

# Fluvanna County Public Library

## Spice of the Month Club

### Marjoram

**Flavor Profile: Warm, slightly sharp and bitterish with sweet, subtle spiciness**

Marjoram is an aromatic herb in the mint family that has been cultivated for thousands of years. In Greek mythology, marjoram was grown by the goddess Aphrodite. The plant has small, oval-shaped leaves and white or pink flowers. It is used to flavor food, and it has a slightly sweet taste. It is also used medicinally to treat a number of different issues.

Marjoram is native to Mediterranean, North Africa, and western Asia, but it is now grown in many parts of the world, it is often called sweet marjoram to distinguish it from oregano varieties like wild marjoram and pot marjoram, aka Turkish oregano. The genus *Origanum*, whose name comes from Greek *Origanon* (brightness or joy of the mountains), contains around 40 species, only one of which is considered true marjoram – most of the others are called oregano.

It is important to know the difference between marjoram and oregano if you are cooking a dish with these herbs. They are not interchangeable because marjoram has a milder taste, whereas oregano's flavor can be too strong for certain dishes. Marjoram will have leaves that look like flat blades of grass, while oregano's leaves are more pointy. Marjoram is also known as "sweet marjoram: while oregano is sometimes called "wild marjoram."

Dried marjoram is a spice made from the leaves of the plant, a close relative of oregano. It's available both whole and ground and has a sweet, slightly minty flavor that goes well with lamb, pork, chicken, and fish. It is also used in some Italian dishes such as pizza and pasta sauce.

When adding dried marjoram to a dish, it's best to do so towards the end of cooking so that the flavor doesn't have a chance to dissipate. If you're using ground marjoram, ¼ tsp. is typically enough for most recipes. For whole leaves, you'll want to use about ½ tsp.

#### How to Use:

- Marjoram leaves and flowers are used to make marjoram oil, which is used in aromatherapy.
- The oil is also used in some cosmetics and skincare products.
- The herb is available fresh, dried, or as a powder. It can be found in the spice aisle of most supermarkets.
- When using the herb, be careful not to overdo it, as the herb can have a strong flavor. A little goes a long way!

#### Health Benefits

Marjoram is popular in traditional alternative medicine due to its anti-inflammatory, antioxidant, and antimicrobial properties. The fresh or dried leaves can be brewed as a tea, or marjoram essential oil can be extracted from the plant and may help to treat colds, coughs, and asthma, to aid digestion, help regulate

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menstrual cycles, increase milk supply during breastfeeding, and decrease blood pressure. Always check with your healthcare provider before using herbs medicinally.

Vitamins A and C, as well as minerals like iron and calcium, are abundant in this herb. It also includes antioxidants, which can protect the body from damage caused by free radicals.

## Marjoram Tea

- 1 tsp. of fresh or dried marjoram
- 8 oz. of boiling water
- Honey (optional)

To make the tea, simply add the marjoram to a cup of boiling water and let it steep for 5 minutes. If you want, you can add a bit of honey to sweeten the tea. Once it's finished steeping, strain the tea and enjoy!



<https://www.thespruceeats.com/greek-marjoram-tea-1705055>

## Mediterranean Herb Crusted Tilapia

- 1 tsp. garlic, minced
- 1 tsp. marjoram leaves
- ¾ tsp. ground mustard
- ¾ tsp. basil leaves
- ¾ tsp. oregano leaves
- ½ tsp. ground black pepper
- 6 tilapia or flounder fillets (about 1 ½ pounds)
- ½ tsp. salt
- 1/3 cup butter, melted
- 1 ½ cups chopped fresh spinach leaves
- 3/4 cup panko bread crumbs
- 1/3 cup finely chopped red bell pepper
- 3 Tablespoons shredded Parmesan cheese



1. Preheat oven to 400F. Place fish on foil-lined shallow baking pan. Sprinkle with salt. Mix butter and all of the spices in medium bowl. Brush fish with 1 tablespoon of the seasoned butter.
2. Stir spinach, panko, bell pepper and Parmesan cheese into remaining seasoned butter. Divide mixture evenly among fish fillets, pressing lightly so mixture adheres to top of fish.
3. Bake 15 minutes or until fish flakes easily with a fork.

