

## **Lavender-Infused Lemonade**

Lemonade gets an extra burst of flavor from a few springs of fresh lavender.

YIELD: 12 Servings

### INGREDIENTS:

3 cups granulated sugar

3 cups water

1/4 cup dried or fresh lavender

4 cups fresh lemon juice (from 16 to 20 lemons)

Ice, for serving

Lemon slices and fresh lavender sprigs, for garnish

### DIRECTIONS:

Bring sugar and water to a boil in a saucepan, stirring until sugar has dissolved. Stir in lavender. Remove from heat, and let stand for 10 minutes. Strain, discarding lavender. Let cool. Stir in lemon juice. (Lemonade can be refrigerated in an airtight container for up to 1 week.) Serve over ice, and garnish with lemon slices and fresh lavender sprigs.

### SEMI-HOMEMADE RECIPE:

Boil Lavender sprigs with ¼ cup sugar in 2 cups water. Strain. Use lavender water with lemonade concentrate. Garnish with more lavender sprigs.

## **Sweet and Sour Cucumber and Red Onion Pickles with Lemongrass and Cilantro**

Inspired by classic bread-and-butter pickles, while adding the unexpected tastes of lemongrass and coriander.

YIELD: Makes 3 1/4 cups

### INGREDIENTS:

1 pound cucumbers, ends trimmed

1/2 medium red onion, halved lengthwise

Fresh lemongrass

Fresh cilantro

1/2 cup sugar

2 teaspoons sea salt

1 teaspoon freshly ground coriander seeds

1/8 teaspoon pepper

3/4 cup Champagne vinegar

**PREPARATION:**

1. Slice cucumbers and onion very thinly on a mandoline or with a knife; rinse onion and drain. Put both in a medium bowl.
2. Cut a few stalks of lemongrass. Use the bottom few inches of the stem. Add cilantro. Chop in ninja or food processor with vinegar.
2. Whisk sugar, salt, coriander, pepper, and vinegar mixture together. Pour over cucumber mixture and chill at least 1 hour, stirring gently a couple of times. Serve cold. Keeps, chilled, up to 1 day.

**Yellow Squash and Zucchini Pasta Salad with Fresh Oregano, Kalamata Olives and Sunflower Seeds**

Here's a great way to use summer's abundant squashes. Sunflower seeds and briny kalamata olives make this pasta salad a standout.

YIELD: Makes 15 side-dish servings

**INGREDIENTS:**

16 ounces farfalle (bowtie) pasta

1 pound yellow summer (crookneck) squash, cut into 1-in. chunks

1 pound zucchini, halved lengthwise and cut into 1-in. chunks

1/2 cup olive oil, divided

Salt

2 tablespoons Champagne vinegar

About 1/2 tsp. freshly ground black pepper

2 tablespoons chopped fresh oregano, or more if you desire

1/4 to 1/2 cup sunflower seeds

1/4 cup chopped pitted kalamata olives

PREPARATION:

1. Cook pasta in a large pot of boiling salted water until tender to the bite, 9 to 12 minutes or according to package directions. Drain and rinse thoroughly under cold water until completely cool.
2. Cook squash and zucchini chunks on a baking sheet tossed with 1/4 to 1/3 cup olive oil on all sides and sprinkled with salt to taste. Cook 10 to 15 minutes in 350 degree oven, turning occasionally, or until vegetables are very tender.
3. Meanwhile, whisk together remaining olive oil, the vinegar, and 1/2 tsp. pepper in a small bowl.
4. In a large bowl, toss together pasta, vegetables, oregano, sunflower seeds, and olives. Add dressing and salt and pepper to taste; toss. Serve warm or cold.

### **Carrot Soup with Orange and Tarragon**

YIELD: Makes 4 servings

INGREDIENTS:

1 tablespoon butter

1 1-pound bag classic-cut peeled carrots

3/4 cup chopped onion

3 cups low-salt chicken broth

1/2 cup orange juice

1 tablespoon brandy

2 teaspoons chopped fresh tarragon

Fresh tarragon sprigs

PREPARATION:

Melt butter in heavy large pot over medium heat. Add carrots and onion; sauté until onion is soft, about 8 minutes. Add broth; cover and bring to boil. Reduce heat, uncover, and simmer until carrots are tender, about 10 minutes.

Working in batches, puree soup in blender until very smooth. Return soup to pot. Stir in orange juice, brandy, and chopped tarragon. Simmer 5 minutes for flavors to blend. Season to taste with salt and pepper. Garnish soup with tarragon sprigs and serve.

