

Infosheet about the Indigenous Herbs & Spices available from Thoughtful Foods.

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This information has been compiled from the following: Recipe cards from Kurrajong Native Foods sample packs, Recipe cards from OzTukka five spice pack, www.bushtuckerstore.org, www.oztukka.com.au

1) Background Information

Using Indigenous Australian Spices

In general, like other spices, a lot of the flavour disappears during long cooking. Add the spices towards the end of cooking (last 15 minutes). Long cooking of most of these spices will bring out a slightly bitter eucalyptus flavour. The exception is mountain pepperberry – long cooking enhances its flavour and mellows the hotness. Store spices in an air tight container, in a cool dark place to preserve aroma and flavour.

Roasted Wattle Seed

Plant information

Wattle seed *Acacia victoriae* grows in the very arid parts of central Australia & the stuff in stock is wild harvested by Aboriginal people in the Northern Territory. Many Wattle's have edible seed including the Sydney Golden Wattle. It is generally gently harvested by hand from the wild and Aboriginal people have been using wattle seed for thousands of years as a staple food source but these days it is more commonly used as a spice when roasted and ground.

How to use this spice

As a flavouring anywhere you would like a chocolate, coffee, walnut & hazelnut flavour & aroma. Wattle seed's unique flavour evolves from the drying and roasting process after which the seeds are ground. Wattle seed is used in desserts, cake and bread and gives a delicious flavour to cream sauces and meat dishes. In uncooked dishes it is best to let the flavour infuse overnight & it also goes very well with milk products. For sweet dishes it blends well with vanilla and cinnamon while for savour flavour try it with lemon myrtle, bush tomato or mountain pepper. As a general rule of thumb use 1 teaspoon per 500 gram of other ingredients, in desserts use 1 tablespoon per 500 grams.

Makes a food caffeine free coffee, just add a teaspoon of wattle seed to a cup or plunger and pour over boiling water. Allow to stand for a few minutes. The used grounds can then be use again to flavour biscuits, cream, ice cream etc. as below.

Cooking ideas

Sprinkle wattle seed with cream for a delicious sauce for pasta, tofu or meat. Add 1-2 tablespoons to your favourite bread or cake recipes or sprinkle on tofu, chicken or fish with lemon myrtle before cooking. Add to a pancake batter or use in a cheese cake.

Mountain Pepper

Plant information

Mountain pepper, *Tasmannia lanceolata*, is a small tree growing to around 5 metres and is found in South Eastern New South Wales, Victoria and Tasmania. Both the leaves and berries contain a compound called polygodial which gives them their characteristic hot taste. Most of mountain pepper is wild harvested by hand however commercial plantations are now emerging to keep up with demand.

How to use this spice

The hotness of the pepper reduces with the cooking time so add a little just before serving if you like the peppery zing. Sprinkle mountain pepper leaf on chicken, fish, beef, pork or lamb before cooking, alone or in combination with other herbs or spices. Use in marinades, rub onto your meat or use in a dip.

Cooking ideas

Mountain pepper leaf goes especially well with potatoes. Try to add it to your favourite potato dish. It goes well with most vegetables and gives a delicious touch to your salad dressing, pasta dough, sauce or bread.

Lemon Myrtle & Pepperberry Seasoning

Plant information

This mix contains the lemon-citrus flavours of the Lemon Myrtle (*Backhousia citriodora*) & the hot peppery burst of Native Pepperberries (*Tamannia lanceolata*) that grow on Tasmania's west coast. Use this seasoning wherever you would traditionally use a lemon pepper or salt, it enhances flavours and livens up finger and fried foods, steamed veggies, rice, seafood dishes & sandwiches. The pepperberries will add purple flecks to any moist foods if allowed to sit a while.

