

# SPICE OF THE MONTH CLUB

March 2024



## Join us to discuss

*Tuesday, 3/26 / 6:00pm / Annex*

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: Dried Thyme

### History

Thyme is indigenous to the Mediterranean. The Egyptians and the ancient Greeks both appreciated its antiseptic properties. The name *thyme* derives from the Greek *thymon*, meaning “to fumigate.” The ancient Romans found the palate-pleasing taste of thyme a useful complement to fatty cheeses, and they also used it to flavor alcoholic beverages. One legend had it that thyme was included among the hay used to make a bed for the Virgin Mary and Jesus. Thyme was introduced to England by the Romans and was common there in the Middle Ages. By the 16th century thyme had become naturalized in England, although the flavor English thyme never achieved the pungency of thyme grown in hot Mediterranean climates.

### Use

It would be an overstatement to say that it is easier to list the recipes thyme is not used in than those where it is. However, in Western and Middle Eastern cuisine, thyme finds its way into many traditional dishes. Its distinctive savory pungency brings an agreeable depth of flavor to soups, stews, casseroles, and almost any dish containing meat.



# Flash-Marinated Skirt Steaks with Balsamic, Black Pepper, and Thyme

*Total prep and cook time: 45 minutes*

*Yields 4-6 servings*

## INGREDIENTS:

- 2 pounds outside skirt steak, 3 to 4 inches wide and ½ to 1 inch thick, trimmed
- 3 tablespoons balsamic vinegar
- 3 tablespoons soy sauce
- 1½ tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil
- 3 garlic cloves, minced
- 1 tablespoon honey
- 3 tablespoon chopped fresh thyme, divided
- 2 teaspoons pepper
- ¼ teaspoon table salt
- 2 tablespoons vegetable oil, divided



## STEPS:

1. Slice steak with grain into 3- to 4-inch-long steaks. Whisk vinegar, soy sauce, olive oil, garlic, honey, 2 tablespoons thyme, pepper, and salt together in large bowl. Transfer 2 tablespoons marinade to second bowl; set aside. Place steaks in first bowl with marinade and toss to coat. Let sit at room temperature for 10 minutes. Remove steaks from bowl, pat dry with paper towels, and place on plate; discard marinade.
2. Set wire rack in rimmed baking sheet. Heat 1 tablespoon vegetable oil in 12-inch nonstick skillet over medium-high heat until shimmering. Add half of steaks and cook until browned on both sides, about 2 minutes per side.
3. Continue to cook, flipping steaks about every 30 seconds, until steaks are well browned and register 130 to 135 degrees, 2 to 4 minutes longer. Transfer steaks to prepared rack, tent with aluminum foil, and let rest for at least 5 minutes. Wipe skillet clean and repeat with remaining 1 tablespoon vegetable oil and steaks.
4. Slice steaks thin against grain and transfer to platter. Pour any accumulated juices from cutting board and sheet over steaks. Drizzle with reserved marinade and sprinkle with remaining 1 tablespoon thyme. Serve.

# Chicken Vesuvio for Two

*Total prep and cook time: 55 minutes*

*Yields 2 servings*

## INGREDIENTS:

4 (5- to 7-ounce) bone-in chicken thighs, trimmed

Kosher salt and pepper

12 ounces Yukon Gold potato, 2 to 3 inches in diameter, halved crosswise

1 tablespoon vegetable oil

7 garlic cloves, peeled (1 whole, 6 halved lengthwise)

1½ teaspoons lemon juice

¾ teaspoon dried oregano

¼ teaspoon dried thyme

¾ cup dry white wine

1 tablespoon minced fresh parsley

## ADVICE:

Trim all the skin from the underside of the chicken thighs, but leave the skin on top intact. To ensure that all the potatoes fit in the skillet, halve them crosswise to minimize their surface area. Combining the garlic with lemon juice in step 1 makes the garlic taste less harsh, but only if the lemon juice is added immediately after the garlic is minced.

## STEPS:

1. Adjust oven rack to upper-middle position and heat oven to 450 degrees. Pat chicken dry with paper towels and sprinkle on both sides with ¾ teaspoon salt and ¼ teaspoon pepper. Toss potatoes with 1½ teaspoons oil and ½ teaspoon salt. Mince whole garlic clove and immediately combine with lemon juice in small bowl; set aside.

## STEPS (continued):

2. Heat remaining  $1\frac{1}{2}$  teaspoons oil in 12-inch oven-safe skillet over medium-high heat until shimmering. Place chicken, skin side down, in single layer in skillet and cook, without moving it, until chicken has rendered about 2 tablespoons of fat, about 2 minutes. Place potatoes cut side down in chicken fat, arranging so that cut sides are in complete contact with surface of skillet. Sprinkle chicken and potatoes with oregano and thyme. Continue to cook until chicken and potatoes are deeply browned and crisp, 6 to 8 minutes longer, moving chicken and potatoes to ensure even browning and flipping pieces when fully browned. When all pieces have been flipped, tuck halved garlic cloves among chicken and potatoes. Remove skillet from heat and pour wine into skillet (do not pour over chicken or potatoes). Return pan to heat and bring to boil. Transfer skillet to oven and roast until potatoes are tender when pierced with tip of paring knife and chicken registers 185 to 190 degrees, 15 to 20 minutes.

3. Transfer chicken and potatoes to deep platter, browned sides up. Place skillet over medium heat (handle will be hot) and stir to incorporate any browned bits. Using slotted spoon, transfer garlic cloves to cutting board. Chop coarse, then mash to smooth paste with side of knife. Whisk garlic paste into sauce. Continue to cook until sauce coats back of spoon, 2 to 3 minutes longer. Remove from heat and whisk in reserved lemon juice mixture and  $1\frac{1}{2}$  teaspoons parsley. Pour sauce around chicken and potatoes. Sprinkle with remaining  $1\frac{1}{2}$  teaspoons parsley and serve.

