



# ANOTHER HERB HERBERT FAVOURITE HERBS FACT SHEET

## Basil Thai *Ocimum sp.*



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**B**asils are rich in volatile oils, which often vary considerably within the same species and according to growing conditions.

The composition of oils in a particular plant affects its aroma, flavour and uses, and may make identification difficult.

The name *Ocimum* is from the Greek *okimon*, used by the *Ophrastus* for basil.

### DESCRIPTION

Similar to anise basil, but the flavor and fragrance is distinctively less licorice-like. This is the true strain used in Vietnamese and Thai cooking. Essential fresh cut accompaniment to many Vietnamese dishes, including pho, a famous beef or chicken noodle soup. Addictive!

*Ocimum sp.* 'Siam Queen' is a great Thai basil. Leaves are dark green. The deep purple inflorescence are borne in terminal racemes from summer to mid autumn and provide a very spectacular display.

### PARTS USED

Whole plant, leaves, seeds, oil

### PROPERTIES

An aromatic, anise/licorice scented herb.

### USES OF THE HERB

#### Culinary

Use in Thai and Vietnamese cooking. Use fresh to add a distinct flavour to noodle dishes, soups or Thai curries.

#### Ornamental

The brilliant purple bracts surrounding the flowers make this basil a wonderful addition to the perennial border.

#### Medicinal

Internally for feverish illnesses especially colds and influenza, digestion and nausea.

### CULTIVATION

Frost tender. Prefers rich, light, well-drained soil in sun. Slugs, aphids, white fly, spider mites and *Botrytis* may attack plants.

### HARVEST

Whole plants are cut as flowering begins and distilled for oil. Leaves are picked during the growing season and used fresh or dried.

Don't forget  
Herbs book,  
"Wonderful World  
of Herbs."

### GROUND BEEF WITH BASIL

In the kitchen basil is an excellent complement to such foods as eggs, cheese, fish, poultry, stuffings, salads and meat. The Thais have always used basil in their cooking.

- 750g lean beef, very finely chopped or coarsely ground
- 3 large cloves garlic, minced
- 1 chilli, seeded and minced
- 2 tablespoon fish sauce or soy sauce
- 1 tablespoon oil
- 1 cup tightly packed basil leaves
- 1 teaspoon sugar

Heat Wok and add oil. Add garlic and chilli and cook for 30 seconds. Add meat and stir-fry for 2 minutes or until browned. Add fish sauce and sugar; cook for 2 more minutes. Add basil and toss through meat mixture. Serve on warm plate.

Serves 4



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