

BAY LAUREL

TYPE:	Annual
SUN:	Full Sun
HEIGHT:	12 to 18 inches
GROWING IT:	Rich well-drained soil. Protect from wind and cold. Space 12 to 18 inches apart. Can be planted in containers.
PARTS USED:	Leaves
HARVEST:	Pick leaves throughout the summer. For drying and freezing pick before plant goes to bloom.
CULINARY:	Use fresh as needed or dried to store. Hang loose bunches in a dry, dark place. Store dried leaves in air tight containers once dried. Use within twelve months for best flavor.

TRY IT!

SPAGHETTI AND MEATBALLS

- 2 Tbs. olive oil
- 2 onions, finely chopped
- 3 cloves garlic, minced
- 1 egg
- ½ c. ricotta cheese
- 2 tsp. fennel seeds, lightly crushed
- 1 ¼ tsp. salt
- ¾ tsp. ground pepper
- 1 c. coarse fresh bread crumbs
- ¼ c. minced fresh parsley
- ¼ c. grated Romano
- 8 oz. lean ground beef
- 8 oz. lean ground pork
- ½ c. dry red or white wine or chicken stock
- 1 can (28 oz.) crushed canned tomatoes
- ½ c. coarsely chopped fresh basil
- ¼ tsp. sugar
- 1 or 2 bay leaves
- 1 ½ lb spaghetti, prepared according to directions

BAY LAUREL, cont.

If you have fresh plum tomatoes use these in place of canned. Use 3 lbs. fresh, peeled, seeded, and diced. Add ¼ c. tomato paste. In large non-stick skillet, heat half of the oil over medium heat; fry onions and garlic, stirring occasionally, until onions are golden, 10 to 12 minutes. Scrape into a bowl. Set aside. In bowl, whisk together egg, ricotta cheese, fennel seeds, ¾ tsp. salt and pepper. Stir in bread crumbs, parsley, Romano cheese and half the onion mixture. Add beef and pork, combine. Form meat mixture by rounded tablespoons into balls. Add remaining oil to pan. Brown meatballs over medium heat and transfer to plate. Pour off fat. Add wine to pan; bring to a boil, stirring and scraping up brown bits. Transfer to Dutch oven. Stir in remaining onion mixture, dicing crushed tomatoes, half of the basil, bay leaves, sugar, and remaining salt. Add meatballs. Cover and simmer over low heat, stirring occasionally for 25 minutes. Meanwhile in a large pot of boiling salted water, cook spaghetti until tender but firm, 8 to 10 minutes. Drain and return to pot. Add about 1 cup of the sauce to pasta; toss to coat. Serve with remaining meatballs and sauce spooned over the top. Garnish with remaining basil.

