

Herb Honour Roll

Parsley and coriander might be the family favourites, but there are many other herbs to enjoy. Dietitian Caitlin Reid shows you how to add more flavour (and nutrients) to your meals using the herbs in your garden – and a few that you might want to add to the vegie patch.



BASIL

Why we love it: Besides its taste, basil is a source of vitamin A, C and K. It also contains magnesium, which promotes the relaxation of blood vessels, thereby improving blood flow.

Serve it: Enjoy in a salad with ripe tomato, bocconcini and olive oil, or combined with olive oil, Parmesan cheese and pine nuts to make pesto for pasta.



SAGE

Why we love it: Sage may help our memory – British researchers found immediate recall improved in adults who consumed it.

Serve it: While sage makes a delicious stuffing for roast chicken, the true taste sensation lies in sautéing the leaves in olive oil until they're crisp and sweet.

PARSLEY

Why we love it: It's a source of folate, a B vitamin critical for proper cell division and heart health. Containing antioxidant flavonoids, parsley may help to reduce cell damage.

Serve it: Add parsley's light, fresh flavour to stocks, stews, soups and, of course, potato salad dressing. Finely chopped, it brings plain garlic bread to life.



THYME

Why we love it: Thyme is rich in flavonoids such as apigenin and thymol, which give it its high antioxidant capacity.

Serve it: While thyme, especially lemon-flavoured, is the perfect companion to grilled fish, it also makes a tasty addition to omelettes or scrambled eggs on a Sunday morning.



CORIANDER

Why we love it: Aside from being packed full of minerals such as magnesium and iron, coriander may help lower cholesterol levels.

Serve it: Make a tzatziki-style dip with Greek yoghurt and coriander to cool a hot curry or to have with lamb. Coriander leaves can be overpowering, so add according to taste.



DILL

Why we love it: Two components in dill – flavonoids and monoterpenes – offer protection against the damaging affects of free radicals. Monoterpenes may also help promote bone health.

Serve it: Dill provides a tangy addition to pickles and salad dressing, and complements grilled salmon superbly.

A handy home for herbs

If you find that you don't use herbs because storing them is annoying – or they don't last long enough – try the Prepara Herb-Savor (\$59.95, 1800 209 999). It can prolong the life of your bought herbs for as long as three weeks. Fill up the bottom with water and store this micro greenhouse in your fridge door. It's a lovely little home for a whole range of herbs and even for asparagus.

