



HERBS FOR GREEK CUISINE

Dill

Annual

Dill along with mint and parsley is a key ingredient in making Greek dolmathes or stuffed grape leaves. It is an easy herb to grow, enjoying full sun. It is a tall herb and should be planted at the back of the herb or vegetable garden or in a position sheltered from winds.

Greek Oregano

Perennial

The very pungent dried flower tops of Greek Oregano are mainly used in Greek cooking. Used fresh, the leaves are less strong, but still provide extra taste and aroma in cooking. Oregano is best grown in a sunny position in average to well drained soils.

Rosemary

Perennial

Bushes of Rosemary grow wild throughout Greece, particularly on the dry arid hills close to the sea. It is a popular herb added to roasts and grilled meat such as lamb, pork or fish. A sprig of Rosemary also makes a fine basting brush. Plant in an open, sunny position with average well-drained soil.

Sage

Perennial

The scent of Sage fills the arid hills of the Greek Islands. Sage provides full flavour and aroma, whether used fresh or dried. Use Sage on its own, or with other herbs, when cooking meat, eggplant, tomato or cheese dishes. Plant in a sunny position in light, well drained soils.

Mint

Perennial

Mint is regularly used in Greek cooking, added to meatballs, stuffed tomatoes, salads and herbal teas. Plant Mint in a semi-shaded to shaded position in a rich, moist soil. It is best cut back to ground level in winter.

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RECIPE: Dolmathes

(Grape leaf roll ups stuffed with rice).

Serves 4.

Ingredients:

1 bunch finely chopped dill
250g grape leaves
1 whole lemon squeezed
1 bunch finely chopped mint
1 cup olive oil
1 cup white rice
500g finely chopped onions

Directions:

Briefly dip grape leaves in boiling water then rinse them with cold water and wipe dry.
Mix the onions with half the olive oil.
After a while, mix the rice, 250ml hot water and the remaining lemon juice.
Boil the mixture for 4-5 minutes.
Wrap one tablespoon of the mixture with a grape leaf and repeat until completed.
Carefully place the dolmathes in a pot with some space between them.
Cover the dolmathes with a plate and add the rest of the oil and the lemon juice with 500ml of water.

Boil on a low heat for 30 minutes, until some water is absorbed and the rice is done.
Serve cold with slices of lemon.

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