

# SPICE OF THE MONTH CLUB

October 2022

## Join us to discuss

*Tuesday, 10/25 / 6:00pm / Conference Room*

Spend the month cooking with your spice and join us to discuss your opinions, experiences, and recipes!



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## This month's spice: Rosemary

### History

Rosemary is native to the Mediterranean region. It gets its botanical name from *ros* ("dew") and *marinus* ("sea"), in reference to the areas around the Mediterranean Sea where it grows so abundantly.

Rosemary thrives in sandy, well-drained soils and in misty air filled with sea spray. An old legend states that the rosemary bush will never grow taller than the height of Jesus, that is, 6 feet (2m).

### Use

The astringent fresh, savory taste of rosemary complements starchy foods, and it is delicious in dumplings, breads, and cookies. It also counters the richness of meats such as pork, lamb, and duck. The Italians love rosemary. In Italy, butchers often place a complimentary sprig of fresh rosemary in the package with cuts of lamb. Rosemary's powerful flavor does not overpower a dish when it is matched with other strong ingredients, such as garlic and wine. A sprig of fresh rosemary will enhance most casseroles. Vegetables such as zucchini, eggplant, Brussels sprouts, and cabbage are all enlivened by the fresh, resinous taste of rosemary.



# Rosemary and Lemon Polenta Shortbread

This is a delightful cookie for any occasion. Rosemary and lemon have a long history in savory dishes, but they work equally well in this buttery shortbread.

Makes about  
45 cookies

**Preparation time:**  
35 minutes, including  
chilling

**Cooking time:**  
10 minutes

## Tips

The dough can be rolled into a sausage shape and frozen for up to 3 months. To use, simply cut into  $\frac{1}{8}$ -inch (3 mm) slices and bake as directed in Step 4, adding an extra 5 minutes to the cooking time.

You can substitute 1 tsp (5 mL) dried ground rosemary or 1 tbsp (15 mL) dried chopped rosemary for the fresh rosemary.

Medium cornmeal (polenta) is a fine grain that gives a little texture and crunch to this cookie.

- 2 baking sheets, lined with parchment paper
- Cookie cutters

7 tbsp	unsalted butter, softened	105 mL
$\frac{1}{4}$ cup	granulated sugar	60 mL
1	large egg, beaten	1
	Finely grated zest of 1 lemon	
1 tbsp	finely chopped fresh rosemary leaves	15 mL
$2\frac{1}{2}$ cups	all-purpose flour	625 mL
$\frac{1}{3}$ cup	medium cornmeal (see Tips, left)	75 mL

1. In a large bowl, using an electric mixer at high speed, beat butter and sugar until pale and fluffy. Add egg, lemon zest and rosemary; beat until just combined. Stir in flour and cornmeal until mixture comes together. Turn out onto a lightly floured surface and knead gently until smooth. Using your hands, form into two disks and cover with plastic wrap. Refrigerate for 30 minutes or until firm.
2. Preheat oven to 350°F (180°C).
3. On a lightly floured work surface, roll out dough to  $\frac{1}{8}$  inch (3 mm) thick. Cut out shapes using cookie cutters and arrange on prepared sheets.
4. Bake in preheated oven for 10 minutes or until lightly golden. Carefully transfer to a wire rack to cool completely. Store in an airtight container for up to 2 weeks.

## Variation

Substitute an equal amount of orange zest for the lemon zest.

# Leg of Lamb Stuffed with Olives, Grapes and Rosemary

I find lamb and rosemary to be one of the most heavenly pairings; it's no wonder that the combination is a traditional Greek favorite. The olives and grapes give a sweet and salty fruitiness to this stuffing, and I like to imagine all these ingredients coming together in nature before they appear on the plate. It makes a satisfying Sunday dinner served with roasted rosemary potatoes.

**Makes 4 to 6 servings**

**Preparation time:**

15 minutes

**Cooking time:** 2 hours

**Tips**

Ask your butcher to remove the bone from the lamb. This is often referred to as "butterflying."

If you feel like enjoying lamb but don't want to go to the trouble of making a large roast, try one of my father's favorites: sprinkle powdered rosemary over lamb chops before barbecuing.

- 13- by 9-inch (33 by 23 cm) metal baking pan
- Ovenproof string
- Meat thermometer, optional
- Preheat oven to 425°F (220°C)

1	egg, beaten	1
1	red onion, chopped	1
1 cup	fresh whole-wheat bread crumbs	250 mL
1 cup	red grapes, quartered	250 mL
1/2 cup	kalamata olives, pitted	125 mL
1/2 cup	cooked chickpeas, roughly mashed	125 mL
2 tsp	finely chopped fresh rosemary	10 mL
1/2 tsp	ground cumin seed	2 mL
	Sea salt and freshly ground black pepper	
1	boneless leg of lamb (4 lbs/2 kg), in one piece	1
	Olive oil	

1. In a bowl, combine egg, onion, bread crumbs, grapes, olives, chickpeas, rosemary and cumin. Mix well and season with salt and pepper to taste.
2. On a clean work surface, lay lamb out flat, cut side up. Spoon stuffing evenly over meat, then carefully roll up from one side to the other. Secure roll with several pieces of ovenproof string tied around the circumference, making sure to encase stuffing well. Rub oil all over lamb, season well with salt and pepper, and transfer to baking pan. Roast in preheated oven for 20 minutes, then reduce heat to 375°F (190°C) and roast for 1 hour and 20 minutes, until a meat thermometer inserted in the thickest part of the meat registers 150°F (65°C) for medium rare (the optimum way to serve roast lamb). Roast longer if desired. Remove from oven and set aside for 10 minutes to rest before carving.

# Rosemary Roasted Potatoes



*Yields 3-4 servings.*

## INGREDIENTS:

1 1/2 pounds small red or white-skinned potatoes (or a mixture)

1/8 cup good olive oil

3/4 teaspoon kosher salt

1/2 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper

1 tablespoons minced garlic (3 cloves)

2 tablespoons minced fresh rosemary leaves

## STEPS:

1. Preheat the oven to 400 degrees F.
2. Cut the potatoes in half or quarters and place in a bowl with the olive oil, salt, pepper, garlic and rosemary; toss until the potatoes are well coated. Dump the potatoes on a baking sheet and spread out into 1 layer; roast in the oven for at least 1 hour, or until browned and crisp. Flip twice with a spatula during cooking to ensure even browning.
3. Remove the potatoes from the oven, season to taste, and serve.