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*Spice of the Month Kits are free, but supplies
are limited. Please, only one kit per household.*



Summer Reading is June 1st - July 31st
Sign up on Beanstack!



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Spice up your life!

The library will have take-and-make kits to
pick up at the beginning of every month.

***We will be taking a break June-August for
Summer Reading! Check back in September!*

Each kit includes:

- Packet of the featured spice
(enough to try both recipes)
- Information and fun facts
- Two recipes to try at home



thyme

Thyme (*Thymus*) is an aromatic perennial evergreen herb in the mint family *Lamiaceae*. It is native to Europe, North Africa, and Asia, and there are over 350 different species. This herb gets around 1 to 4 inches tall and can spread 2+ feet wide. Thyme produces white, yellow or purple flowers, arranged in dense clusters at the end of its branches.

Thyme does well in full sun and tolerates partial shade. Generally easy to grow, its main pests and diseases to look out for include red spider mite and humidity induced rot. Harvest from July through September and for the best and most potent flavor, pick the leaves just before the plant flowers.



Fun Facts

- Essential oils extracted from the leaves and flowers contain a substance called thymol which has antiseptic properties.
- The ancient Egyptians used thyme as an embalming fluid.
- In ancient Greece, they used thyme as an incense in temples and added it to bathwater as it was seen as a symbol of courage.
- During the Middle Ages in Europe, thyme was thought to ward off nightmares if placed beneath a pillow before going to sleep.

Info. from the Philadelphia Orchard Project

Instructions

1. Place the potatoes in a large saucepan and cover with water. Bring to a boil and then reduce heat as needed to avoid overflowing the pan. Cook until fork tender, about 20 minutes.
2. Drain and return to pot over very low heat. Add butter and mash with a potato masher to break up the potatoes and combine the butter with them.
3. Add $\frac{1}{4}$ cup cream, thyme, salt, and pepper to the potatoes. Mash again until desired consistency.
4. Taste and adjust salt and pepper as desired. Stir in or sprinkle with parsley before serving. Top with additional butter, if desired.

Notes

These can be served immediately or they can be made ahead and then allowed to stand at room temperature for an hour or two. Warm over medium heat, stirring often and adding more cream as needed if the potatoes are dry.



Herb Mashed Potatoes

🕒 Total Time: 25 mins

🍽 Servings: 8



Ingredients

- 3 pounds Yukon Gold potatoes approximately 5-6 medium size potatoes, cut into 1-2 inch pieces
- 4 tablespoons butter softened, plus more for serving if desired
- ¼ cup heavy cream plus more as desired
- **1½ teaspoons dried thyme**
- ½ teaspoon kosher salt adjust to taste
- ¼ teaspoon freshly ground black pepper adjust to taste
- 1 tablespoon chopped fresh Italian parsley

Recipe from: Barefeet in the Kitchen

<https://barefeetinthekitchen.com/thyme-mashed-potatoes/>



Lemon Thyme Shortbread

🕒 Total Time: 55 mins

🍽 Servings: 12



Ingredients

- 1 cup very soft butter, I use salted
- ½ cup granulated sugar
- Zest from one medium size lemon
- 2 teaspoons fresh lemon juice
- ½ teaspoon vanilla extract
- 2 cups all-purpose flour
- **1 teaspoon dried thyme**
- ½ teaspoon kosher salt
- 2 tablespoons sanding sugar, Demerara, Turbinado or regular granulated sugar

Recipe from: The Café Sucre Farine

<https://thecafesucrefarine.com/ridiculously-easy-lemon-thyme-shortbread/>



Instructions

1. Preheat oven to 325. Lightly grease (I use baking spray) and then line an 8 or 9-inch cake pan (round or square) with parchment paper. (See Notes at the end of instructions) Line a sheet pan with foil. Set both pans aside.
2. Combine soft butter, sugar, lemon zest and juice and vanilla in a medium-large bowl. Stir for about 30 seconds until nice and creamy.
3. Add the flour, thyme leaves and salt. Stir just until all of the flour is incorporated. The dough will be crumbly. Press the dough firmly into the prepared pan to create an even surface. Be sure there are no loose crumbs around the edges of the pan. Sprinkle with the sugar.
4. Place the cake pan on top of the foil lined sheet pan. Bake for 35-45 minutes until the top is a nice golden brown. (The smaller your pan is, the thicker your shortbread will be and the longer it will take to bake.)
5. Invert the shortbread onto a flat plate. Place another plate on top and invert again so the sugared side is up.
6. Slide the shortbread onto a cutting board and sprinkle with a bit more sugar, if desired. With a long, sharp knife, cut it into wedges (or rectangles or squares if using a square pan). Transfer pieces to a wire rack to cool completely. Store in an airtight container.

Instructions continued...

7. If you prefer your shortbread crisper, place the cooling rack with the cut pieces on a sheet pan and return return to the oven for 5 minutes then cool completely on the rack.

Notes

- *This recipe is a one-bowl, no-mixer recipe, it's important that your butter is very soft. Sit at room temperature for a few hours or put cold butter in the microwave in 10 second bursts.*
- *This shortbread on its own is not super sweet but the sugar topping adds a touch of extra sweetness and a lovely crunch. You want to use a coarse sugar for the topping. It can be Demerara or Turbinado which is available at most grocery stores in the same section as the regular sugar.*
- *The pan you use will determine how thick the final shortbread is. I usually use a 9-inch cake pan but for thicker shortbread use an 8-inch pan.*

