

## Herbs - Savory

### TIPS FROM THE KITCHEN

Many herbs and spices are compatible with fish and shellfish, including basil, bay leaves, celery seed, chives, fennel, mustard, parsley, rosemary and savory - just to name a few.

Savory is, for one thing, a category applied to foods that are not sweet. It suggests either a spicy or tart flavors. There are a number of foods that have both a sweet and a savory preparation. For example, sweet potatoes, pie crust and soup can all be served sweet or prepared as a savory dish.



Savory is also an herb so bold and peppery in its flavor that since the time of the Saxons it has become synonymous with tasty and flavorful foods, hence savory as a category applied to foods.

Summer savory (*Satureja hortensis*) is the most delicate of the familiar varieties, both in taste and in character. It is an annual that requires light, rich soil and full sun, conditions that make it ideal for growing indoors. Because the leaves are so tender they can be added fresh to salads or used as a toothsome garnish.

Winter savory (*Satureja montana*) is a coarser variety. The leaves are bright green, narrow, and tough. They are best used for dishes that require long cooking, such as stews, or added to the water when cooking dried beans so that there is enough heat and moisture to break them down.

This not only releases the flavorful oils, but also softens the leaves so that they are palatable. Winter savory is often used in stuffing, with vegetables, as a seasoning for fowl, and in making sausages. In fact, it is used today in the commercial preparation of salami.

Both of these varieties of savory have a peppery bite to them, although the summer savory is milder. It has been suggested to use this herb as a seasoning for salt-free diets as the strong flavor makes food more appealing.

Contributed by David Green