

# MENASHA PUBLIC LIBRARY: SPICE OF THE MONTH CLUB



## WHAT IS PARSLEY?

Parsley (*Petroselinum crispum*) is a hardy biennial member of the carrot (umbelliferae/apiaceae) family that is native to the Mediterranean. As a biennial plant, it only flowers every other year, followed by tiny seed-like fruits, similar to those of a carrot.

While widely considered to be a garnish, parsley's true power is its ability to complement and bring out a dish's other flavors with its slight bitterness. Parsley is one of the main ingredients of tabbouleh, a traditional dish of Lebanon and chimichurri, a classic Argentinian sauce meant to be served with grilled meats, chicken, or fish.

Parsley became popular in Europe in the Middle Ages, as it became increasingly common to find it grown in monastery and royal gardens. Ancient Greeks associated parsley with Archemorus, the Herald of Death, and adorned their tombs with parsley wreaths. Legend stated that parsley grew from the places where Archemorus's blood was spilled when he was bitten by a serpent. The Romans associated parsley with the god Mercury and also planted it on graves.

**FEBRUARY**



**PARSLEY**



# 8 TIPS FOR PARSLEY

- Cooking parsley for too long can cause its flavor to fade and destroy its nutritional value, so the best bet is to add chopped fresh parsley at the very end of cooking.
- Parsley is an excellent source of vitamins A, C and B12. 100g of parsley offers 12 percent of the daily recommended intake of potassium. It is also a good source of beta carotene and folic acid.
- Parsley makes an attractive border plant. Plant deep to accommodate the plant's long taproot. Also, soak seeds overnight before planting to enhance their germination rate.
- The flavor of parsley can differ based on its leaf type. Flat-leafed parsley has a more pungent and sweeter flavor profile than its curled-leafed counterpart.
- Beatrix Potter wrote of parsley's stomach soothing properties in her famous *Peter Rabbit* series, "First he ate some French beans and then he ate some radishes and then, feeling rather sick, he went to look for parsley." It has also been used to treat menstrual cramps.
- It was said that Charlemagne liked to eat cheese with parsley seeds. You can also chop it very fine and mash it into butter with a fork. This herbed butter tastes great with bread or melt it into pasta, casseroles, or scrambled eggs.
- Parsley has a reputation for preventing bruising, so keep some parsley ice cubes on hand. They also work well for cooling minor burns.
- For an natural breath freshener, try chewing on some parsley. It contains chlorophyll, which kills the oral bacteria that leads to bad breath.



## Add Parsley to:

-Soups

-Salads

-White Fish



**Note:** This information is meant to supplement, not replace advice from your healthcare provider and is not meant to cover all possible uses, precautions, interactions or adverse effects.

**Sources Consulted:** Encyclopedia Britannica; Consumer Health Complete; spiceography.com; Gale Health and Wellness; MasterClass

# Chimichurri Sauce

Courtesy of: [acouplecooks.com](http://acouplecooks.com)

Prep Time: 10 mins

Cook Time: 0 mins

Total Time: 1 hr

Yield: 1 Cup



## INGREDIENTS:

- ¼ cup water
- 1 teaspoon kosher salt
- 6 garlic cloves, minced
- ¾ cup very finely chopped Italian parsley (1 bunch)
- ½ cup finely chopped loosely-packed fresh oregano leaves\*
- ½ teaspoon red pepper flakes, plus more to taste
- 3 tablespoons red wine vinegar
- ½ cup olive oil

*\*Or substitute ¼ cup more Italian parsley and use ½ teaspoon dried oregano.\**

**Note:** Add more red pepper flakes for more heat. This version is more on the mild side.

## Directions:

1. Combine water and kosher salt in a small saucepan and heat until dissolved. Remove from heat and allow to cool.
2. In a large bowl, stir together the minced garlic, Italian parsley, oregano, and red pepper flakes. Whisk in red wine vinegar, followed by olive oil and then the salt water. Taste and add additional red pepper flakes if desired. Serve immediately. Store refrigerated for 2 to 3 weeks.

Nutritional Information (Per Serving): Calories: 347 Fat: 24g Carbs: 10g Protein: 33g

# Winter Pasta with Olives, Herbs and Lemon

Courtesy of: Dawn Perry

Prep Time: 20 mins

Cook Time: 40 mins

Total Time: 1 hr

Servings: 4



## Ingredients:

- 1 pound pasta, any shape
- Kosher salt and black pepper
- 1/4 cup olive oil
- 2 yellow onions, halved and thinly sliced
- 8 garlic cloves, smashed and sliced
- 1/2 cup pitted and chopped castelvetro olives
- 1/2 cup chopped fresh herbs such as parsley, chives, basil and/or mint
- Juice from 1/2 lemon
- Grated Parmesan, for serving

## Directions:

1. Cook pasta in a large pot of boiling salted water according to package directions for al dente.
2. Meanwhile, heat olive oil in a large skillet over high. Add onions and garlic and cook, tossing occasionally until beginning to brown and blister, 3 to 4 minutes. Season with 1 teaspoon salt and several grinds pepper and continue to cook, tossing, until mostly dark brown all over, 6 to 8 minutes more. Reduce the heat as low as it will go while the pasta finishes cooking.
3. Using tongs, transfer pasta directly to the skillet along with 1 cup pasta water. Increase heat to high and cook, tossing, until liquid thickens and coats the pasta, about 3 minutes. Remove from heat, add olives, herbs, and lemon juice and toss to combine. Taste and season with more salt and pepper if you like. Serve topped with Parmesan.

Nutritional Information (Per Serving): Calories: 607 Fat: 17.5g Carbs: 95.7g Protein: 17g