<https://www.mccormick.com/recipes/main-dishes/mediterranean-herb-crusted-tilapia>

## Basque Salad

- 1 green bell pepper, thinly sliced
- 1 red bell pepper, thinly sliced
- 1 yellow bell pepper, thinly sliced



- 3 medium fresh tomatoes, cored, quartered, and sliced as thin as possible
- 1 large cucumber, peeled, seeded and thinly sliced
- 1 Spanish onion, peeled, but in half, and thinly sliced

#### Dressing

- 1/3 cup red wine vinegar
- ¾ cup extra-virgin olive oil
- 1 tsp. salt
- ½ tsp. freshly ground black pepper
- 1 tsp. white sugar
- ¼ tsp. dried oregano
- ¼ tsp. dried basil
- ¼ tsp. dried marjoram
- Chopped fresh parsley

#### Instructions

1. In a large bowl, toss together the green, red, and yellow peppers with the tomatoes, cucumber, and onion.
2. In a medium bowl, whisk together the vinegar and olive oil. Season with salt, pepper, and sugar. Whisk in oregano, basil, and marjoram. Continue whisking until ingredients are well blended and the oil and vinegar are emulsified.
3. Pour dressing over vegetables, and toss gently with a wooden spoon. Cover, and marinate at room temperature for 1 to 2 hours, stirring frequently. Refrigerate until 1 hours before serving; then remove from the refrigerator, and let sit at room temperature. Garnish with chopped parsley.

<https://www.allrecipes.com/recipe/63250/basque-salad/>

## Maple-Mustard Chicken Thighs

- 4 large bone-in chicken thighs, skins removed (about 1 ½ pounds)
- 2 Tablespoons grainy French mustard
- 2 Tablespoons Dijon mustard
- 1 clove minced garlic
- ½ tsp. dried marjoram
- 2 Tablespoons maple syrup



#### Instructions

1. Preheat oven to 375F.
2. Rinse chicken and pat dry. Combine mustard, garlic, marjoram, and maple syrup in a small bowl. Spread about 1 ½ tablespoons mustard mixture evenly on top of each chicken thigh, being careful to cover as much of the surface as possible to form a “crust.”
3. Arrange chicken in a glass baking dish. Bake for 45-60 minutes, or until mustard mixture has formed a crust and is slightly hardened, and juices run clear when the chicken is pierced.

<https://www.foodnetwork.com/recipes/ellie-krieger/maple-mustard-chicken-thighs-recipe-1949864>

## Marjoram Roasted Potatoes

- 2 pounds potatoes
- 3 Tablespoons canola oil
- ¾ tsp. dried marjoram
- ½ tsp. salt
- Pepper to taste

1. Preheat oven to 475F. Peel 2 pounds baking potatoes. Halve lengthwise; slice into 1/2 –inch-thick half-moons.
2. On a nonstick baking sheet (or baking sheet coated with cooking spray), toss potatoes with 3 tablespoons canola oil, ¾ tsp. dried marjoram, ½ tsp. salt, and a pinch of pepper. Spread potatoes in a single layer.
3. Bake until partially browned, about 15 minutes. Flip potatoes, and cook until evenly browned, about 10 minutes.

<https://www.marthastewart.com/1154116/marjoram-roasted-potatoes>

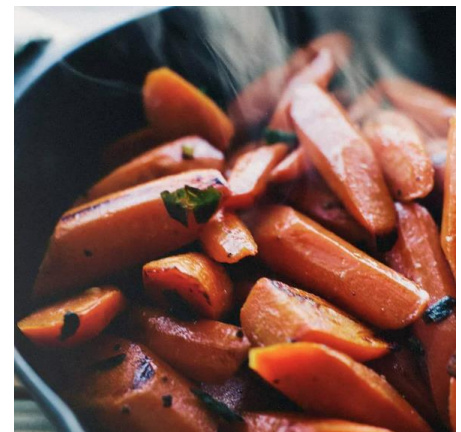


## Sautéed Carrots with Lemon and Marjoram

- 3 Tablespoons olive oil
- 1 large clove garlic, minced
- 2 pounds carrots (about 16), cut diagonally into ½-inch slices
- 1 tsp. sugar
- ½ tsp. salt
- ¼ tsp. fresh-ground black pepper
- 1 tsp. dried marjoram
- 4 tsp. lemon juice

1. In a medium nonstick frying pan, heat 1 ½ tablespoons of the oil over moderately low heat. Add the garlic, carrots, sugar, ¼ tsp. of the salt, the pepper, and the dried marjoram. Cook, covered, stirring occasionally, for 5 minutes.
2. Uncover the pan. Raise the heat to moderate and cook, stirring frequently, until the carrots are very tender and beginning to brown, about 8 minutes longer.
3. Remove the pan from the heat. Stir in the remaining 1 ½ tablespoons oil and ¼ tsp. salt, the lemon juice, and the marjoram.

