



Rosemary for Remembrance DATES

Regular Meetings are held at the Mobile Botanical Gardens.

- **November:** NO MEETING
- **December 6, 5:30pm:** Christmas Soiree at MBG, No Program, Everyone Brings their Favorite Dish!

Thymely NOTES

[Click Here to find us on Facebook!](#) Read herb tips, recipes, and see pictures from our latest events.

- Please **volunteer** in the herb garden Saturdays after the monthly meetings.

Did You KNOW

5 Must Have Herbs For The Holidays (herbgardens.about.com)

There is nothing more powerful than scents. The smells of the holidays can be linked to the use of herbs in our cooking. Here are the top 5 herbs for the holidays.

1. Sage. Sage is the number one ingredient in delicious stuffing. Growing and using this flavorful herb is easy and an important addition to your seasonal cooking.

2. Rosemary. Rosemary makes a fabulous alternative to a mini pine tree. Try adding your rosemary plant to your mantle or as a festive centerpiece, with a string of mini lights. Rosemary is also delicious in any poultry or potato recipe. This herb is a holiday must have.



Rosemary by Richard Cooney

3. Mint. Nothing says the spirit of the holidays like fresh mint! Try making your next batch of cocoa with a sprig of mint in the milk. Delicious!

4. Parsley. Parsley goes much further than a breath freshener. Add this bright green herb to your holiday fare, as a cheerful decorative touch, add it for its light, refreshing flavor, and enjoy this easy to grow indoor specimen, as a festive focal point for your holiday decorating. Parsley is an herbal must have this season.

5. Oregano. Oregano adds a richness and depth to any dish it is included in. For festive cooking, oregano pairs well with meats and sauces, bringing a hint of summer flavor to your holiday meals.

10 Growing Tips & Uses For Chocolate Mint (organicauthority.com)

Mint and chocolate? Why would you ever grow any other mint variety again? Chocolate mint is as chocolatey, minty and scrumptious as it sounds. You can bake it in cakes, add sprigs to mojitos, and even use it in your beauty recipes. But more on that later. You won't regret picking up this herb at your local farmers market. When the sun warms its leaves, your garden will smell just like a peppermint patty. Yum! Get a plant now and enjoy chocolate mint goodness all summer long.

Tips for growing chocolate mint – Keep your chocolate mint in mint condition with a little gardening know-how.

1. Find the perfect location. Chocolate mint prefers cool temperatures. It needs sun, but doesn't like extreme heat. Look for the sweet spot for growing chocolate mint: An area that gets a few hours of morning sun, but stays shady in the afternoon.

2. Tend to it every so often. Chocolate mint doesn't need a lot of fuss. It mainly just likes its soil to stay moist. Water your chocolate mint regularly to keep it happy. Your plant will likely survive a few dry spells, but don't let it dry out too often. Other than that, just let it grow!

3. Contain it—or watch out. Chocolate mint grows like a weed. It spreads quickly, forming creeping underground root systems and taking over your garden. Keep your chocolate mint in containers to prevent it from spreading. If you do want to plant your chocolate mint straight in the ground, use this method to keep it from taking over: Place the chocolate mint in a deep bottomless container and set the plant (container and all) into the ground. This will keep its roots from overrunning neighboring plants.

4. Regrow from cuttings. With mint, you definitely get your money's worth. Chocolate mint will grow from

cuttings from your original plant. Just snip off a stem and set the cutting in a pot of soil to regrow. (These regrown chocolate mint plants make sweet gifts.)

5. Get ready for next year. As a perennial plant, your chocolate mint will come back next year. The leaves will die during the winter, but the plant will be back. You'll see shoots form the next spring. To prepare your plant for winter, mulch around the herb before the first frost.

Uses for chocolate mint

Head to your garden and harvest your chocolate mint for these scrumptious uses.

6. Make the best tea ever. Fill your mug a little less than half way full with fresh chocolate mint leaves. Pour boiling water over the leaves and let your tea steep for a few minutes. Spoon out the leaves and enjoy an aromatic chocolate mint tea straight from your garden. Add a splash of chocolate soy or almond milk for a little more indulgence.

7. Add it to anything chocolate. Mix chocolate mint into just about anything where you'd use chocolate. Add it to cakes, muffins, cookies, pies...Everyone will be wondering about your secret ingredient. You'll certainly be known as the baking queen (or king!).

8. Whip up ice cream. Made without chocolate or food coloring, this Fresh Chocolate Mint Ice Cream recipe is pretty special. The starring ingredient? Chocolate mint, of course. Get ready to scoop up with rich, creamy chocolate mint ice cream. You won't be able to put your spoon down. You might even lick the bowl.

9. Mojitos! (Is there really anything else to say?) Chocolate. Mojitos. Why have we gone so long without trying this cocktail? Simply substitute chocolate mint leaves for the spearmint in our recipe for a mean organic mojito.

10. Make your own essential oil. Use the essence of chocolate mint any time of the year by making your own essential oil. You can then add it to your favorite homemade body scrub, facemask or other beauty products for a little chocolate indulgence.

The Secret to Getting the Most Out of Dried Herbs (thekitchn.com)

While I'd love to cook with fresh herbs all the time, it's not always feasible. Between the occasional lack of practicality, the lack of availability (hello, mid-

January), or last minute cooking, sometimes dried herbs are a more convenient choice. And, when used correctly, dried herbs can be your secret weapon to making a seriously flavorful dish.

