**THYME**

*Thymus species* [TY-muss]

**Family:** Labiatae

**Names:** French thyme; English thyme and assorted varieties; Thymian (German); thym (French); timo (Italian); Tymianek wlasiciwy, macierzanka (Polish); tomillo (Spanish); Tobmiyoxibutil (Nahuatl)

**Description:** upright and prostrate varieites; small (1/8-1/4 inch long) slightly pointed leaves—ranging from glossy dark green to wooly silver or variegated green and gold—are highly aromatic; woody stems; tiny star-like flowers bloom throughout the summer in shades from crimson to pink or white; perennial (sometimes tender)

**Cultivation:** Perennial: Zone 4. Germination 3-4 weeks. Soil temperature: 55F. Soil: well drained, light, rather dry. PH: 6-8. Sun: Full. Propagation: by seed, cuttings, root division or layering. The fine root system makes thyme more difficult than most herbs to move. Transplant it so it has plenty of time to establish its fine root system months before a hard freeze. Even established plants can be damaged if the soil freezes solid and heves. A layer of sand on top of the soil helps prevent damage from freezes. Eventually the clumps die out in the center, but if this occurs after only 2 to 3 years, it can indicate poor growing conditions. Studies at the University of Granada, Spain, found that maximum essential oil potency occurs in the summer months of July and August. No fertilizer required; smaller leaves yield most flavor. Quite susceptible to root rot and fungal disease when grown in soil that is too moist and heavy. Grows well with lavender and sage; attracts bees into the garden; repels cabbageworms. Leaves are best while thyme is in bloom.

**Types:** There are 200 to 400 species of thyme, including numerous cultivars, which results in confusion in proper identification. *Thymus vulgaris* are the best culinary thymes. French thyme has narrow, ½ inch gray-green leaves and fares the best during hot and humid summers with a good, strong flavor. Older plants get gnarled and wood trunks. English thyme’s leaves are broader, greener, more oval and about ¼ inch long. *Thymus x citriodora* or lemon thyme has the scent of fresh lemons and fares the best during hot and humid summers with a good, strong flavor. Older plants get gnarled and wood trunks. English thyme’s leaves are broader, greener, more oval and about ¼ inch long. *Thymus x citriodora* or lemon thyme has the scent of fresh lemons and is added to cottage cheese, steamed vegetables, stuffed under chicken breasts and used in sauces for fish or poultry. Also makes a soothing tea. There are upright varieties with glossy, green leaves or with green and gold variegation. More susceptible to frost, especially the variegated ones. Other varieties are *T. pulegioides* (broad leaf thyme—bushy shrub with mauve-pink flowers and strongly flavored leaves which are larger and rounder than common thyme; *T. richardii* (*T. niitidis*) neat shrub with pale lilac flowsr and narrow, bright gree leaves. Ht. 6 inches. Similar *T. carnosus* has white flowers; *T. v. "Silver Posie"

History: Thyme has inspired poetic praise from Virgil to Kipling, who wrote of “wind-bit thyme that smells of dawn in Paradise.” Its fragrance is particulary strong on the warm, sunny hillsides of Mediterranean lands. To the Greeks, thyme denoted graceful elegance: “to smell of thyme” was an expression of stylish praise. After bathing, the Greeks would include oil of thyme in their massage.

Thymus may derive from the Greek word *thymon*, meaning “courage,” and many traditions relate to this virtue. Roman soldiers bathed in thyme water to give themselves vigor. In the Middle Ages, European ladies embroidered a sprig of thyme on tokens for their knights-errant. A soup recipe of 1663 recorded the use of thyme and beer to overcome shyness, while Scottish highlanders drank tea made of wild thyme for strength and courage, and to prevent nightmare.

Sumerian cuneiform tablets in 2750 B.C. suggested that thyme be dried and pulverized with pears and figs and enough water to make a thick paste for a poultice. The Egyptians used *tham*, “thyme,” for medicine and to embalm their dead. The Romans liberally strewed *thymum* on their floors, burned it to deter venomous creatures and flavored their cheese with it. St. Hildegard mentioned it as a treatment for leprosy, paralysis, and “excessive” body lice.

