



Shiso



Perilla frutescens; also known as shiso, perilla, or beefsteak plant, is an easy to grow leafy green in the mint family.

Plant: Shiso seeds are planted in the spring and harvested in the summer and fall. Bury 2 seeds an inch deep, 6 to 12 inches apart in well-drained but moist soil with full to partial sun exposure or direct sow them in well-drained soil and lightly cover. The shiso seeds will germinate rapidly at 68 °F (20° C) or even a little cooler.

Grow: Shiso requires a moderate amount of water. If the weather is extremely hot, trim the flowering buds to create a lush, bushy plant. Flowers bloom from July to October and are white to purple, get to a height of 6 inches to 3 feet tall before dying off during frosts. After the first year of growing the shiso, the plant will easily self-seed as a "re-seeding annual" in successive seasons.

Harvest: The leaves and flowers are the prized portion of the shiso plant. To harvest while maintaining constant growth, trim the top leaves off, leaving the larger leaves on the bottom to collect light energy. Continue to cut new growth as it emerges. Allowing the plant to flower will change the flavor of the leaf so try to cut all flowering buds of the plant when they appear.

Nutrition Information:

Shiso leaves are rich in calcium and iron, and are used in Chinese medicine to treat asthma, colds, flu and other respiratory ailments.

How to Prepare:

Shiso has a unique flavor: pungent and grassy, it contains strong flavors of spearmint, basil, anise and cinnamon. Shiso leaves are either red or green. The red shiso is often described as having an anise flavor, whereas the green variety is said to be spicier and more like cinnamon. Ideally used raw in salads and sandwiches (the leaves will lose their flavor and discolor if cooked), its flavor and fragrance also go well with egg, fish and meat. Wrap fresh leaves around rice balls, cheese or salmon. Chop and mix with ginger root to garnish stir-fries or cooked meat or fish.



Shiso Chimichurri

Yields: 8 servings

Serving size: 2 Tbsp

Ingredients

- 2 red or green Thai chiles, with seeds, thinly sliced
- $\frac{3}{4}$ cup finely chopped Shiso
- 2 tablespoons toasted sesame oil
- 1 tablespoon soy sauce
- $\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon freshly ground black pepper

Preparation

1. Mix chiles, shiso, sesame oil, soy sauce, and pepper in a small bowl. Cover and chill, at least 3 hours. Will hold for up to one week.
2. Use as a marinade for fish, meat or vegetables before grilling or serve on the side as a condiment. Toss diced new potatoes in it before roasting. Use as a spread on sandwiches. Add to any salad dressing or mayo-based dressing, such as for potato salad or coleslaw, to add more flavor.

Nutrition Facts per Serving:

20 calories, 2 g fat, 0 g carbohydrates, 0 g fiber, 0 g protein