

HERBAL MARINADES

Herb marinades and dry rub mixtures are a must for summer grilling and year round flavor when cooking seafood, meat and poultry. Marinades are usually made up of three components. Acid, oil and herbs. Acid such as vinegar, wine or citrus juice tenderizes the meat, while oil moisturizes. Experiment with different combinations of herbs and spices to achieve unique flavors.

For large pieces or denser meat, marinades work best when the meat is cut into smaller pieces so the marinade can penetrate a larger surface area. However, if marinades are left on too long, the acids can “cook” the surface, causing the meat to dry out. Some meats, such as pork and steak, can marinate for hours. Other less dense cuts of meat, such as chicken breast and most fish, only need to stay in a marinade for a short time.

Common Questions:

What does marinating do?

Marinating tenderizes meat, game and fish so that they cook faster and are juicier with more flavor.

Does the food have to be refrigerated while marinating?

Always marinate in the refrigerator.

Can I reuse marinade?

The marinade can be used immediately to coat the marinated meat or fish while cooking but do not save it for another meal. Bacterias could have developed.

How much marinade should I use?

Generally, you'll need 1 to 2 cups of marinade for every 1 1/2 to 2 pounds of food. Use enough marinade to completely coat the food.

Can I marinate food in the freezer?

Freezing is a great way to marinate. If you freeze a piece of meat in a marinade, it will soak up the flavors as it thaws

HERBAL MARINADES, cont.

Marinating Tips:

- Do not salt the marinades to avoid drying out the meat
- For fast marinating, make a few incisions in the meat to allow the marinade to penetrate
- Turn the meat over a few times while marinating to ensure complete coverage
- Marinades can also be used with tofu, or vegetables, or added to stir-fry as seasoning
- Always marinate foods in glass, porcelain or plastic containers; never in aluminum bowls, which react to acids. For no-mess marinating, place ingredients to be marinated along with marinade in a plastic bag, squeeze out air and seal

Suggested herbs for marinades:

- Parsley
- Garlic
- Oregano
- Rosemary
- Thyme
- Sage
- Basil
- Lemon Grass
- Mint

