



“All Things Rhubarb” Workshop

Wednesday, May 13th, 2015

Presenter: Katie Jewett

Rhubarb plant facts and information

- Another name for the Rhubarb Plant is "Pie Plant".
- Rhubarb is a vegetable, *not* a fruit. It is commonly used as a fruit in sauces, pies, cakes and crisps but can also be used in savoury dishes.
- Fresh, tender rhubarb stalks can be eaten raw, but are very tart. Often, rhubarb is combined with sweet fruit, such as strawberries, to decrease the amount of sugar needed in cooking.
- Rhubarb is a perennial plant and is extremely easy to grow. Rhubarb plants need very little care and attention and they usually do not suffer from diseases and pests.
- Rhubarb is generally propagated by dividing existing plants.
- Rhubarb leaves are **toxic** and contain oxalic acid.
- Some varieties of rhubarb have green stalks, while others have red or pink. Add a bit of strawberry juice to green rhubarb if pink colour is desired in cooking.
- To harvest rhubarb, pull stalks directly from the ground. Stalks should be over 30 cm long, and they should not feel limp or have white spots. Do not harvest more than 1/3 of the stalks at one time. Discard any stalks that have gone to seed.
- Fresh picked rhubarb (leaves removed) will stay fresh in the refrigerator for several days.
- When cooking with rhubarb, it is best to use "non-reactive" cookware that does not react with the acid in the rhubarb. Stainless-steel cookware is preferable over aluminum and copper. Cooking rhubarb in aluminum or copper may cause "stains" on the pans.
- Rhubarb is low in calories, low in fat, cholesterol free, and is high in fibre, providing approximately 5 grams of fibre per cup of cooked rhubarb. Rhubarb also contains vitamin A, potassium, and calcium. One cup of cooked rhubarb contains as much calcium as a glass of milk.
- Rhubarb is easy to freeze, although it becomes somewhat watery after freezing. It can also be preserved by dehydrating, or by canning in jam form.
- Rhubarb leaves can be used to make a natural insecticide.
- Some parts of the rhubarb plant have medicinal uses. In previous centuries, rhubarb was cultivated almost solely for its medicinal uses.

Source: <http://www.rhubarb-central.com/rhubarb-plant-facts.html>

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RECIPES

Rhubarb Barbecue Sauce

2-3 large stalks of rhubarb, chopped (about 2 cups)
3/4 cup water
1 onion, finely chopped
2-3 garlic cloves, crushed
1 cup ketchup
1/2 cup pure maple syrup or honey
1/2 cup packed brown sugar
1/4 cup apple cider or rice vinegar
1 Tbsp. Worcestershire sauce
1 Tbsp. grainy mustard

In a small saucepan, bring the rhubarb and water to a simmer and cook for 5-6 minutes, until the rhubarb is very soft. Pour into a bowl and set aside.

In the same saucepan, heat a drizzle of oil over medium-high heat and cook the onion for 3-4 minutes, until soft; add the garlic and cook for another minute or two. Add the remaining ingredients and bring to a simmer; cook for 10-15 minutes, until the mixture thickens. Puree with a hand-held immersion blender or cool and puree in a blender or food processor until smooth. Use as you would any barbecue sauce – on grilled meats, in baked beans or drizzled on burgers.

Makes about 2 cups.

<http://dinnerwithjulie.com/2013/05/24/rhubarb-barbecue-sauce/>

Rhubarb Vinaigrette

Adapted from vinegartart.com.

1 rhubarb stalk, thinly sliced
2 Tbsp. honey or maple syrup
2 Tbsp. rice vinegar (red wine or raspberry vinegar would work well too)
2 tsp. grainy Dijon mustard (or to taste)
1/4 cup canola or mild olive oil

In a small saucepan, simmer the rhubarb with 1/4 – 1/2 cup water for 5 minutes, or until very soft. Remove from heat and set aside to cool. (I've done it warm too, and it's just fine.)

Put the rhubarb into a blender with the honey, vinegar and mustard. Pulse until smooth. With the motor running, slowly pour in the oil. Makes about a cup.

<http://dinnerwithjulie.com/2011/07/15/rhubarb-vinaigrette/>

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Strawberry Rhubarb Grunt

3 c. strawberries, fresh or frozen, cut up
3 c. rhubarb, fresh or frozen, cubed
¾ tsp. cinnamon
¾ c. sugar
¾ c. water (less if fruit is frozen)
¼ c. + 2 Tbsp. orange juice
1 ½ T. tapioca

Combine ingredients in large saucepan. Bring to boil, reduce heat and simmer, stirring frequently, for 5 minutes.

Dumplings:

2 c. flour
4 Tbsp. sugar
4 tsp. baking powder
½ tsp. salt
4 Tbsp. butter
1 c. milk

Combine dry ingredients. Cut in butter; add milk and stir until just moistened. Drop by spoonful onto hot fruit, allowing space for dumplings to expand. Cover tightly and simmer 15 minutes without peeking. Serve warm with cream or ice cream.

Slightly adapted from: <http://www.saltscapes.com/food-a-drink/recipe-index/item/strawberry-rhubarb-grunt.html>

Rhubarb Syrup

2 lbs. fresh or frozen rhubarb, cut into 1" lengths
1 c. sugar (scant), or to taste
Juice of 1 lemon (opt.)

Put rhubarb (and lemon juice, if using) in non-reactive saucepan and cover with water. Cook on medium heat 15 minutes, or until rhubarb has broken down. Skim any foam that forms on top. Cool slightly. Strain well; don't force rhubarb through the sieve or liquid will be cloudy. Return liquid to a boil; add sugar and simmer until sugar has dissolved and syrup has thickened. Rhubarb solids can be served, sweetened, in smoothies or on yogurt.

Rhubarb syrup will keep in a non-reactive container in the refrigerator for several weeks, or it can be frozen for longer storage. To serve, add to water, sparkling water or ginger ale. Can also be used to make mixed drinks.

Adapted from: <http://moosecurry.blogspot.ca/2013/06/festival-of-rhubarb.html>

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More Ways to Enjoy Rhubarb All Year Long

- Enjoy stewed rhubarb on white cake or biscuits. Top with whipped cream.
- Serve stewed rhubarb for breakfast on pancakes, french toast or waffles.
- Use stewed rhubarb to top plain yogourt.
- Add dehydrated rhubarb to cooked granola.
- Add fresh or dehydrated rhubarb to your favourite muffin or quick bread recipe.
- Roast fresh rhubarb in the oven alongside other vegetables.
- For a simple bread pudding, fill greased 1 ½ quart casserole with day-old bread which has been broken into bite-sized pieces. Add 1-2 beaten eggs, ⅓ c. sugar, rhubarb, and enough milk for the bread to soak up. (Amount of milk depends on dryness of bread.) Dot with butter; sprinkle with cinnamon. Bake 40 minutes at 350°F. Serve with additional stewed rhubarb.

UPCOMING NBCHG “COOKING LOCAL” WORKSHOPS:

“Alternative Grains & Early Greens”

WEDNESDAY, JUNE 10TH, 2015 6:30PM-8:00PM

Presenter: Llsa Wilby - Learn to make delicious risotto, salad & pilaf recipes celebrating our local Spring harvest

“BIG MAC-taquac...Vegan-Style”

WEDNESDAY, JUNE 17TH, 2015 6:30PM-8:00PM

Presenter: Sarah McCarthy - Absolutely scrumptious, locally-sourced, vegan alternative to the classic backyard burger!

SPACE IS LIMITED – to register please contact Edee at 457-5533 or info@nbchg.org or register online at www.nbchg.org

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