



Herbal Vinegar

Use these herbal vinegars made with herbs from your farm garden in any recipe that calls for vinegar.

Any herbs can be used to create this culinary specialty.

Use your own herbs in combination with any of the sundry vinegars available at the market can give a unique boost to salad dressings and marinades.

The most commonly used base vinegars for herbal concoctions are cider and red wine—both good choices for strongly flavored herbs like basil or thyme—or white wine, which is good for herbs with a more subtle taste, such as lemon balm.

Champagne vinegar is also a good choice for delicate flavors. White distilled vinegar is harsher than the others, so it might not give the best results.

The key is to experiment and find combinations you like. For gift-giving, look for decorative jars with tight-fitting, non-metallic stoppers.

It takes about one cup of fresh herb leaves, picked just before the plant flowers, or 1/2 cup of dried leaves to flavor one quart of vinegar.

Use a large, clean, glass jar with a tight-fitting, non-rusting lid. Place herbs in jar and crush slightly with a wooden spoon.

In a pan, warm the vinegar, but do not boil. Pour over herbs and cover tightly. Set the mixture in a dark place and let soak for two to three weeks. Strain through cheesecloth into airtight containers. Insert a large fresh leaf of the herb into the container before closing. Store at room temperature.

- Lynda King