Thyme is found in many antimildew preparations and has long been use din linens to deter bugs. Studies show it kills mosquito larvae. Thyme is used occasionally in potpourris and soap making. In addition, it is reported to allow one to see fairies, who are said to dance in beds of wild thyme on Midsummer Eve.

In the Aztec Herbal of 1552 a plant identified as thyme was included in an elaborate remedy for nursing mothers whose breasts failed to produce the necessary supply of milk

Energetics: spicy, warm

Meridians/Organs affected: lungs, liver, stomach

Medicinal Uses: Thyme’s main medicinal role is in treating coughs (including whooping cough) and clearing congestion. It makes an excellent gargle or mouthwash for sore throats and infected gums. Many pharmaceutical gargles, cough drops, mouthwashes, and vapor rubs contain thyme’s constituent thymol, which destroys bacteria, some fungus, and the shingles virus (herpes zoster). Participants in a study who rinse twice daily with Listerine™, containing thymol (with eucalyptol and menthol), found they developed 34% less gum inflammation and new plaque formation. Thyme improves digestion, relaxing smooth muscles. It reduces the prostaglandins responsible for many menstrual cramps. Thyme also helps destroy intestinal parasites (especially hookworms and roundworms). Used externally for infected wounds. Soothing sedative action on nerves. Expectorant, reduces spasms. Induces perspiration to break fever

Dosage—10 to 30 drops of extract 3 times per day.

Infusion: Pour a cup of boiling water on 2 tsp of the dried herb and let infuse for 10 minutes. Drink 3 times a day

Tincture: take 2-4ml 3 times a day

Combinations:
Asthmatic problems: lobelia and ephedra by adding its anti-microbial effect
Whooping cough: wild cherry and sundew

Thyme Cough Drops
4 fresh thyme sprigs
16 oz distilled water
1 Tbsp unsalted butter
1 cup sugar
¼ cup light corn syrup
1 tsp oil of orange
1 tsp cream of tartar
candy thermometer

In a small, heavy-bottomed pot with a tightly fitting lid, bring the thyme and the distilled water to a boil. Lower the heat and simmer for 5 minutes. Set aside to steep overnight. Coat an 8-inch-square cake pan with two teaspoons of butter. Set aside. Coat a medium, heavy-bottomed pot with the remaining butter. Strain the thyme infusion into the pot. Discard the spent herb. Add the sugar, corn syrup, oil of orange and cream of tartar. Stir to dissolve the sugar. Cook over medium-high heat, moving the pot in a circular motion to swirl the liquid until it boils. Take the temperature. Swirl-cook at a boil, until the thermometer reads 300F. Pour the syrup into the cake pan. Set aside about 5 minutes. Score the semi-hard syrup into half-inch squares with a knife. Set aside to harden, about 30 minutes. Turn out on a sheet of waxed paper. Break into cough drops along the scored lines. Stored in an airtight container, they’ll stay fresh for months. (The Healing Kitchen)

Properties: Very healing and antiseptic, eliminates infections. Anti-spasmodic. Stimulant and relaxant, regulates system as needed.

How affects your body: Thymol is an expectorant, an agent that causes the mucous membranes lining your respiratory tract to “weep” watery secretions, making it easier for you to cough up mucus. It is also an antiseptic that kills mildew and mold and is used for preserving anatomical and urine specimens.

Aromatherapy Uses:
EXTRACTION: essential oil by water or steam distillation from the fresh or partially dried leaves and flowering tops. ‘Red thyme oil’ is the crude distillate. ‘White thyme oil’ is produced by further redistillation or rectification. An absolute is also produced by solvent extraction for perfumery use.

CHARACTERISTICS: a red, brown or orange liquid with a warm, spicy-herbaceous, powerful odor. A clear, pale yellow liquid with a sweet, green-fresh, milder scent.

BLENDS WELL WITH: bergamot, lemon, rosemary, melissa, lavender, lavandin, marjoram, Peru balsam, pine, etc.