<https://www.foodandwine.com/recipes/sauteed-carrots-lemon-and-marjoram>



## Butternut Squash Chicken Street Tacos

- 1 pound skinless chicken thighs
- 1 pound butternut squash, cubed
- 1 yellow onion, sliced
- ½ cup chicken stock
- 2 Tablespoons ground paprika
- 4 cloves garlic, crushed
- 2 ½ tsp. salt





- ½ tsp. dried marjoram
- 2 tsp. onion powder
- 1 tsp. garlic powder
- 1 tsp. dried oregano
- 1 tsp. black pepper
- 1 (15 ounce) can diced tomatoes in juice

1. Preheat oven to 300F.
2. Combine chicken thighs, butternut squash, onion, chicken stock, paprika, garlic, salt, marjoram, onion powder, garlic powder, oregano, and pepper in an enamel cast iron Dutch oven. Pour tomatoes on top.
3. Bake, covered, in the preheated oven until chicken is tender, about 1 hours 30 minutes. Uncover and continue baking until most of the butternut squash has melted into the sauce, about 30 minutes more. Shred chicken with 2 forks.
4. NOTE for Serving – you can add avocado, cheese, rice, salsa, sour cream, etc.
5. NOTE: You can also make this in a slow cooker – cook on low for 6-7 hours.

<https://www.allrecipes.com/recipe/255595/butternut-squash-chicken-street-tacos/>

## Romaine Roasted Corn

- 6 Tablespoons butter ,softened
- 1 tsp. dried rosemary, crushed
- ½ tsp. dried marjoram
- 6 medium ears sweet corn, husks removed
- 1 bunch romaine
- Salt and pepper to taste

1. In a small bowl, beat the butter, rosemary, and marjoram until blended, spread over corn. Wrap each ear in two to three romaine leaves.
2. Place in a 13 x 9 baking pan. Cover and bake at 450F for 30-35 minutes or until corn is tender. Discard romaine before serving. Sprinkle corn with salt and pepper.

<https://www.tasteofhome.com/recipes/romaine-roasted-corn/>



## Sautéed Zucchini

- 2 Tablespoons olive oil
- 4 medium zucchini, thinly sliced
- 2 cloves garlic, finely chopped
- 1 tsp. dried marjoram
- Salt and pepper to taste

Heat half the oil in a large skillet over medium-high heat. Add half the zucchini and cook, stirring only occasionally, until golden brown, 10-12 minutes. Transfer the cooked zucchini to a plate. Repeat with the remaining oil and zucchini. Return the first batch to the skillet. Stir in the garlic, marjoram, ½ tsp. salt, and ¼ tsp. pepper and cook, stirring, for 2 minutes.

<https://www.myrecipes.com>



## Homemade Pizza Sauce

- 2 Tablespoons olive oil
- 1 garlic clove (or to taste)
- 1 (28 ounce) can organic tomato puree
- 1 tsp. of marjoram
- 1 tsp. of dried basil
- Sea salt and pepper to taste

1. Over medium heat, heat the oil in a pan until hot. Add all ingredients, cover and bring to a boil. Uncover, lower heat and allow to simmer for 30 minutes. The smell is great.
2. Leftovers store in the fridge in a glass jar.

<https://kellythekitchenkop.com/homemade-pizza-sauce-recipe-from/>



## Tomato Salad of Tiny Tomatoes (4-6 servings)

- 1 pint basket of small tomatoes – cherry, red or golden currant tomatoes, yellow pear
- 1 shallot, finely diced
- Salt and freshly ground pepper, to taste
- 1 Tablespoon extra-virgin olive oil
- ½ tsp. marjoram
- Few drops balsamic vinegar, to taste

Rinse the tomatoes, remove the stems, and cut them into halves or quarters.

Leave tiny currant tomatoes whole. Put in a bowl with shallot, season with a pinch of salt and freshly ground pepper, then toss with the olive oil and marjoram. Taste the salad and add a little balsamic vinegar if needed or desired.

<https://www.foodnetwork.com/recipes/tomato-salad-of-tiny-tomatoes-recipe-2009336>



## Foil-Packet Steak and Asparagus (4 servings)

- 1 bunch asparagus, trimmed and cut into 1 ½ inch pieces
  - 2 Tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil
  - 1 tsp. dried marjoram
  - 2 cloves garlic, finely grated
  - Kosher salt
  - 1 ½ pounds skirt steak, cut into eight 4 inch-long pieces
  - 1 ½ tsp. cracked pepper
1. Preheat a grill to medium high. Lay out four 12 by 18 inch sheets of heavy-duty foil on a work surface. Combine the asparagus, olive oil, marjoram, garlic and a pinch of salt in a large bowl and toss.



