

# **A Taste of Lavender**

**Delectable Treats with an  
Exotic Floral Flavor**

Gloria Hander Lyons



**Blue Sage Press**

**A Taste of Lavender**  
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*Lavender is a beautiful, fragrant and  
tasty herb that has a wide range of  
culinary uses.*

*Delight your family and dinner guests  
by adding the deliciously distinctive  
flavor of lavender to your cooking.*



# *Introduction*

## *A Taste of Lavender*



Lavender is more commonly known for its use in bath and beauty products, as well as in aromatherapy, for its pleasant fragrance and soothing qualities. It is also a popular choice for gardeners in America because of its beautiful, fragrant, purple flowers. But French chefs have been using lavender for centuries to add its sweet, floral flavor to their cuisine.

Thankfully, this tasty herb has finally found its way into the spice racks in American kitchens. Lavender can add a unique, exotic flavor to a wide variety of recipes, ranging from beverages to desserts to casseroles.

A member of the mint family, it tastes very similar to rosemary, with a hint of citrus. You can substitute lavender for rosemary in many recipes and the flowers (also called buds) can be used either fresh or dried.

The secret to cooking with lavender is: a little goes a long way. Start with a small amount and add more to taste. Adding too much lavender to your recipe will make it very pungent and bitter tasting. Dried lavender has a stronger flavor than fresh, so use one third the amount.

<p><b>NOTE:</b> Make sure that the lavender you use for cooking has not been sprayed with any pesticides. It should be labeled “FOR CULINARY USE”.</p>
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English Lavender (*lavendula angustifolia*) has the sweetest fragrance of all the lavenders, and is the one most commonly used in cooking.

Lavender blends well with any fruit, especially citrus. The citrus flavor of lavender enhances any recipe made with lemon. You can add extra zip to lemonade, pound cake or lemon chicken with this tangy herb.

The French used lavender to create an herbal blend called Herbs de Provence, which usually includes basil, oregano, sage and rosemary. You can find it in most supermarkets or make your own using the recipe on page 37.

If you don't plan to grow your own lavender, you can order dried lavender buds online. See the ordering information in the index.

Whether you're crafting soothing bath and body products or cooking a tasty treat, lavender is a welcome and versatile herb to have on hand.

Experiment with lavender in some of your own favorite recipes in addition to the ones included in this book. Lavender will add a unique flavor to your cooking.

**Contraindications and Safety:** It is recommended that lavender be avoided if you are pregnant or nursing. Also, it should not be used with preparations containing iron and/or iodine. If you are taking prescription medications, check with your physician about possible contraindications for any herb.



# *Lavender Recipes*

Cooking with lavender is no great mystery. You can add dried lavender buds to many of your favorite recipes, from cookies to soup to meatloaf—no special recipe is required.

There are two methods for introducing the flavor of lavender into your food: by adding the dried buds directly to your dish or by infusing liquids with the lavender before adding them to the other ingredients. A few guidelines are described below:

## **Lavender Infusion**

To infuse the flavor of lavender into your recipes, first steep the buds in water, milk, cream or sugar syrups before adding them to your food.

Measure one tablespoon of dried lavender buds for each cup of hot liquid (usually boiling water or warmed milk). Steep for 10-15 minutes and then strain the liquid. You can also steep the buds in cold milk or cream for 3-4 hours to infuse the flavor without warming the liquid.

Lavender water infusion can be used to flavor lemonade, iced tea and sorbets. Lavender milk or cream infusion can be used to make ice cream, cheese cake, scones or cakes.

## Tips for Adding Dried Lavender to Recipes



- Use dried lavender as you would any other dried herb in casseroles, soups or stews. It's best to grind the dried flower buds first in a clean coffee grinder then stir them into the dish.
- For meat, fish or poultry, blend 1 part ground, dried lavender and 2 parts garlic powder (or a mixture of garlic powder and onion powder), plus salt and pepper to taste. Rub on the meat before roasting or grilling.
- Add 2 teaspoons of ground, dried lavender to any bread, cake or cookie mix or recipe, including yeast breads, layer cakes, pound cakes and sugar cookies. Mix and bake as directed.

**Helpful Hint:** Grind several tablespoons of dried lavender buds in a clean coffee grinder and store in an airtight container so you will have it on hand whenever you need it.

Impress your family and guests by adding the unique flavor of lavender to your favorite recipes. Just remember, it has a strong flavor, so use it sparingly. You will be pleasantly surprised with the results.



# *Beverages*



## **Lavender Tea**

Steep 1 teaspoon of dried lavender buds in one cup of boiling water for three to five minutes. Strain the tea into a cup. Sweeten with honey or sugar if desired and serve with lemon. Lavender tea is good for insomnia or when you want to relax.