USES:
Skin Care: abscess, acne, bruises, burns, cuts, dermatitis, eczema, insect bites, lice, gum infections, oily skin, scabies
Circulation, Muscles and Joints: arthritis, cellulitis, gout, muscular aches and pains, obesity, edema, poor circulation, rheumatism, sprains, sports injuries
Respiratory System: asthma, bronchitis, catarrh, coughs, laryngitis, sinusitis, sore throat, tonsillitis
Digestive System: diarrhea, dyspepsia, flatulence
Genito-urinary system: cystitis, urethritis
Immune system: chills, colds, flu, infectious diseases
Nervous system: headaches, insomnia, nervous debility and stress-related complaints

Chemical constituents: volatile oils; terpenes; fixed oils & resins; phenols and phenolic glycosides (thymol, carvacrol). The most important flavor and aroma chemical in thyme is thymol. Oil of thyme, a colorless to reddish brown liquid, also contains sharp tasting, peppery scented borneol, carvacrol, linalool and pinene.

Nutritional profile: 1 teaspoon ground thyme has 4 calories. Provides: .1 g protein, .1 g fat, .9 g carbohydrates, 26 mg calcium, 1.7 mg iron and 53 IU vitamin A.

Ritual Uses: Gender: cold; Planet: Venus; Element: Air; Basic Powers: Clairvoyance, purification.

Burn as incense to purge and fumigate magical rooms. Take a magical cleansing bath in the spring of thyme and marjoram. A pillow stuffed with thyme cures nightmares. Crush a handful of the fresh herb and inhale. You will at once be refreshed and renewed. Wear a sprig of the herb to funerals to protect yourself from the negativity of the mourners. Thyme is a very friendly herbe for your garden devas and may be used to call upon the faerie folk. It carries with it the magick of delight and is an excellent herbe for those who take themselves too seriously. Thyme is gathered with marigolds, marjoram and wormwood for love divination on Saint Luke’s Day (October 18).

Cosmetic Uses: To clear the scalp of dandruff—gather a handful of “tops” which are most potent when just coming into bloom, and infuse in 1 pint of boiling water for 15 minutes. A handful of sage or rosemary could be included for greater efficiency. Strain and massage into the scalp to remove dandruff and use as a rinse to darken the hair and give it healthy gloss.

Culinary Uses: Orange Balsam: The orange flavor can be highlighted with a drop or two of orange juice and perhaps a little grated orange zest in a savory herb butter for asparagus or beans or for spreading on hot biscuits or dinner rolls. A vinaigrette made with orange juice with a smattering of chopped ‘Orange Balsam’ leaves is tasty over a salad of mixed green lettuces, or a fresh fruit salad. Minced, the herb can be added to a beurre blanc for fish. Its resinous leaves are good with chicken and game, and are especially tasty with rabbit. An herbal tea is a soothing hot refreshment with an ever-so-subtle scent of oranges.

Recipes

Using Lemon Thyme:
Thyme Roasted Chicken with Baby Leeks
1 whole chicken, 3 ½- 4 pounds
1 lemon
2 tablespoons butter, softened
½ apple, quartered
1 large handful tender baby leeks with tops or other alliums such as scallions, unpeeled garlic cloves, etc.
1 loosely packed cup fresh thyme springs (lemon thyme is excellent)
1 teaspoon paprika
freshly ground pepper
salt to taste

Preheat oven to 450 degrees. Cut 3 slices, ¼ inch each, from the lemon. Ream the remaining lemon and rub about 1 tablespoon of the juice inside the cavity of the chicken and another tablespoon on the outside. Rub the butter inside and out as well. Stuff the cavity with the lemon slices, apple slices, leeks, and some of the thyme springs, reserving some to stuff under the skin of the chicken on the outside. Rub chicken with the paprika and a generous sprinkling of freshly ground pepper. Place on a foil-lined roasting pan in the middle rack of the oven, and cook for 15 minutes at 450 degrees. Baste, and reduce heat to 350 degrees; bake for about 45 minutes, basting every 15 minutes, until tender and golden. Allow to rest 10 minutes before serving, sprinkling with salt and pepper if desired. (The Herb Garden Cookbook)
Salmon and Ginger Pie, with Lemon Thyme and Lime
1 ¾ lb middle cut of salmon
3 Tbsp walnut oil
1 Tbsp lime juice
2 tsp chopped fresh lemon thyme
2 Tbsp white wine
salt and pepper
14 oz puff pastry
½ cup flaked almonds
3-4 pieces stem ginger in syrup, chopped

