

HERBAL TEAS

The perfect cup of herbal tea refreshes and heals while it quickens your senses with its delicious warmth, taste, and aroma. Unlike caffeinated black, green, or oolong teas, herbal teas don't darken as they become stronger; they usually remain light green or amber. Most herbal teas are made from leaves or flowers using the infusion method.

For each cup of tea, place 3 teaspoons crushed fresh herbs or 1 teaspoon dried herbs into an infuser (a screw-top or hinged container that has pin-size holes, shown below). Measure the cups of water into a pot, bring to a boil, then pour the water into a prewarmed teapot. Add the infuser, then steep until the tea is the strength you desire.

Suggested herbs for tea:

- Anise Hyssop
- Catnip
- Chamomile
- Echinacea
- Lemon Balm
- Lemon Grass
- Peppermint



Herbs for Tea

PLANTING:

Most herbs need FULL SUN (see individual plant listings for exceptions). Herbs thrive in loose, fast-draining soil. To achieve this, amend existing garden soil with **Stauffer's Planting Mix** (1/2 and 1/2). For pots use 1/3 existing (native) garden soil mixed with 2/3 **Stauffer's Planting Mix**.

FERTILIZING:

Most herbs grow quite well with little fertilizer. We recommend using **Plant Starter** once a month. For perennials, start your feeding program when new foliage appears in spring. For annuals, begin feeding at planting time.

HARVEST:

Harvest herbs anytime *before* the plant begins to flower, when essential oils are at their peak (except when the flowers are the type used for brewing tea—see *plant list*).

Pick leaves in the morning after dew has dried instead of at the end of the day when the oils have been depleted by hot afternoon sunshine.

Always use sharp scissors when harvesting. Avoid crushing leaves.

DRIED HERBS:

Dried herbs have a much stronger flavor than fresh herbs. However, dried herbs DO NOT have the distinct flavor that fresh herbs contain.

Wipe off any soil or grit (avoid washing leaves unless absolutely necessary). Keep leaves out of sunlight, which extracts and evaporates essential oils.

Choose a warm, dry, dark location with adequate ventilation such as a warm loft, garden shed or garage (away from washer and dryer). 90½ F is IDEAL for the first 24 hours of drying. 75½ - 80½ F thereafter is preferable.

Hang stems of leaves in small bunches (10 stems at a time). When drying is complete, leaves should be "paper-dry" and fragile, but not so dry that they "powder" on contact.

Store in airtight, dark glass bottles away from sunlight, heat, moisture and dust.