## **Relaxing Lavender & Herb Tea**

- 1 tablespoon dried lavender buds
- 1 tablespoon dried rosemary leaves
- 1 tablespoon dried mint leaves
- 1 tablespoon dried chamomile flowers
- 1/2 teaspoon whole cloves

Blend all the herbs and spices together and store in an airtight container. To prepare, place 1 to 1-1/2 teaspoons of tea mixture per cup of water into a warmed teapot. Pour boiling water over the herbs and steep for 5 minutes. Strain into cups. Serve with honey or sugar and lemon.

## **Lavender & Green Tea**

- 1 tablespoon dried lavender buds
- 1 tablespoon green tea leaves

Blend lavender and tea together and store in an airtight container.

To prepare, place 1 teaspoon of tea mixture per cup of water into a warmed teapot. Pour boiling water over the herbs and steep for 5 minutes. Strain into cups.

Sweeten with honey or sugar if desired.

## **Lavender & Lace Tea**

- 1/2 teaspoon dried lavender buds
- 1 teaspoon dried rose petals  
(labeled for culinary use)
- 2 tablespoons black tea leaves



Blend ingredients together and store in an airtight container.

This recipe makes one six-cup pot of tea. Place tea mixture into a warmed teapot. Add six cups of boiling water and steep for 3 to 5 minutes. Strain into cups.

Sweeten with honey or sugar if desired.

Packets of Lavender & Lace Tea make nice favors for tea parties when bundled in a pretty lace handkerchief and tied with satin ribbon. Be sure to attach the instructions for preparing the tea.

## **Lavender Lemonade**

6 cups water (divided)  
1-3/4 cups sugar  
2 tablespoons dried lavender buds  
1 teaspoon grated lemon zest  
1 cup fresh squeezed lemon juice

Combine 2 cups of the water, sugar, lavender and lemon zest in a large sauce pan. Bring to a boil.

Reduce heat and simmer, stirring frequently until sugar dissolves. Remove from heat and let syrup steep for 10 minutes. Strain syrup and discard lavender.

In a large pitcher, combine lavender syrup, lemon juice and remaining 4 cups of water.

To serve, pour into glasses filled with ice.



## **Lavender-Mint Tea Punch**

2 tablespoons dried mint  
1 tablespoon dried lavender buds  
6 cups boiling water  
4 cups ginger ale  
1 cup purple grape juice

Place mint and lavender in a warmed teapot. Add boiling water and steep for 10 minutes.

Strain the tea into a 3-quart pitcher and add the ginger ale and grape juice.

Chill before serving.



## Lavender Hot Chocolate

Lavender adds a sweet floral flavor to this delectable chocolate beverage.

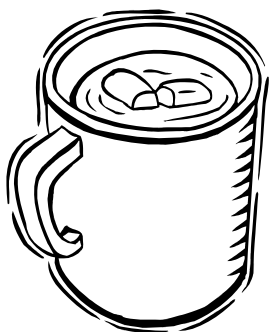
2-1/2 cups milk

4 teaspoons dried lavender buds

6 ounces (1 cup) semi-sweet chocolate chips

In a medium saucepan, bring milk to simmer over medium-low heat. Remove from heat, stir in lavender, cover pan and steep for 5 minutes. Strain milk and discard the lavender.

Add chocolate chips to warm milk and stir until melted. Top with sweetened whipped cream if desired. Makes 4 servings.



## Amaretto Lavender Peach Smoothie

When you're in the mood for something frosty and fruity, this smoothie will hit the spot.

- 1 (15 oz.) can of sliced peaches, drained
- 2 tablespoons Amaretto liqueur
- 1 teaspoon ground, dried lavender buds
- 1 pint vanilla ice cream, softened

Place peaches, Amaretto and lavender in a blender and process until smooth.

Add ice cream and process until well blended. Makes 3-4 servings.





# *Sweeteners, Spreads & Toppings*

## **Lavender Sugar**

There are two methods for making lavender sugar: a ground lavender/sugar mix and sugar infused with lavender flavor.

### **Ground Lavender/Sugar Mix**

Place one teaspoon of ground, dried lavender buds and one cup of sugar in a food processor. Process the ingredients to make a fine sugar mixture. Store in an air tight container and use for baking or sweetening beverages. This sugar makes a nice gift when presented in an attractive canister.

### **Infused Lavender Sugar**

Mix 1 tablespoon dried lavender buds with 2 cups of sugar and store in an airtight container for 3-4 weeks. Shake occasionally. Sift out the lavender buds before using the sugar in baked goods or to sweeten beverages.