



Bulletin no. 8 July 2020



Parsley, *Petroselinum crispum*

There are three main varieties of parsley: common parsley or curly parsley, flat parsley often called Italian parsley in Quebec, and tuberous parsley, the root of which is used as a vegetable. This year, we have chosen to plant both curly and flat parsley. The great heat of the summer of 2020 did not help the growth of the parsley and we had to replant it in mid-July.

Please wait until these plants have gained vigour before harvesting.

The parsley often used for decorating dishes also has many other qualities that we would like to illustrate here.

Botanical description

In Quebec, parsley is mainly used as an annual plant 25 to 80 cm high, very aromatic when crumpled, with a characteristic odour. The stems are striated and the leaves are hairless. The glossy green leaves are doubly divided, especially those at the base, with the upper leaves often having only three narrow, elongated lobes. The flowers are greenish-yellow to white in full bloom and are grouped in compound umbels with eight to twenty rays. The elongated, swivel-type root is fairly well developed. It is yellowish, strongly smelling and aromatic.

How to cultivate

Parsley thrives in all types of soil, however, it does best in very fertile, light and somewhat rich in humus and calcareous soil. Parsley thrives well in pots, in a mixture of loam and topsoil (3/4-1/4), keeping it in light shade.



What parts to use

The leaves are used in cooking and the flowering tops are used for medicinal purposes.

Medicinal uses

Parsley is widely regarded as one of the healthiest foods in the world. According to the [USDA's Nutrition Facts table](#), 100 grams of parsley contain (among other things): 133mg of vitamin C, 421µg of vitamin A, 1640µg of vitamin K, 138mg of calcium and 6.3mg of iron. It is an excellent source of vitamin k and a very good source of vitamin A and C, beta-carotene and iron. The flavonoids in parsley—especially luteolin—have been shown to function as antioxidants that combine with highly reactive oxygen-containing molecules (called oxygen radicals) and help prevent oxygen-based damage to cells. In addition, extracts from parsley have been used in animal studies to help increase the antioxidant capacity of the blood. Pregnant women should avoid excessive consumption of parsley. Normal food quantities are safe for pregnant women, but consuming excessively large amounts may have uterotonic effects.

Parsley, an infinite number of culinary uses

Add colour to raw vegetables and invite green parsley to their side! Delicious raw, parsley enhances the finest dishes: with garlic, shallots or chives, parsley accompanies meats and fish. It is magic in the butter that coats the snails of



Burgundy. The essential ingredient of the bouquet garni: thyme, bay leaf... and parsley! It is the one that brings colour and a vegetal fragrance to the trio of potatoes, bacon and mushrooms in the forest pan. Cooked vegetables lose some of their nutrients: parsley makes up for this in part. Your soups lack taste? Rather than adding too much salt, systematically add 2 or 3 stalks of parsley at the end of cooking. Parsley is the basic ingredient in many recipes from the Middle East, North Africa and Mediterranean countries.

Recipes

Tabbouleh, a Middle East feast

Ingredients

- 1 ½ cup finely chopped fresh parsley
- 3 green onions (shallots), chopped
- 3 medium tomatoes, deseeded and diced
- 4 tbsp. lemon juice, or more to taste
- ¼ cup extra virgin olive oil
- 4 tablespoons chopped fresh mint
- 1 cup fine bulgur (or couscous)*.

Preparation

Salt and pepper to taste

Soak the bulgur for 25 minutes in a bowl of very hot water, covered.

Wash and spin-dry the parsley and mint leaves, discarding the harder stems.



the salad. Toss and serve.

** For a gluten-free recipe, use an equivalent amount of cooked quinoa.*

- Finely chop the leaves and green onions and add them to the bowl. Mix in the salad bowl.

-Beat the oil, lemon juice and salt in a small bowl with a fork or small whisk until the dressing is emulsified.

-Pour over salad. Mix well and let stand 10 to 30 min.

-Dice the tomatoes, remove the seeds, then add them to

Gremolata, a delicious Italian persillade

Ingredients



- 1 large bunch fresh parsley, chopped
- 1 lemon zest, finely chopped
- 2 tablespoons of capers
- 6 Greek olives, pitted and chopped
- 2 ounces of extra virgin olive oil
- ½ tsp garlic pureed or minced

Preparation

Mix all the ingredients together in a bowl.

Let stand one hour before serving

Use

Gremolata is an Italian parsley preparation traditionally used to season Osso Buco and other white meats and fish. It is also used to flavour pasta and even vegetable soups.

The gremolata is added at the end of cooking, it also completes the decoration of the plate. Some recipes incorporate chopped fresh rosemary or a fillet of anchovies.

Legends and popularity of parsley

According to an ancient Greek legend, parsley sprang from the blood shed by the fallen hero Archemorus when he was eaten by serpents. The ancient Greeks held the plant sacred, and parsley was never placed on their tables. In classical antiquity, it was used by the Greeks in the victory wreaths made for athletic competitions, and the Romans would include it in bridal sprays to ward off evil spirits. In medieval Europe, it was thought that only pregnant women and witches could grow it successfully. At one time, it was thought to be a symbol of death, and was used as a funeral herb. Conversely, on a Seder plate at Passover, it's used as a springtime symbol of life's perpetual renewal.

