

SPICES and SEASONING

Gorson Culley*

Chef, Residence Halls
University of Wisconsin



SPICES are commonly used both for fragrance and flavoring. The favorites in herb cookery are sweet basil, chervil, sweet marjoram, thyme, rosemary, and tarragon. These may be used singly or in blends. There are no rules in blending herbs, but imagination, interest and constant experimentation assure their most effective use.

Herbs should be used with a light hand -- too much of any flavor is objectionable. Blend them carefully never using at a time more than one of the very strong herbs.

It Helps to Blend Them with Butter

The best way to draw out and extend the flavor is to blend or heat herbs with butter or other cooking fats.

When using fresh herbs, the leaves should be cut or chopped finely. Dried herbs are three or four times stronger than fresh herbs. Long cooking will destroy the delicate aroma and flavor of herbs.

In soups and gravies, tie fresh herbs in tiny bunches or in cheese-cloth bags and add them one-half hour before cooking is finished. Remove them as soon as they have served their purpose.

The art of using spices, in practical everyday cooking, is illustrated in these recipes.

Barbecue Sauce Helps Left-Overs

This sauce will eliminate your left-over worries. The left-over roast beef that has long been hash may as well be a delicious barbecue sandwich. Any other meat from roasts or boiled meats can be made very palatable by slicing, or chopping, and heating it in this barbecue sauce and serving in sandwich buns.

Spiced Barbecue Sauce

1 tablespoon oregano sage	1 bay leaf
2 1/4 tablespoons paprika	1 tablespoon garlic vinegar
1/2 tablespoon garlic salt	2 tablespoons tarragon
1 tablespoon seasoning salt	vinegar
1 tablespoon chili powder	1/2 cup eschalot vinegar
1/2 clove garlic	1/2 cup olive oil or butter
1 tablespoon onion salt	3 cups stock or boullion
1/8 teaspoon cayenne pepper	1/2 cup water
1/4 tablespoon mustard seed	1 cup chili sauce
1 tablespoon brown sugar	2 tablespoons Worcestershire
1/2 teaspoon table salt	sauce
1 cup onions, chopped fine	

Sauté onions in olive oil or butter until translucent. Stir in dry ingredients except sugar and bay leaf. Cook with 1/2 cup water and stir until the mixture forms a paste. Add the vinegars, chili sauce and Worcestershire sauce. Add sugar last of all. Bring to a boil and then simmer for at least 30 minutes. After the sugar has been added the barbecue sauce requires constant watching to avoid burning.

Add bay leaf during the last 30 minutes of cooking. Should cook until it has reduced to 4 cups. This sauce may be served on many hot meats.

Combination Meat Loaf with Herbs

1 pound pork	3 teaspoons salt
1 pound beef	3 cups cracker crumbs
1 pound veal	1 1/2 cups onions

Onions should be cooked or sautéed before putting them into the meat loaf. Sautéing is best. You have heard people say, "I can't eat it if it has onions in it." But if the onion is cooked before it is added, it will not bother them.

To each 3 pounds of meat add:

1 teaspoon celery salt	1 teaspoon white pepper
1/4 teaspoon ground mace	1/4 teaspoon leaf thyme
1/4 teaspoon sweet marjoram	1 tablespoon brown sugar

Mix all spices together and add to the sautéed onions, and pour into this mixture 2 cups of cold milk. Stir well and work it into the meat and cracker crumb mixture. Mold into loaves or put into a loaf pan. Bake at 250-300°F. for 3 or 4 hours, or until done. It should be 165° in the center by meat thermometer when done.

Home-Made Pickled Fish

Many of us have turned up our noses when there is mention of pickled fish. Probably we have encountered samples of this delicacy which have been rubbery and tough, tasted strong and bitter. I have experimented with pickling brines and have found one that lets the fish stay flaky and tender. Follow this recipe and the fish will not become bitter or sour.

2 cups water	1 teaspoon red hot peppers
1 quart vinegar (4 cups)	1 teaspoon leaf thyme
2 tablespoons sugar	1 teaspoon whole allspice
2 tablespoons salt	1 teaspoon juniper berries
1 teaspoon whole white pepper	3 crushed bay leaves
1 teaspoon whole black pepper	1 tablespoon sweet marjoram
2 cups onion rings	6 pounds fish - trout is best
2 cups sliced celery	Small pieces of trimming may be used

Add the above spices to the vinegar and sugar. After the fish has been washed and cleaned it should be soaked in salt water (1 cup per gallon) for six hours. Then it should be placed in the boiling pickle brine and heated until it comes to a boil, then simmered slowly for 5 minutes. The fish should be kept in a tightly sealed container for at least 24 hours, under good refrigeration.

Vinegars Help Control Herb Flavors

If herb seasoning is hard to control by using fresh or dried herbs, use herb flavored vinegars, such as garlic, tarragon, or malt vinegar.

There are several shades or color of vinegar -- white, brown, and dark. In pickling you should use white vinegar, if you want the fruit to keep its original color.

The pickling syrup should contain spices, sugar, water and vinegar. The spices should be tied in a cheese cloth and all brought to a boil -- no more cooking until fruit is added and then the spice bag should be removed.

Pickling Syrup

6 pounds sugar	$\frac{1}{2}$ tablespoon whole cloves
1 quart white cider vinegar	1 tablespoon whole allspice
4 sticks of cinnamon	

Bring syrup to a boil. Add a few peeled peaches at a time. Cook until tender enough to pierce easily with a toothpick. When finished cooking, put in clean jars. Cover with the syrup up to 1/2 inch of top of jar. Let stand overnight. The next day put the jars in a water vat. Heat to 180°F. for 20 minutes. Seal. Wash jars and put away.



Spices and seasoning. [ca.1940]

Gulley, Carson

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