2. Sprinkle the steak with a big pinch of salt and the pepper. Put 2 pieces of steak side by side in the center of each sheet of foil and top with the asparagus. Bring the 2 short ends of the foil together and fold twice; fold in the sides to seal.
3. Put the foil packets steak-side—down on the grill and cook, flipping halfway through until the steak is cooked to medium and the asparagus is tender, about 5 minutes.
4. NOTE: You can also make this in the oven – place foil packets on a baking sheet and bake in your oven at 425F for 20-25 minutes – the time depends on how thick your steak is sliced.

<https://www.foodnetwork.com/recipes/food-network-kitchen/foil-packet-steak-and-asparagus-5558495>

## Marjoram Butter Cookies (24 cookies)

- ½ cup (1 stick) butter
- 2 tsp. dried Marjoram
- ½ cup sugar
- 1/8 tsp. salt
- 2 large egg whites
- 2 cups flour



1. Preheat oven to 375F. Melt butter with marjoram in large saucepan on low heat. Remove from heat.
2. Stir in sugar and salt. Stir in egg whites, 1 at a time, until well blended after each addition. Stir in flour. Drop by rounded teaspoonfuls 2 inches apart onto 2 large greased baking sheets.
3. Bake, one baking sheet at a time, 8 to 10 minutes or until edges of cookies are browned (centers should remain pale). Immediately remove cookies to wire racks. Cool completely.

<https://www.mccormick.com/gourmet/recipes/dessert/marjoram-butter-cookies>

## Marjoram and Orange Pound Cake

- 1 ½ cup flour
- 1 tsp. baking powder
- ½ tsp. salt
- 2 tsp. dried marjoram
- ½ cup unsalted butter, softened
- ¾ cup sugar
- 2 large eggs
- ½ cup sour cream
- Zest of 1 orange
- 2 Tablespoons squeezed orange juice



1. Preheat oven to 350F. Grease a 9 x 5 loaf pan.
2. In a medium bowl, whisk together the flour, baking powder, salt, and chopped marjoram. Set aside.
3. Using an electric mixer, cream together the butter and sugar until light and fluffy.
4. Add the eggs, one at a time, beating well after each addition.
5. Add the dry ingredients to the wet ingredients in three additions, alternating with the sour cream and mixing well after each addition.
6. Stir in the orange zest and fresh orange juice.



7. Pour the batter into the prepared loaf pan and smooth out the top.
8. Bake for 60-70 minutes, or until a toothpick inserted into the center comes out clean.
9. Let the cake cool in the pan for 10 minutes before transferring to a wire rack to cool completely.

<https://recipes.net/herbs-and-spices/herbs/marjoram/marjoram-and-orange-pound-cake-recipe/>

## **Herbed Pasta with Feta Cheese (Serves 4 as a meal, 6 as a side dish)**

- 1 lb. vermicelli or angel hair pasta
- ¼ cup olive oil
- 1 Tablespoon parsley
- 1 tsp. cracked rosemary
- 1 tsp. rubbed sage
- 1 tsp. basil
- ½ tsp. marjoram
- 1 pint cherry tomatoes, quartered
- ½ cup black olives, coarsely chopped
- 1-2 Tablespoons balsamic or red wine vinegar
- 1 cups feta cheese, crumbled
- ¼ tsp. crushed red pepper flakes, optional



Bring a large pot of water to a boil. While the water for the pasta is heating, mix the olive oil and herbs together and let stand for 5 minutes. Wash, then quarter the tomatoes and chop the olives. Cook the pasta according to the package directions, which is usually 5 minutes or so. When the pasta is almost done cooking, add the vinegar, feta cheese, olives and tomatoes to the oil/herb mix and mix lightly. Drain the pasta and rinse briefly. Toss the pasta and sauce together. Sprinkle with crushed red pepper flakes, if desired. Serve with crusty French bread.

<https://www.penzey.com/shop/recipes/herbed-pasta-with-feta-cheese/>

### **Library Resources**

Essential Spices and Herbs by Christina Nichol – 641.6383 NIC

Healing Spices Handbook: Recipes for Natural Living by Barbara Brownell Grogan – 615.3 BRO

Herbs & Spices: The Cook's Reference by Jill Norman – 641.6383 NOR

Mastering Spice: Recipes and Techniques to Transform Your Everyday Cooking by Lior Lev Sercarz – 641.6383 SER

Milk Street: The New Rules by Christopher Kimball – 641.523 KIM

Milk Street: The World in a Skillet by Christopher Kimball -

The Science of Spice: Understand Flavour Connections and Revolutionize Your Cooking by Dr. Stuart Farrimond – 641.3383 FAR

Spiced by America's Test Kitchen – 641.6383 AME

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