Split the salmon in half, remove all the bones and skin, and divide into 4 fillets. Mix the oil, lime juice, thyme, wine and pepper, and pour over the fish. Leave to marinate overnight in the refrigerator. Divide the pastry into two pieces, one slightly larger than the other and roll out—the smaller piece should be large enough to take two of the salmon fillets and the second piece about 2 in larger all round. Drain the fillets. Discard the marinade. Preheat the oven to 350F. Place two of the fillets on the smaller piece of pastry, and season. Add the almonds and ginger and cover with the other two fillets. Season again, cover with the second piece of pastry and seal well. Brush with beaten egg and decorate with any leftover pastry. Bake for 40 minutes. (Herbal Pleasures: Cooking and Crafts)

Carrots Glazed with Ginger and Lemon Thyme
1 pound carrots, cut in to 2 inch matchsticks
4 tablespoons butter
2 tablespoons shallot, minced
2 tablespoons candied ginger, minced
2 tablespoons lemon thyme white wine or rice vinegar
1 tablespoon fresh lemon tyme, minced
salt and freshly ground black pepper, to taste

In a saucepan, combine carrots with water to cover. Bring to a boil over medium heat, reduce heat to low, cover, and poach until tender, or about 5 minutes. Drain, rinse with cold running water, and drain again. Set aside. In a heavy nonreactive skillet, melt butter over medium heat. Add shallot and ginger and saute until softened, or about 3 minutes, stirring occasionally. Add vinegar, lemon thyme, and carrots, stirring to coat, and heat through for 2 to 3 minutes. Season with salt and pepper. (Herbal Vinegar)

Lemon Thyme Sorbet
½ cup sugar
1 ½ cups water
juice and thinly pared rinds of two lemons
4 Tbsp fresh lemon thyme leaves
1 egg white or an equal amount of pasteurized, dried egg whites

Heat the sugar, water, and lemon rinds in a heavy-bottomed saucepan, allowing the sugar to dissolve without stirring. If crystals start to form on the sides of the pan, brush them down into the liquid with a wet pastry brush. Bring to a boil and boil briskly for 5 minutes. Remove the pan from the heat, and dip the base briefly in cold water to stop the cooking process. Add the thyme leaves to the syrup and let cool completely. When cooled, strain off the leaves and rinds and add the lemon juice. Process in an ice-cream freezer. When the mixture is nearly frozen, beat the egg white until it stands in soft peaks and add to the mixture for a sorbet with a smooth texture. (Herbal Sweets)

Lemon Thyme Cake
2 cups unbleached flour
2 tsp baking powder
sprinkle of salt
6 Tbsp softened butter
1 cup sugar
2 eggs
1 Tbsp grated lemon zest
2 Tbsp fresh lemon juice
2 Tbsp chopped lemon thyme
2/3 cup milk
2 Tbsp fresh lemon juice
½ cup icing sugar

Preheat oven to 325F. Grease and flour a loaf pan. Sift together flour, baking powder and salt. In another bowl, cream the butter and beat in the sugar until fluffy. Add eggs and
beat well. Stir in lemon zest, 2 Tbsp lemon juice, lemon thyme and milk. Slowly whisk in the flour mixture and mix well. Pour into the loaf pan. Bake for 1 hour, or until a knife inserted comes out clean. Cool on a rack. To make the lemon glaze, mix 2 Tbsp lemon juice with the icing sugar so it is of a thin pourable consistency. Pour over the cooled cake, spread with a brush, and serve. (Summer Herbal Delights)

**Lemon Thyme Cookies**
1 cup butter, softened  
1 ½ cups sugar  
2 eggs  
1 ½ cup unbleached flour  
1 tsp cream of tartar  
½ tsp salt  
3 Tbsp dried lemon thyme


