



Diann's Herb Newsletter

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The International Herb Society selects the Herb of the Year. Here is a list of the ones from the first decade of the 21st century:

**2011 Horseradish
2010 Dill
2009 Bay Laurel
2008 Calendula
2007 Lemon Balm
2006 Pelargonium
2005 Oregano
2004 Garlic
2003 Basil
2002 Echinacea
2001 Sage
2000 Rosemary**

2011 Herb of the Year—Horseradish

"It's not a radish, and has nothing to do with horses, but the root has a bite to love." (Richters)

Horseradish (*Armoracia rusticana*), the Herb of the Year (HOY) for 2011, has a long history of both culinary and medicinal use.

Distinctive dishes featuring horseradish have become associated with several cultures. Although horseradish is very good for you, there are some warnings about the use of this hot root.



Horseradish is relatively easy to grow, and once you grow it, you may have it for a long time.

Horseradish has been a favorite herb of mine, but I have very little experience with growing and processing it. So my knowledge of horseradish was enhanced greatly at the International Herb Association conference in Collinsville, Illinois, "the horseradish capital of the world" and home to the annual International Horseradish Festival.

Horseradish was in use in Egypt 1500 B.C. It dates back to Exodus and is one of the five bitter herbs that the Jewish people are instructed to eat at Passover. Early Greeks used ground horseradish as a rub to relieve lower back pain. They also considered it a cure for tuberculosis and scurvy. Its use as a condiment and a medicinal were soon evident in Central Europe. It was thought to cure rheumatism and was also used as a diuretic. For countless years horseradish has had a reputation as an aphrodisiac. By the 1600s, horseradish had made its way to England.

It was possibly introduced to the United States by German immigrants to the Midwest where the deep, loose soil near the rivers was excellent for growing the root. By the 1850s, horseradish was in commercial production in the United States.

Not only is the culinary use of horseradish associated with the Jewish and German cultures, but wasabi, its Japanese cousin, is also an essential accoutrement for sushi.

According to an article by Susan Belsinger, horseradish is very nutritious containing vitamin C, iron, calcium, magnesium, phosphorus, potassium, and zinc. It has anti-depressant, antibacterial, anti-cancer, antioxidant, detoxifying, and expectorant properties. It is not recommended for someone who has an underactive thyroid. In spite of the many benefits of horseradish, ingesting large quantities may cause irritation in the stomach. Wolters Kluwer Health at www.drugs.com advises avoiding it during pregnancy or lactation because it may irritate mucosal tissues.

If you choose to process your own horseradish, it is recommended that you do it outside or in a place that is well-ventilated. Inhaling the pungent aroma certainly clears out the sinuses, but too much may also cause some people to be momentarily light-headed.

Culinary uses for horseradish seem endless. When we think of horseradish, we think of meats, especially beef and pork. Fish is also enhanced with horseradish. Add a bit to scrambled eggs for breakfast. Coleslaw and potato salad can be complemented by horseradish. Vegetable dishes love horseradish—baked beans, baked or mashed potatoes, and green beans, for example. You may add some to soups and sauces. Dagwood even listed it as an essential condiment on his famous sandwich. What would a shrimp cocktail or a Bloody Mary be without horseradish? I've even seen a recipe for apple pie with horseradish. I haven't tried it yet but plan to.

If you plan to grow your own, pick a sunny location where it will not invade your other crops. As little as an inch of root can get you started. Be sure your soil is worked deeply so the roots will have room to develop. It will probably take two years for the roots to get large enough to use. I always thought it should be harvested in the fall after the leaves die down; however, I found some research that said it should be dug in the spring. So take your pick, and enjoy it.

Belsinger, Susan, ed. *Horseradish, Herb of the Year*. Jacksonville, FL. International Herb Association. 2011

Herb Catalog. Richters. Goodwood, Ontario, Canada 2011

Tucker, Arthur O., & DeBaggio, Thomas. *The Big Book of Herbs*. Loveland, Colorado: Interweave Press. 2000

2011 Herbal Workshops

I will be completing the schedule of herbal workshops for 2011 soon and will send out the list in an email by the end of January, but you may also check my website for postings.

Check www.diannsgreenhouse.com or call me (931-648-8701) for details of the herbal workshops for 2011.

Recipes

Baltimore Bloody Mary with Horseradish

1 cup V8 juice
1 ½ ounces vodka
1 to 2 teaspoons fresh grated or prepared horseradish
About 3 dashes of Tabasco
Few dashes Old Bay Seasoning
1/8 lemon (wedge)
Celery stalk or lovage, lemon wedge for garnish

Add the V8, vodka, horseradish, and Tabasco to a small pitcher and stir well. Add the Old Bay, and squeeze in 1 lemon wedge, and stir well. Taste for seasoning and adjust ingredients. Take the other lemon wedge and run it lightly around the rim of a glass. Dip the rim into the Old Bay Seasonings to coat it lightly. Fill the glass halfway with ice cubes. Pour the stirred Bloody Mary into the glass. Garnish with the celery stalk or lovage, and lemon wedge.

-- Belsinger, Susan, ed. *Horseradish, Herb of the Year*. IHA. 2011

Cocktail Sauce (Makes about 1½ cups)

1 ½ cups bottled chili sauce
2 tablespoons horseradish
1 tablespoon freshly squeezed lemon juice
Salt and pepper

In a small bowl, mix all of the ingredients together. Season with salt and pepper to taste. Chill until ready to serve. It will keep in the refrigerator for several weeks

-- Frawley, Donna. *Horseradish, Herb of the Year*. IHA. 2011.

Horseradish Mashed Potatoes (6 to 8 servings)

8 Russet potatoes, unpeeled
½ cup horseradish
¼ cup butter
1 cup sour cream
½ cup grated cheese
Salt and freshly ground pepper

Cook the potatoes. Mash them with a potato ricer into a large bowl. If you wish to retain the skins, use a potato masher. Add the horseradish, butter, and sour cream to the mashed potatoes and stir. Place in an oven-proof baking pan, and top with grated cheese. Bake in a 400 degree oven until cheese is lightly browned—about 20 minutes.

--Powel, Madge. *Horseradish, Herb of the Year*. IHA. 2011.

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