

The Lemon Flavored/Scented Herb Gang

OBJECTIVES:

EDUCATIONAL

Lemon flavored and lemon scented herbs are relatively easy to grow. They can be used as a seasoning or garnish in both salads and main dishes. The leaves are usually torn rather than chopped. The leaves and some of the flowers can be steeped in water for teas or blended into oils and vinegars. All can be preserved for later use. (Albert, 2018).

ACTIVITY

Participants will pot a lemon scented or lemon flavored herb (or herbs) for their personal enjoyment.

TAKE AWAY

Participants will increase their knowledge of the lemon flavored/scented herbs: their culinary uses, leaf shape and size, plant size, growing requirements, and when best to harvest the leaves/flowers for optimal flavor.

MATERIALS:

10 decorative pots [The Dollar Store has a variety of pots available for \$1 each.]

Potting soil adequate for pots

Lemon flavored and/or scented herbs [**WARNING:** Lemon sage is neither lemon-scented nor lemon-flavored.]

DURING CLASS:

Leader will introduce self and Master Gardeners present. MGs should introduce themselves and give a very brief summary of their years as a MG and why they became a MG. A short presentation about the lemon scented and/or lemon flavored herbs being used for the class should be done.

Participants will be asked to state their names and describe their interests in plants, especially herbs, and if they enjoy the different smells of various plants.

LEMON CATNIP [NEPETA CATARIA SSP. CITRIODORA]



Description: Light, pleasant lemon scent; medium to light green triangular-shaped leaves with serrated edges and a light down.

Grow: Prefers full sun, will tolerate partial shade. Will grow in most soils as long as it is not waterlogged. Grows up to 4' tall. **INVASIVE.**

Kitchen use: As a medicinal herb, a cup of Lemon Catnip tea will make a great sleeping aid as well as help in digestion. (Also repels mosquitoes.)

LEMONGRASS [CYMBOPOGON CITRATUS]



Description: Strong lemon scent; 1" wide, long, flat leaves. Grows in clumps, about 3' in all directions.

Grow: Grows in full sun, well-drained moisture-retentive soil. Can survive mild winters.

Kitchen use: Use bottom 1/3 of stem & peel off outer layer. Pound inner stem or cut into very thin pieces. Use in Thai & Vietnamese dishes.

LEMON VERBENA [ALOYSIA TRIPHYLLA]



Description: Strong, citrus scent & flavor. Long, pointed, toothed leaves with central vein, arranged in threes: stems are ridged, round green in first season, red in second season.

Grow: Plant in full sun in sandy, moist, well-drained soil. Grows in alkaline, poor soil. Protect from frost.

Kitchen use: Leaves can be picked at any time, but best when flowers begin to bloom. Use fresh leaves to flavor oil & vinegar. Steep leaves in hot water for tea. Finely chopped leaves can be used to flavor drinks, puddings, jelly, cakes & ice cream.

LEMON BALM [MELISSA OFFICINALIS]



Description: Lemon-scented, hairy, strong-veined, toothed, oval and light green leaves; pale yellow flower blooms in clusters, matures to white to pale blue.

Grow: Grow in full sun, with midday shade. Needs well-drained, moisture-retentive soil. Allow 2' in all directions when planting. Not hardy below 20EF.

Kitchen use: Harvest when flowers first begin to open for best flavor. Use fresh leaves finely chopped in salads, white sauces for fish, mayonnaise, sauerkraut, poultry, & pork. Add to fruit salads, jellies, custards, fruit drinks, and wine. Steep in hot water to make Melissa tea.

LEMON THYME [THYMUS X CITRIDORUS]



Description: Lemon scented bright green leaves.

Grow: Grow in full sun. Needs well-drained , slightly alkaline soil; not too much organic matter. Grows 1' in all directions. Protect in winter; can grow indoors.

Kitchen use: Harvest when in bloom for best flavor. Use in place of lemon or lemon flavoring in any recipe. Use fresh for best lemon flavor. Add to chicken, fish, hot vegetables, fruit salads & jams.

LEMON BASIL [OCIMUM BASILICUM]



Description: Lemon-scented green, oval, pucker-ed leaves; white flower blooms.

Grow: Grow in full sun or partial shade. Needs well-drained, moisture-retentive soil. Avoid overwatering! Grows well in containers and indoors.

Kitchen use: Best flavor when picked young. Tear leaves, do not chop. Use in pesto sauce and to flavor fish & fowl. Can be used to flavor vinegars.

LEMON MINT [MENTHA X AQUATICA >CITRATA=]



Description: Smooth, lemon-scented, medium green leaves.

Grow: Grow in full sun or light shade. Needs well-drained, compost-rich soil. Roots are INVASIVE. Can grow indoors. Remove flowering stems to avoid cross-pollination with other mint species.

Kitchen use: Pick leaves before flowering for best flavor. Steep in teas. Use for mint sauce and vinegars; add fresh leaves to new potatoes, fruit salads, drinks; use in soups & stuffings.

LEMON BERGAMOT [MONARDA CITRIODORA]



Description: Toothed, oval leaves with dark reddish veining; squared stems. Flowers have tight head with tubular scarlet blooms.

Grow: Plant in full sun or partial shade. Needs well-drained, moisture retentive soil, rich in organic matter. NOT suitable to grow indoors.

Kitchen use: Pick leaves when flowers form; pick flowers when open. Flowers can be sprinkled sparingly in salads. Steep leaves in hot water for tea. Fresh leaf added to China tea gives Earl Grey flavor. Use in lemonade and wine.

BLOODY SORREL [RUMEX SANGUINEUS]



Description: Spring green elongated leaves with deep red veins.

Grow: Plant in full sun to partial shade. Needs rich moisture-retentive soil; will tolerate boggy conditions.

Kitchen use: The young leaves are suitable for salads for taste and decoration; also flavorful in soups and stews. The taste especially compliments fish and eggs. Older leaves tend to get bitter, but can be chopped, sautéd., and added to milk for flavorful cream sauce.

FRENCH SORREL [RUMEX SCUTATUS]



Description: Large, green shield-shaped leaves with distinct lemon flavor.

Grow: Plant in full sun; will tolerate limited shade. Prefers rich, damp, well-drained soil. Suitable for indoor cultivation. Can achieve 18" height.

Kitchen use: Can be used in mixed salads, sauces, soups, chess dishes and pork and fish dishes. Because of the high acidity levels in sorrel, cooking with it may discolor some metallic pots.

LEMON SAGE [SALVIA ELEGANS >lemon=]



It is called Alemon@ due to the yellow color of its leaves. It has no lemon taste and no lemon scent; the scent is pineapple.

Sources:

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