Dried herbs are an underrated resource. They're inexpensive, versatile, and have a much lengthier shelf life than their fresh counterparts. The most important thing to know about these pantry staples is how and when to use them. Follow these four tips to get the most flavor out of your dried herbs.

1. Stick to woody dried herbs. Not all herbs are that great when dried. Woody herbs — like oregano, thyme, and rosemary — all tend to dry nicely and retain their flavor well. Basil, chives, and other soft, tender herbs tend to lose much of what makes them good once dried. For these, I'd rather buy and use them fresh than settle for the mediocre flavor of their dried counterpart.

2. Replace dried herbs regularly. Even though dried herbs are, well dried and not fresh, freshness matters. Dried herbs don't necessarily spoil or go bad, but they do lose potency and flavor over time. The fresher they are, the tastier they'll be. It's best to toss and replace dried leafy herbs every one to three years.

3. Add them at the right time. As the saying goes, timing is everything — and this couldn't be more true when you're cooking with dried herbs. To get the most flavor, be sure to add dried herbs during cooking — don't wait until the end. In fact, the earlier you add them, the better; it gives the herbs more time to infuse their flavor into whatever you're cooking.

4. Rub dried herbs between your fingers before using. How you're adding dried herbs to a dish makes a difference, too. Instead of just sprinkling them in the pot, rub dried herbs between your fingers to crush and break them up first. This simple step releases some of the oil left in the leaves, which equals another dose of flavor.

Difference Between Overwatering & Underwatering (homeguides.sfgate.com)

Both underwatering and overwatering will eventually kill your plants. Indoor plants are more prone to overwatering damage, while outdoor plants, especially those grown in pots, tend to suffer from underwatering. Although the symptoms of both types of water stress are similar, you can determine which is the problem by carefully examining the plant.

Overwatering Symptoms – An overwatered plant develops soft, rotten roots as the root system drowns and begins to die. The base of the stem may feel mushy or a rotten odor may emanate from the potting soil. The plants begin to drop leaves, both new and old, or the leaves may become soft and appear rotten. Mildew, mold and other fungal growth on both the soil and plant are common symptoms of overwatering. Check the drip tray beneath the pot for standing water and empty it promptly after each irrigation to minimize the chances of overwatering. Most plants don't require watering if the top 1 to 2 inches of soil feels moist.

Underwatering Symptoms – Underwatered plants typically grow slowly and have brown, dry leaf edges. The plants may drop leaves or flowers, or the plant may fail to flower entirely. The lower leaves usually suffer first, becoming yellowed and curled. Eventually the plant dries up and dies. Check soil moisture at least once weekly. Water when the top 1 to 2 inches of soil begins to feel dry, but before it dries out completely. Outdoor plants usually require more frequent watering than those kept indoors. Check the soil moisture of outdoor potted plants daily and garden plants at least twice as a week.

Myrtle's MUSINGS

- **Membership Dues** are \$15 for a single person, \$25 for couples - due by the end of our calendar year, which was August. Please pay Lettie McDaniel at the next meeting.

- **GCHS Holiday Party** will be December 6th at 5:30pm in the Botanical Center. There's no regular meeting. It's a potluck dinner, so bring whatever you want. The Herb Society will provide meat dishes.

Environmental Studies Center Wish List!

Every year we donate supplies to the Environmental Studies Center at our Christmas Party. Here's a wish list of things they need. Please bring whatever you can give to the party the Herb Society will deliver it to them.

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| • Clip-on clamp lamp | • Ziploc freezer bags (gallon & quart) | (small bites) |
| • 60-watt light bulbs | • Wal-Mart gift cards | • Unsalted sunflower seeds |
| • Cages | • Pine bark mulch | • Canned sardines in water |
| • Heating pads (not auto-off) | • Pine shavings (for cages) | • Raisins |
| • Liquid laundry soap | • Baled hay | • Fresh Fruits & Vegetables |
| • Liquid dishwasher soap | • Frozen mixed vegetables | • Small frozen fish |
| • Bleach | • Dried whole corn | • Jarred "Chicken Vegetable" Baby Food |
| • Newspaper | • Scratch feed | • Cheerios |
| • Cash | • Wild birdseed | • Canned Cat & Dog Food |
| • 1cc and 3cc syringes | • Raw peanuts (in shell) | |
| • Plastic Wrap | • Nuts (in shell) | |
| • Paper Towels | • Dry dog food | |

"DILL"-ICIOUS Peppermint Hot Chocolate ~ Motherearthliving.com

The marriage of peppermint and chocolate is a cold weather favorite. Makes 1 to 2 Servings of Peppermint Hot Chocolate.

- 1 cup water
- 1/4 cup dried peppermint OR 1/2 cup fresh peppermint leaves, finely chopped
- 1 teaspoon peppermint extract (optional)
- 2 tablespoons honey OR agave nectar, to taste
- 1/2 cup unsweetened baking cocoa (preferably fair-trade)
- 1 tablespoon naturally sweetened chocolate chips (optional)
- 1 cup unsweetened soymilk OR water

1. In a small saucepan, boil water, peppermint, optional peppermint extract and sweetener. Remove from heat and steep for 5 or more minutes. Strain with a fine-mesh strainer. Reserve.

2. In a medium saucepan, combine mint mixture, cocoa, optional chips and soymilk (or water). Stir constantly over medium heat until you have a smooth, velvety texture.

3. Serve warm in mugs or demitasse cups.

Fresh tip: If you're lucky enough to have fresh peppermint leaves in the late fall and winter, be sure to use them in this warming drink recipe. In the summer, this drink is terrific served chilled.

GCHS Officers 2016-17

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