Lemon myrtle, *Backhousia citriodora* is a beautiful medium sized rainforest tree found in the coastal rainforests of North Eastern Australia. Its leaves and flowers contain the world's highest concentration of citral (around 90-98%), an essential oil also found in lemon grass and the leaves are characterised by their strong lemon aroma. Plants are available from most good native plant nurseries. Lemon myrtle is fast becoming famous for its incredible flavour. Demand for the leaves has paved the way for commercial production in Northern NSW and Queensland.

Mountain pepper, *Tamannia lanceolata*, is a small tree growing to around 5 metres and is found in South Eastern New South Wales, Victoria and Tasmania. Both the leaves and berries contain a compound called polygodial which gives them their characteristic hot taste. Most of mountain pepper is wild harvested by hand however commercial plantations are now emerging to keep up with demand.

How to use this spice

The pepperberries have an incredible spicy fruity flavour followed by a hot peppery taste. Put them in your peppermill and taste the difference! Store the pepper mill in a dry place or the berries reabsorb moisture. If it happens you can easily re-dry them in a conventional oven. Use mountain pepper berries in any dish you would like to add a bit of zing to. The hotness of the pepper will reduce with the cooking time so add a little just before serving if you like the peppery zing.

As a spice use Lemon Myrtle anywhere you would use lemongrass, lime or lemon zest. The flavour is very strong- it has a unique lemon flavour with eucalyptus notes in the background. The remarkable flavour is best enhanced if added just before cooking is finished. It should only be cooked for 10-15 minutes. Add to your favourite tea blend for a wonderful lemon and lime infusion & it also makes a refreshing herbal tea with a high quality lemon flavour.

Cooking ideas

Slow cooking enhances the full flavour of the pepper berry while removing the hotness; it is excellent in dishes like casseroles and soups. In uncooked dishes it is recommended to prepare a day in advance as the flavour and hotness will increase over time. The re-hydrated berries release a beautiful purple colour. Sprinkle ground berries onto meat before cooking, add to marinades, grind it over salads or sandwiches. Add to your pasta dough or your sauce. Lemon Myrtle is superb with pork, fish, tofu and chicken and in desserts. Just sprinkle a little on before cooking. Add to steamed rice, sprinkle over fish with a little salt during cooking or as a finishing spice. Blend lemon myrtle with oil and vinegar for a salad dressing. Lemon myrtle works wonderfully with milk products. Add it to dressings and sauces, ice cream or a

cheesecake recipe. You can make great tasting biscuits and short bread by adding a little to a plain recipe. Experiment, you will find lemon myrtle to be extremely versatile.

Lemon Myrtle Rainforest Spice

Plant information

Lemon myrtle, *Backhousia citriodora* is a beautiful medium sized rainforest tree found in the coastal rainforests of North Eastern Australia. Its leaves and flowers contain the world's highest concentration of citral (around 90-98%), an essential oil also found in lemon grass and the leaves are characterised by their strong lemon aroma. Plants are available from most good native plant nurseries. Lemon myrtle is fast becoming famous for its incredible flavour. Demand for the leaves has paved the way for commercial production in Northern NSW and Queensland.

How to use this spice:

As a spice anywhere you would use lemongrass, lime or lemon zest. The flavour from lemon myrtle is very strong- it has a unique lemon flavour with eucalyptus notes in the background. The remarkable flavour is best enhanced if added just before cooking is finished. It should only be cooked for 10-15 minutes.

Cooking ideas

Add to your favourite tea blend for a wonderful lemon and lime infusion & it also makes a refreshing herbal tea with a high quality lemon flavour. To make a cup of tea, place a teaspoon of lemon myrtle in a tea strainer, pour boiling water over and let infuse for 3-5 minutes. It is superb with pork, fish, tofu and chicken and in desserts. Just sprinkle a little on before cooking. Add to steamed rice, sprinkle over fish with a little salt during cooking or as a finishing spice. Blend lemon myrtle with oil and vinegar for a salad dressing. Lemon myrtle works wonderfully with milk products. Add it to dressings and sauces, ice cream or a cheesecake recipe. You can make great tasting biscuits and short bread by adding a little to a plain recipe. Experiment, you will find lemon myrtle to be extremely versatile.

