

Lemongrass Uses

Make up bundles of the green leaves and toss a bundle into a warm bath after you've run a marathon or dug ditches all day. Very relaxing to the muscles. Add a few sprigs of rosemary if you like.

An infusion of the leaves is antiseptic and will help improve acne. It is used to treat tuberculosis, coughs, fever, colds and flu, gingivitis, headache, leprosy and pneumonia. It is a natural anti-fungal agent, so useful for treating tinea. Chewing on the stalks will help clean the teeth. A cream preparation with 2.5% essential oil is an effective treatment for ringworm.

Used mainly in Asian cookery. Use in any recipe where the flavor of lemon is desired. It is used to flavor teas, soups, stews, marinades and curries. When using it fresh, strip off the tough outer leaves and cut off the bottom root portion. Slice into rings or strips and bruise the pieces to release the flavor before adding to dishes.

Lemongrass recipes

Lemongrass Lamb Chop on Sauteed Choy Sum

For each lamb chop:

- 1 teaspoon lemongrass, finely chopped
- 1 teaspoon soy sauce
- 1/2 teaspoons cinnamon
- 1 teaspoon paprika
- 1 teaspoon garlic, minced
- salt to taste

Mix ingredients to create dry rub for each lamb chop. Marinate lamb chop overnight. Pan fry to desired taste. [Use spinach or other greens if you can't get the soy sum.]

Curry Paste

- 1 teaspoon coriander seeds
- 1 teaspoon cumin seeds
- 6 jalapeno chillies
- 2 lemongrass stems (fresh or dried)
- 5-8 garlic cloves, very finely minced
- 3-5 shallots or onions, very finely diced
- 1 teaspoon galangal, finely chopped
- small amount of water if required

Roast coriander and cumin seeds for a few minutes in a dry fry pan, stirring constantly. Remove from heat, cool. Place remaining ingredients in a blender and puree for a few seconds. Add water if necessary and blend a few seconds longer. When using the paste in cooking, fry it over high heat a few minutes before adding other ingredients.

Lemongrass Chicken (1)

750g boneless, skinless chicken breasts
1-2 stalks fresh lemongrass (2 tablespoons minced)
1 1/2 tablespoons honey
3 cloves garlic, minced
3 tablespoons fish sauce or soy sauce
1 large onion, thinly sliced
1 1/2 tablespoons canola oil
3 tablespoons fresh coriander for garnish

Cut the chicken breasts into strips. Combine chicken, honey and 1 tablespoon of fish sauce and marinate 10 minutes. Trim the green leaves and root end off the lemongrass stalk and remove the outside leaves. What remains will be a greenish cream-colored core about 12cm long. Mince finely. Just before serving, heat a large non-stick frypan or wok over high heat and swirl in the oil. Add the garlic and lemongrass and stir fry until fragrant but not brown, about 15 seconds. Add the chicken and stir fry until the pieces turn white. Move the chicken to the sides and add the onion. Stir fry until the onion is tender about 1 minute. Mix the chicken back in the center, add remaining fish sauce, continue frying until the chicken is cooked, 2-3 minutes. Add more honey or fish sauce to taste. Sprinkle with coriander to serve. Makes 4 servings.

Lemongrass Chicken (2)

1kg whole chicken
1 1/4 cups water
salt and pepper to taste
6-8 lemongrass leaves, roughly chopped
1 tablespoon corn flour
milk

Place the chicken on a saucer in a saucepan. Add the water, sprinkle salt and pepper over and heap the lemongrass onto the breast. Cover and bring to the boil, reduce heat and simmer for 2 hours, basting occasionally with the liquid. To eat hot, remove chicken and keep warm. Strain the liquid into a small saucepan and stir in a tablespoon corn flour blended to a smooth paste with a little milk. Stir until thickened and pour over the chicken. To eat the chicken cold, put it into a deep bowl and pour the strained liquid over it. Cool, then chill overnight. The liquid will have jelled and there will be a layer of fat which should be removed.

Lemongrass Coconut Sorbet

10 stalks lemongrass
1 1/2 cups sugar
1/4 teaspoon salt
1/4 cup lemon juice
1 cup coconut milk (stir before measuring)

Peel the tough outer layers from the lemongrass and discard them. Cut the remainder into 1cm lengths. In a saucepan over high heat, combine lemongrass, sugar, salt and 2 1/2 cups water. Stir until liquid

comes to the boil. Reduce heat, simmer, stirring occasionally, until light golden, about 20 minutes. Pour through a fine strainer, pressing on the solids to extract moisture. Discard solids. Place the bowl in a larger bowl of ice water and stir syrup until cool, about 5 minutes. Stir in lemon juice. Whisk in the coconut milk. If mixture is lumpy, pour through a fine strainer. Pour into an ice cream maker and freeze. Or freeze in a suitable dish until just firm, 2-4 hours. Scoop into bowls, or scrape with a large fork to form a slushy ice. Serve immediately.

Lemongrass Ice Cream

3 cups milk
4 stalks chopped lemongrass, white part only
250g sugar
1 vanilla bean, split lengthwise and scraped
3/4 cup egg yolks
2 cups heavy cream

In a saucepan, simmer milk with lemongrass and reduce by one-third. Steep several hours or overnight. Strain out lemongrass and heat with sugar and vanilla bean. Bring to scalding. Whisk the yolks. Temper the yolks by adding only a ladle of hot milk to the yolks. Mix well then add tempered yolks back to the saucepan. Whisk constantly over medium heat for 2 minutes. Strain and cool in an ice bath. When mixture is cooled add cream. Freeze in an ice-cream maker according to manufacturer's instructions. If desired serve with chopped pineapple mixed with chopped mint leaves, and coconut macaroons.