**Grilled Scallops with Light Thyme Sauce**
½ cup dry white wine  
½ cup chicken broth  
2 shallots, minced  
2 tablespoons minced fresh thyme  
½ cup whipping cream  
¼ cup cold unsalted butter, cut into 4 pieces  
1 ½ pounds fresh sea scallops  
¼ cup olive oil  
2 tablespoons fresh lemon juice

In a large skillet, combine wine, broth, shallots, and thyme. Bring to a boil over high heat; continue to boil, uncovered, until reduced by half. Stir in cream and boil, uncovered, until reduced to about ¼ cup. Reduce heat to medium and whisk in butter, one piece at a time, stirring constantly after each addition until butter is melted. Keep warm by pouring into a glass measuring cup and setting in hot water. Rinse scallops to remove any bits of shell or sand; pat dry with paper towels. Thread scallops onto metal skewers. Place on a well-oiled grill 4-6 inches above a solid bed of hot coals. Combine olive oil and lemon juice. Baste scallops with lemon olive oil and cook, turning once, until scallops are opaque throughout. Cut to test for doneness after 5 to 7 minutes. Do not overcook. Pour prepared thyme sauce onto 4 warm serving plates. Lay scallops on sauce. (Kitchen Herbs)

** Herb Cheesecake**
3 8-oz packages cream cheese, softened  
2 cups sour cream, divided  
1 (10 ¾ oz) can condensed cream of celery soup  
3 eggs  
½ cup Romano cheese  
2 cloves garlic, minced  
1 tablespoon cornstarch  
2 tablespoons finely chopped fresh basil, or 2 tsp crushed dried  
1 tablespoon finely chopped fresh thyme or 1 tsp crushed dried  
1 teaspoon finely chopped fresh tarragon or ¼ teaspoon crushed dried  
½ teaspoon cracked black pepper  
red bell pepper slices, lemon twists, or fresh herbs for garnish.

Combine cream cheese, 1 cup sour cream, and soup in a food processor or a large mixing bowl. Blend at medium speed until smooth. Add eggs and next 7 ingredients. Blend until smooth. Pour into a greased 9 inch springform pan. Place on a jellyroll pan. Bake at 350F for 60 minutes or until lightly browned. Turn off oven and let stand in oven 30 minutes. Remove from oven and cool in pan on a rack. Cover and refrigerate at least 4 hours or overnight. When ready to serve, remove from pan. Spread remaining 1 cup sour cream over the top. Garnish. Serve with crackers, Melba toast or fresh vegetables. (Today’s Herbal Kitchen)

**Thymed Flounder**
2 medium tomatoes  
1 Tbsp olive oil
½ cup onion, coarsely chopped
8 oz fresh mushrooms, sliced
2 Tbsp thyme flowers
4 flounder fillets
2 Tbsp thyme butter, softened

Preheat boiler. Core tomatoes. Slice one into 4 slices set aside. Dice remaining tomatoes. In a heavy skillet, heat oil. Add onion and mushrooms. Sauté over a medium heat until onions turn translucent. Add diced tomatoes and thyme flowers (reserving a small amount for garnish). Sauté over a low heat until mushrooms are tender. While sauce is cooking, place fish on a flat pan and brush lightly with thyme butter. Top each fillet with a slice of tomato brushed with thyme butter. Put under the broiler for about 3 minutes, until the fish appears opaque. Remove fish to serving plates, surround each fillet with the sauce. Garnish with reserved flowers. (Edible Flowers from Garden to Palate)

Stuffed Shells
8 oz ricotta cheese
1 clove garlic, minced
1 Tbsp thyme flowers, coarsely chopped
1 Tbsp oregano flowers, coarsely chopped
8 oz large pasta shells, cooked al dente

In a bowl, combine ricotta cheese, garlic and flowers. Cover and let sit at room temperature for 1 hour to allow flavors to meld. Preheat oven to 350F. Stuff shells with cheese and place in a greased, shallow baking pan. Cover with aluminum foil and bake for 35 minutes. The stuffed shells can be served plain or with your favorite pasta sauce drizzled on them. (Edible Flowers from Garden to Palate)

