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Food

BY NICOLE SOURS LARSON

Rosemary — the very name evokes fond memories of fragrant roasting pork, larded with garlic and rolled in chopped fresh rosemary, cooked succulently rare. Of scents wafting through the kitchen as potatoes sauté in rosemary-flavored oil and rosemary sprigs simmer in salted water, infusing steamed veggies. Of aromas from crusty, round, rosemary and olive oil loaves and wedges of salty-sweet rosemary shortbread drifting from opened oven doors.

Growing up on the edge of the South, I was exposed only to herbs and spices that arrived already staled in grocery store tins. No one I knew ever used fresh herbs and spices, nor had a place to buy them. My mother rarely used more than thyme and bay leaves but retained a stock of dried herbs, aged well beyond their one-year shelf life, for occasional use in a specific recipe. Not surprisingly, I didn't discover the benefits of these aromatic flavorings until adulthood.

SET **ROSEMARY** • E3

RECIPES

Rosemary and Walnut-Crusted Salmon

Garlic Lime Butter

Rosemary Shortbread

The Red Deer's Mix
Rosemary Lemonfizz



Robust rosemary

FRESH HERB CASTS
A COMMANDING
CULINARY PRESENCE

Rosemary and
Walnut-Crusted
Salmon

FOOD STYLING BY ANITA L.
ARABULA & PHOTOGRAPHY
BY EDUARDO CONTRERAS U-1



ROSEMARY

FROM E1

Rosemary infiltrated my consciousness in my teens through Ophelia's sad reflection on her bouquet in Shakespeare's play "Hamlet": "There's rosemary, that's for remembrance."

How could a cooking herb, I wondered, affect memory?

Recent research has shown that ancient and medieval herbalists were on to something. In addition to its culinary uses, rosemary does offer an array of health benefits, including memory and concentration booster and digestive aid. It's also rich in vitamins, minerals, antioxidants and anti-inflammatory properties. In the middle ages, it was used as incense, an antiseptic and a pesticide as well as a

plague deterrent. Culturally, it was part of the medieval arsenal of flavorings used to disguise the taste of preserved salted meats.

Rosemary—from the Latin *rosmarinus*, meaning dew of the sea—originated in the Mediterranean region. The woody herb, sprouting blue, pink or white flowers, thrives in both marine and desert climates and requires little water, making it an ideal choice for drought-tolerant California landscaping.

You'll often find it planted as a fragrant border or low hedge, and it is a popular choice for Christmas trees, both full-size and tabletop. In the middle ages, rosemary was used as adornments for both weddings and funerals and was a favorite fragrant addition to rushes strewn on floors.

It's a flavoring for

Rosemary quick hits

Steamed Vegetables: Put two or three twigs of fresh rosemary with salt in the steaming water before bringing to a boil. Steam vegetables for about five minutes.

Pork Tenderloin: Rub tenderloin with garlic and coat with olive oil, plain or garlic- or rosemary-infused, before seasoning with salt and pepper. Roll in fresh chopped rosemary and roast at 450 degrees about 15 to 20 minutes per pound, to an interior temperature of 145 degrees.

Rosemary Spiced Walnuts: Blend together 3 tablespoons olive oil, 5-6 tablespoons finely chopped fresh rosemary or 3-4 tablespoons dried, 1½ to 2 teaspoons kosher salt and 1½ to 2 teaspoons cayenne or ground red pepper. Add 1 pound shelled walnuts and coat them well with spice mixture. Spread on a baking sheet and bake in a preheated 350-degree oven for about 10 minutes until toasted, stirring occasionally.

Mediterranean-style dishes that rosemary has often seasoned, enhancing roast chicken, lamb, veal, pork and even fish, in tomato-based sauces, omelets and

other egg dishes, or in beans, stews and soups. Stripped, mature rosemary twigs make flavorful skewers for kebabs. Rosemary can also offer a delicious

surprise when added to home-baked breads, biscuits and cookies and shines when combined with other starchy foods, such as roast or pan-fried potatoes.

While fresh rosemary is usually preferable, sometimes I can't find it or I run out. A good quality dried rosemary—never powdered—from a reliable spice supplier is a viable alternative. Rosemary retains its flavor when dried far better than most other herbs because of the oils retained in its leaves. Since its flavor becomes more concentrated when dried, use only one-third to one-half the quantity specified for fresh rosemary.

For most purposes, strip the rosemary twigs, being careful to remove the leaves from their coarse outer stems for easier chopping. Chopping fresh rosemary can be challenging and requires

a sharp edge to a good knife. Yet the rewards are well worth the effort.

Rosemary, a member of the mint family, pairs well with garlic, bay leaves, marjoram, oregano, thyme, tarragon, sage, paprika, parsley, chives, nutmeg and lavender. It's an essential component of Italian herb mixes and French *herbes de Provence* blends. Rosemary pops up as a regular ingredient for stuffing and is a welcome addition when infused in olive oil or steeped in milk, cream or syrups used for desserts.