Lemongrass Syllabub

4 stems lemongrass, chopped finely
20g chopped fresh ginger
120g castor sugar
200ml water
300ml thickened cream
1 tablespoon brandy
2 tablespoons lime juice

Place the lemongrass, ginger, castor sugar and water in a saucepan, stir over heat until sugar has dissolved. Boil for 10 minutes, then leave to cool. Strain. May be stored in the fridge for up to 3 weeks. Delicious spooned over ice cream. To make the syllabub, add the syrup, brandy, and lime juice to the cream and whisk together until soft peaks form. Serve in glass dishes with a few gratings of lime zest if desired.

The syllabub can also be used as a filling for Pavlova. Fill a pavlova case with the syllabub, sprinkle over some cubed mango. Sweeten some passionfruit pulp with a little sugar, then drizzle over the mango.

Minted Lemongrass Sorbet

3 stalks lemongrass, outer leaves discarded
3 cups water
3/4 cups fresh mint leaves
3/4 cups sugar

Thinly slice as much of lemongrass stalks as possible, discarding dried thin upper portion. In a saucepan simmer water with lemongrass, covered, 5 minutes. Add mint and simmer, uncovered, 1 minute. Remove pan from heat and add sugar, stirring until dissolved. In a blender, puree mixture and strain through a fine sieve into a bowl, pressing hard on solids. Chill syrup, covered, until cold and freeze in an ice-cream maker. Sorbet may be made 1 week ahead. A piece of ginger root may be used instead of the mint, if desired.

Lemongrass Syrup

sugar

water

sliced lemongrass

lemongrass stalks

Combine equal parts of sugar and water and a generous amount of sliced lemongrass core in a small saucepan. Simmer over medium heat for 10 minutes, stirring to dissolve sugar. Remove from heat and cool. Fill a jar with a few lemon grass stalks. Strain syrup into jar. Cover and keep in the refrigerator. Use to poach pears and apricots, or brush over a basic cake, or drizzle some over cold mango and pawpaw.

Stir fried Beef

3 zucchini, cut in half crosswise, then into quarters lengthwise

1 tablespoon peanut oil

1 onion, cut in half lengthwise and then into slices lengthwise

1 teaspoon finely chopped fresh ginger

1 clove garlic, finely chopped

1 stalk lemongrass, finely sliced

2 small red chilies, finely sliced

200 g rump steak, thinly sliced

2 tomatoes, diced

2 tablespoons shredded mint leaves

1 tablespoon soy sauce

Steam the zucchini for 5 minutes or microwave on high for 40-60 seconds. Heat a frypan. Add oil and swirl to coat the sides. Add onion, ginger and garlic, stir fry until just colored, about 30 seconds. Add lemongrass and chilies. Stir fry for 10 seconds, add beef and stir fry until it browns. Add tomatoes and zucchini, cook for 1 minute. Stir in the mint and soy sauce. Serve immediately with rice.

Thai Green Chicken Curry

90 g coriander leaves

1 stem lemongrass, white part only, chopped

1 tablespoon fish sauce

2 green chilies

2 teaspoons sesame oil

2 tablespoons oil

6 curry leaves

1 2/3 cups coconut milk

500g chicken thigh fillets, cut into thick strips

3 hard-boiled eggs, cut into quarters

coriander leaves for garnish

Put the coriander, lemon grass, fish sauce, chillies and sesame oil in a food process and process for 3 minutes or until mixture forms a smooth paste. Heat remaining oil in a frypan, add paste and curry leaves, cook for 3 minutes. Pour in coconut milk and 1 cup water. Simmer gently for 10 minutes. Add chicken and simmer for 10 minutes or until tender. Stir in the eggs and cook for 3-4 minutes until heated through. Spoon onto a bed of steamed rice or noodles and garnish with the coriander leaves.

Tomato Lemongrass Salsa

2 stalks lemongrass
2 green or red chiles, finely chopped
1 large tomato, coarsely diced
1 small red onion, finely diced
2 tablespoons chopped coriander
2 tablespoons olive oil
2 tablespoons rice vinegar
1 tablespoon sesame oil
salt

Combine all ingredients and let sit at room temperature for about one hour, then refrigerate. Use within one day.

Lemongrass and Tomato Sauce

3-4 lemongrass stalks
3-4 chopped tomatoes
1 capsicum, cut into chunks
sprig thyme
1-2 chillies, or to taste, chopped
3-4 Kaffir lime leaves
2 cloves garlic, chopped
1 tablespoon lemon-flavored olive oil (optional)
1 tablespoon olive oil
salt and pepper to taste
1 teaspoon sugar

Use only the base of the lemongrass stalks for best flavour. Squash them flat to soften, then slice finely. Put the tomatoes, capsicum, thyme, chillies, onions, Kaffir lime leaves and garlic into an ovenproof dish. Sprinkle over with the lemon olive oil and olive oil, season to taste and stir in the sugar. Bake in a hot oven for 45 minutes. Allow to cool, then put through a blender, then strain through a sieve if desired. Delicious served with chicken, steak, vegetables or over a herb omelets.