For Orange Balsam
Honey-Baked Rabbit in Parchment with Orange Balsam Thyme

Marinade:
¼ cup freshly squeezed lemon juice
zest of 1 lemon
¼ cup olive oil
1 dried bay leaf, broken into pieces
½ small onion, sliced
4 whole peppercorns, lightly crushed
the pointed end, fold the tip several times to close the packet securely. Make the other three packets in this manner. Place the parchment packets on a baking sheet and bake for 30 minutes. Remove the packets to heated plates, and server immediately. (Exotic Herbs)

Sage, Thyme and Apple Sausage
2 tsp minced sage leaves
1 Tbsp minced thyme leaves
1 lb ground turkey
2 tsp coarse salt
½ packed cup dried apples, minced
1 small cooking apple, such as Granny Smith, peeled and grated
pinch of ground cinnamon
1 Tbsp maple syrup
1 Tbsp olive oil

In a medium bowl, with a rubber spatula stir together the sage and thyme leaves, turkey, salt; dried and grated apples, cinnamon, and maple syrup. If you want to make patties, form the mixture into 20 3-inch patties. Heat the oil in a large skillet over medium heat. For patties, cook on each side about 3-4 minutes, until golden and cooked through; for bulk sausage, simply cook, stirring often, until cooked through and no longer pink. Serve hot. Sausage can be cooked ahead and gently reheated in a 300°F oven. (Morning Glories)

Chicken breakfast sausage with apple and herbs
Yield: Serves about 8.
2 tbsp. olive oil
1/2 yellow onion, finely chopped
1 small, sweet apple, peeled and grated
1 garlic clove, minced
2 lbs. boneless, skinless chicken thighs, cut into small chunks
1 tbsp. finely chopped, fresh sage leaves
2 tsp. finely chopped, fresh thyme leaves
1 1/2 tsp. kosher salt
Freshly ground black pepper, to taste
Canola oil, for frying

Warm a small skillet over medium heat. Drizzle in olive oil, then add onion and apple. Cook, stirring occasionally, until apple juices have evaporated and onion and apple are soft and tender, about 8 minutes. Add garlic and cook 1 minute more. Set aside to cool.

While onion and apple cook, pulse chicken in a food processor to grind. Be careful not to over-process: running the machine for 4-5 seconds, then scraping the bowl, then running it 4-5 seconds more should do it. You want a chunky yet cohesive mixture. Don’t turn it into a paste.

Transfer ground chicken to a large mixing bowl. Add onion mixture, herbs, salt, and pepper and mix until evenly combined. Heat a generous coating of canola oil in a large skillet over medium-high heat. While oil heats, form chicken mixture into patties. The mixture will be fairly loose. Roll golf-ball sized balls, flatten them gently, put them in the pan, then press them with my fingertips to form a patty. Fry in batches until nicely browned and cooked through, about 3 minutes per side. Transfer to a paper towel-lined plate to drain. Serve hot.

Prawn and Asparagus Salad
4 Tbsp extra-virgin olive oil
1 heaped Tbsp thyme leaves
98 oz young spinach leaves, washed
4 oz tiger prawns, cooked and peeled
salt/pepper
1 lb asparagus, trimmed
juice of 1 small lime

Place the oil and thyme leaves in a small saucepan and heat slowly, until it begins to bubble. Then remove from the heat, cover with a lid and leave to infuse for about 1 hour.

Place the prepared spinach in a large salad bowl. Top with the prawns and season well with salt and pepper. Cook the asparagus in boiling salted water for 4-5 minutes, depending on their thickness, and then drain well before adding to the spinach and prawns. Strain the oil into a bowl. Add the lime juice and mix. Pour over the salad, toss well and serve at once. (Feasting with Herbs)

Filet of Beef with Thyme and Madeira Sauce
3 Tbsp whole black peppercorns
2 tsp fresh rosemary leaves
6 garlic cloves, peeled
1 Tbsp salt
3 Tbsp olive oil
one 2 ½-3 lb filet mignon, trimmed of fat
10 4-inch springs fresh thyme
½ lb carrots, chopped
1 stalk celery, cut in ½ inch slices
⅛ cup chopped shallots
1 cup dry Madeira
½ cup dry red wine
1 Tbsp sherry vinegar
6 oz beef stock or canned beef broth

Grind the peppercorns and rosemary in a blender until they are mostly pulverized; a few small chunks are fine. Add the garlic and salt, and process. Add 2 Tbsp of oil in a thin, slow stream, blending until the mixture is a spreadable paste. Rub the mixture all over the filet, then let the meat stand for 2 hours at room temperature.