Best of all, rosemary can provide a quick hit to brighten up many foods with a minimum of work. Here are a few suggestions—and be creative in finding your own uses for this versatile herb.

Larson is a San Diego freelance writer.

Rosemary and Walnut-Crusted Salmon

This quick and easy recipe is great for a midweek work night. Serve with a drizzle of rosemary olive oil or a spoonful of garlic lime butter, or just a squeeze of lime or lemon.

Makes 2 to 4 servings

1 pound salmon, skin removed, cut in fillets or slices
1-2 cloves garlic, sliced
½ to 1 lime or lemon
2-3 teaspoons olive oil, rosemary flavored or plain, plus more for optional drizzle before serving
½ cup (generous) walnuts, coarsely ground

2 tablespoons fresh rosemary, chopped, or 2 teaspoons dried rosemary, or more to taste
¼ to ½ teaspoon salt, to taste
¼ teaspoon freshly ground black pepper
1 lime or lemon, quartered, for serving

Preheat oven to 400 degrees. Place salmon on a plate and rub with cut garlic. Squeeze lime or lemon juice over the fish and drizzle with olive oil. Set aside to marinate for 15 to 30 minutes.

In a bowl mix, together ground nuts, chopped rosemary, salt and pepper, blending well. Lightly press mixture onto both sides of the fish and place slices on a baking pan lined with foil or parchment paper. Measure thickness of fish and bake 10 minutes per inch. Add an optional drizzle of olive oil after removing from the oven. Serve with (optional) garlic lime butter and lime or lemon on the side.

Garlic Lime Butter

This can be made a day ahead and freezes well. It doubles easily and works well on any fish or vegetables, including corn on the cob.

1 clove garlic, mashed, or more to taste
2 ounces (½ cup) lime juice, freshly squeezed
½ teaspoon salt
¼ teaspoon black pepper, freshly ground
2 ounces (½ cup or ½ stick) unsalted butter, melted

Swirl together garlic, lime juice, salt and pepper in a blender until smooth. Slowly add melted butter until emulsified.

Adapted from www.fox.com

Rosemary Shortbread

I routinely double this recipe, one of my favorites for gift giving. Better quality butter produces tastier results. I've also used good-quality dried rosemary (about one-third to one-half the quantity of fresh) when I've run out of fresh. Experiment baking in different shaped pans or cutting with a cookie cutter and baking on a tray, but watch the baking time. Shortbread keeps well in a sealed container for at least a week.

Makes 16 wedges

2 cups unbleached flour
¼ teaspoon salt
¼ teaspoon baking powder
1½ tablespoons fresh rosemary, chopped, or more to taste
6 ounces (1½ sticks or ¾ cup) unsalted butter, softened
2 tablespoons mild honey
½ cup confectioners' sugar
1 tablespoon granulated sugar
Rosemary sprigs for garnish (optional)

Preheat oven to 300 degrees and butter two 9-inch round cake pans. Mix together flour, salt, baking powder and rosemary in a bowl; set aside.

Using an electric mixer, at low speed combine butter, honey, confectioners' sugar. Add flour mixture and mix until dough becomes a coarse meal with pea-size buttery clumps.

Divide dough in half, using fingers to press each half into one cake pan. Using a fork, score each dough into eight wedges. Sprinkle each round with ½ tablespoon granulated sugar and arrange decorative rosemary sprigs top, pressing them into dough (optional).

Bake shortbread in middle of oven until golden, about 15 to 25 minutes, depending on oven and pan. When done, let cool in pan five minutes before cutting along score marks with a knife.

Adapted from Gourmet

The Red Door's Miz Rosemary Lemonfizz

The Red Door uses Meyer lemons grown in the restaurant's own garden.

Makes 1 cocktail

2 ounces vodka (Fair Quinoa Vodka recommended)
1 ounce Meyer lemon juice, freshly squeezed
1 ounce rosemary-infused simple syrup (recipe follows)

Ice (to fill shaker)
Splash of brut sparkling wine (for topping off)
1 sprig fresh rosemary
1 Meyer lemon peel twist

Place vodka, lemon juice and simple syrup in a cocktail shaker. Add ice and shake well. Strain into a martini glass. Top with champagne and garnish with rosemary sprig and lemon peel twist.



DAVID BROOKS U T

Rosemary Simple Syrup

1 cup sugar
1 cup water
4 sprigs fresh rosemary

Make rosemary simple syrup by placing sugar, water and rosemary sprigs in a medium saucepan. Heat over medium high heat and bring to a boil. Boil one minute or until sugar is dissolved. Remove from heat and let stand 30 minutes before straining.

Store in a sealed container in refrigerator up to one month.

Created by Liz Hamilton of The Red Door