## **Lovage and Lettuce Soup**

Lovage has such a distinct flavor that it does well when tamed by gentler ingredients--like the lettuce, cream, white rice, and leeks in this soup. Use young, glossy leaves; when lovage is too mature, it gets bitter and overpowering.

YIELD: Serves 4 (about 4 cups) (serving size: 1 cup)

### INGREDIENTS:

2 tablespoons unsalted butter

2 cups thinly sliced cleaned leeks, white and light green parts only (about 3 medium leeks)

1 tablespoon white rice

About 2 teaspoons salt

3/4 cup loosely packed lovage leaves\* (1/2 oz.), plus a few leaves for garnish

About 3 1/2 cups roughly chopped romaine lettuce (5 oz.)

1/2 cup heavy whipping cream

### PREPARATION:

1. Melt butter in a large saucepan over medium heat, add leeks, and cook, stirring frequently, until softened, about 10 minutes.
2. Add 4 cups water, rice, and salt. Cover and cook at an even simmer (lift lid to check and lower heat if necessary) until rice is very soft, about 20 minutes. Stir in lovage and romaine. Bring to a boil over high heat and cook 2 minutes.
3. Blend soup, in batches, in a blender until very smooth. Return soup to pan, stir in cream, and bring to a gentle simmer. Ladle into bowls, season with salt to taste, and garnish with remaining lovage leaves.

\*You can substitute flat-leaf parsley for the lovage, but increase the quantity to 1 1/2 cups (1 oz.).

## **Fettuccine with Mint, Walnut, and Gorgonzola Pesto**

There's just enough blue cheese in this minty-bright pesto for an interesting, but not strong, flavor.

YIELD: Serves 6 (serving size: 1 1/2 cups)

### INGREDIENTS:

1 pound fettuccine

3 cups loosely packed fresh mint leaves, divided

About 3/4 teaspoons salt

1/2 cup walnut pieces

3 garlic cloves

2 tablespoons grated parmesan cheese

3/4 teaspoon pepper

1/2 cup extra-virgin olive oil

3 tablespoons gorgonzola cheese

3 tablespoons mascarpone cheese

**PREPARATION:**

1. Cook pasta as package directs in a large pot of salted boiling water.
2. Meanwhile, set aside 3/4 cup loosely packed small mint leaves. Put remaining mint and 3/4 tsp. salt, the nuts, garlic, parmesan, pepper, and oil in a food processor. Pulse just until coarsely puréed.
3. Transfer pesto to a large bowl and stir in gorgonzola and mascarpone.
4. Drain pasta, saving 1 cup pasta water, then transfer to bowl with pesto. Toss to coat well. Quickly toss with reserved mint leaves and add a little pasta water if needed for a looser texture. Serve immediately and season with salt to taste. Add extra walnuts, parmesan cheese or gorgonzola if desired.

**Anise Hyssop Drop Cookies**

YIELD: 3 dozen

**INGREDIENTS:**

1/3 cup anise hyssop, florets and leaves removed from stem

3 eggs

1 cup sugar

1/2 teaspoon vanilla

2 cups flour

1 teaspoon baking powder

1/2 teaspoon salt

**DIRECTIONS:**

Preheat oven to 325°F.

Line cookie sheet with aluminum foil (lightly greased with cooking spray).

Chop anise fine.

With electric mixer, beat eggs till thick and lemon-colored.

Add sugar and flower petals and beat for 5 minutes, then add vanilla.

Sift together flour, baking powder and salt and add to egg mixture.

Continue beating for 5 minutes longer.

Drop batter by teaspoonfuls onto lined cookie sheets, spacing well apart.

Bake till they begin to color (about 12 to 15 minutes).

**Strawberry Sorrel and Ricotta Parfait**

YIELD: Makes 4 servings

**INGREDIENTS:**

15 ounces ricotta

4 ounces mascarpone

2 teaspoons vanilla extract

1 tablespoon granular sugar (or sugar substitute, or brown sugar to taste)

4 cups fresh strawberries, hulled and sliced, or 1 cup frozen, sliced

1/4 cup packed fresh sorrel, chopped, plus 4 sprigs

2 tablespoons balsamic vinegar

1/2 cup crushed graham crackers

**PREPARATION:**

Mix ricotta, mascarpone, vanilla and sugar in a bowl. In another bowl, mix strawberries, sorrel and vinegar. Spoon 2 tablespoon ricotta mixture into the bottom of 4 parfait or iced tea glasses. Add a layer

of crackers, strawberries and another layer of ricotta. Top with remaining strawberries and sorrel sprigs. Serve immediately or chill up to 4 hours.