Heat oven to 350F. Scrape most of the spice rub off the filet, saving ½ tsp. Heat the remaining tablespoon of oil in an ovenproof skillet over high heat and brown the filet mignon on all sides. Because of the pepper in the rub, the crust that forms will be almost black. When the meat is seared on all sides, put the skillet in the oven and cook for 25-30 minutes, depending on the desired doneness. Remove the filet and wrap loosely in foil. Scrape any burned pieces out of the skillet and add the thyme, carrots, celery and shallots. Cook over medium heat, stirring, for 3 minutes, or until thyme is fragrant. Stir in Madeira, wine, vinegar, and stock or broth. Reduce the liquid to 1 cup. Add any juice that has accumulated in foil, and season with the reserved pepper rub. Strain the sauce and serve immediately with the sliced filet. (The Herbal Palate)

**Provencal Thyme Liqueur**

2/3 cup dried thyme
1 liter vodka
3/4 cup sugar
3/8 cup water
1 branch fresh thyme

Combine thyme and vodka in a clean glass jar or bottle. Cover and let stand in a cool, dark place for 6 weeks, giving the mixture a shake every few days. Combine sugar and water in a small saucepan. Boil until sugar has completely dissolved. Let cool. Strain vodka mixture through a coffee filter into a clean jar or bottle with an airtight lid. Sweeten to taste with the sugar syrup. Add fresh thyme as a garnish in the bottle or jar, if desired. Cover and age at least 2 weeks. Store in a cool, dark place for up to 1 year. (Herb Companion, Aug/Sept 2003)

**Wild mushroom tart with gruyère:**

1 sheet frozen all-butter puff pastry
2 large egg yolks
1 1/2 pounds wild mushrooms, cleaned
3 tablespoons olive oil
1 clove garlic, chopped
1 teaspoon thyme, chopped
3/4 cup fresh ricotta
2 tablespoons creme fraiche
1/2 pound Gruyère, sliced
1 bunch scallions, chopped
salt and pepper, to taste

Mixed herbs (parsley, tarragon, chervil & chives), cleaned Balsamic glaze or aged-balsamic. **For the wild mushroom tart:**

Preheat the oven to 400’F. Roll the puff pastry to 1/8 inch thickness on a floured surface. Cut out shapes or make a large rectangular tart. Place on a baking tray. Prick the dough with a fork. Mix an egg yolk with 1 teaspoon water and brush the edges using a pastry brush. Return to the freezer until ready to use. Tear the mushrooms into pieces. Heat the olive oil in a large saute pan and add the mushrooms (you can do this in batches). Add the garlic, scallions and half the thyme and saute until the mushrooms are tender and a little crispy. Season with salt and pepper. Reserve. Mix the ricotta and the creme fraîche with the egg yolk. Season with salt and pepper. Spread the ricotta mixture on the puff pastry leaving a half an inch border. Arrange slices of gruyère on top and then the mushrooms. Bake for 25 minutes. Or until bubbly in the center with a golden crust around the edges. **To serve:** Mix the herbs in a
small bowl and toss with a squeeze of lemon and a touch of olive oil. Season with salt and pepper. Cut the tart into pieces (if you’re making a large one). Drizzle the balsamic reduction on the plate, place the wild mushroom tarts with gruyere on top and finish with the little herb salad.

**Cauliflower Soup with White Truffle Oil**
Makes 6 servings
2 tablespoons unsalted butter
1 1/2 cups sliced yellow onion, about 1 medium
2 teaspoons chopped fresh thyme
1 pound white cauliflower florets
2 cups vegetable stock
1 cup heavy cream
1 teaspoon kosher salt
1/4 teaspoon freshly ground pepper
White truffle oil (optional)

Melt butter in a medium stockpot over medium low heat. Add the onion and cook, stirring occasionally, for 10 minutes or until the onion is softened and translucent. Add the thyme and cook for a minute more. Add the cauliflower and stir to coat with the onions and butter. Cook for another 3 minutes. Add stock and bring the mixture to a boil; reduce the heat to medium low and simmer for 20 minutes. Add the cream and cook for an additional 15 minutes or until the cauliflower is tender and the mixture is slightly reduced. Transfer the cauliflower mixture to a blender and process until puréed. Season the soup with salt and pepper. Ladle 3/4 cup of the soup into six bowls and drizzle each serving with 1 to 2 drops of the truffle oil, if using. Serve immediately.

**Oven-Dried Cherry Tomatoes**
Makes one quart of dried tomatoes

1 gallon boiling water
4 quarts assorted cherry tomatoes
2 tablespoons fresh thyme, finely chopped
1 teaspoon fresh rosemary, finely chopped
1 tablespoon kosher salt
1 teaspoon sugar
2 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil

Dip the tomatoes in the boiling water for about 30 seconds. Immediately put them into a bowl of ice water. Once all the tomatoes have been blanched, peel them carefully. Any broken tomatoes will not dry properly. Preheat oven to 200°F. Drain the tomatoes and then toss them with the chopped herbs, salt, sugar, and olive oil. Place a cooling rack on a cookie sheet, and spray it well with nonstick spray. Place the tomatoes on the rack so that they are not touching each other. Place the tray in the oven. Let the tomatoes dry for about 4 hours. Check them every hour or so. Drying times will differ from oven to oven. The tomatoes are done when they have shrunk to half their original size and have a "raisiny" appearance. If the tomatoes are still not done after 4 hours, let them continue to cook. Just be careful, as they can quickly go from "dried" to "burned" after they have shrunken by half. To store them, place the cool tomatoes in an airtight container in the refrigerator.

**Wild Mushroom Risotto With Herbs**
Serves 4 Ready In: 30-60 minutes
1 cup Arborio Rice
1/4 cup shallots, finely chopped or minced
1 head garlic, minced
1/2 ounce rosemary, cleaned and chopped
1/2 ounce thyme, cleaned and chopped
1/4 bunch parsley, cleaned and chopped
1/4 ounce basil, cleaned, RESERVING 1 basil top for garnish
1 quart mushroom stock, warm
1 1/2 pound Portobello mushroom*
1/4 pound dried wild mushroom mix, hydrated in a little warm mushroom stock
1/4 quart heavy cream
1/2 pound butter; room temperature, diced
3 ounces Parmesan cheese, grated
3 ounces Port wine
1 ounce olive oil
1 pinch kosher salt
1 pinch white pepper
* season, rub garlic and shallots on mushroom and roast off until tender

Take olive oil and warm up in pot, sweat off shallots and garlic until translucent
and add rice. Sweat rice until it becomes pearl white in color, start stirring in warm mushroom essences with wooden spoon. Continue this process for roughly 17 minutes, until rice becomes tender to the tooth. Slowly add in heavy cream and diced butter. Add fresh herbs and finish off with cheese. Stirring constantly until well incorporated, season. Place sliced roasted Portobello mushroom on top and garnish with basil leaves.

**Marinated Grilled Mountain Quail**

8 each Quail, cleaned and split lengthwise

\[ \frac{1}{4} \text{ cup Olive Oil} \]

4 cloves Garlic, minced

1 each Lemon, juiced

1 Tbsp. Fresh Thyme, minced

2 Tbsp. Fresh Sage, minced

1 Tbsp. Fresh Rosemary

1 Tbsp. Dijon Mustard

\[ \frac{1}{2} \text{ cup Dry White Wine} \]

2 tsp. Salt

1 tsp. Black Pepper, freshly ground

Baste and grill over hot coals. Note: The birds may be basted with the marinade for the first several minutes if desired, after which, basting with the marinade should be avoided. This is to prevent possible contamination from the previously marinated meat.

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