Bush Tomato Akatjurra

Plant information

Bush Tomato *Solanum centrale* is a small desert bush with silver leaves and purple flowers. It grows on the red sandhills in the Simpson Desert. It is a relative of the tomato and potato, this plant is a perennial and like many other Australian plants, thrives after bushfires. The fruit is left on the bush to dry before picking. The aboriginal tribes of Central and Eastern Australia have gathered these dried fruits for thousands of years relying on them as a staple food that was very important and nutritious food source for desert tribes. It is now used as a spice, it is mostly wild harvested by hand by Aboriginal communities, though some commercial plantations are now emerging. The Bush Tomato we have in stock is collected by the Alyawaar Aboriginal Tribe east of Alice Springs in the Northern Territory and its Aboriginal name is 'Akatjurra'

How to use this spice

Bush tomato has a wonderful subtle flavour of delicate caramelised, sun-dried tomato with a slight bitter taste to it and brings a new and notable flavour to your cooking. Use as a spice to flavour traditional tomato dishes, curst on steak, salmon or use as a dukkah with fresh crusty white bread and olive oil. Use sparingly and add salt to balance any bitterness.

Cooking Ideas

Bush tomato can be used whole or you can grind it easily in a mortar or just chop it roughly with a knife. It will work as a thickener as it re-hydrates in cooking. Add towards the end of cooking (last 15 minutes). It complements other spices like coriander, wattle seed, lemon myrtle, salt, mustard, thyme and mountain pepper and it enhances the tomato flavour when cooked in dishes with a tomato base. It is tasty in casseroles, soups, marinades, sauces and dips. Add to meatloaf or rissoles, or mix with butter and mountain pepper leaf and use on steaks, or spread on

gourmet bread and toast under grill or on a BBQ. You can also serve bush tomatoes whole with a cheese platter or some tapas.

Bush Tomato Seasoning

Plant information

Bush Tomato *Solanum centrale* is a small desert bush with silver leaves and purple flowers. It grows on the red sandhills in the Simpson Desert. It is a relative of the tomato and potato, this plant is a perennial and like many other Australian plants, thrives after bushfires. The fruit is left on the bush to dry before picking. The aboriginal tribes of Central and Eastern Australia have gathered these dried fruits for thousands of years relying on them as a staple food that was very important and nutritious food source for desert tribes. It is now used as a spice, it is mostly wild harvested by hand by Aboriginal communities, though some commercial plantations are now emerging. The Bush Tomato we have in stock is collected by the Alyawaar Aboriginal Tribe east of Alice Springs in the Northern Territory and its Aboriginal name is 'Akatjurra'

How to use this spice

As a finishing seasoning to taste on just about everything.

Cooking ideas

Use bush tomato seasoning to flavour traditional tomato dishes, crusts on steaks, tofu, salmon, potato & wedges. Sprinkle over a caesar salad to finish or around the plate to add a tasty crust. Add towards the end of cooking (last 15 minutes). It complements other spices like coriander, wattle seed, lemon myrtle, salt, mustard, thyme and mountain pepper and it enhances the tomato flavour when cooked in dishes with a tomato base. It is tasty in casseroles, soups, marinades, sauces and dips. Add to meatloaf or rissoles, or mix with butter and mountain pepper leaf and use on steaks, or spread on gourmet bread and toast under grill or on a BBQ.

Forestberry Herb

Plant information

Forestberry Herb is from a type of Eucalypt also called the Strawberry Gum.

How to use this spice

Forestberry Herb has a pleasant strawberry passionfruit aroma and flavour. It is most often used as a flavour enhancer where it does not add its own distinctive flavour but rather brings other flavours together and makes them more distinct -strange but true!

Cooking ideas

Forestberry Herb is a great enhancer of curries, mustard or vinaigrette, stir fry sauces, chutneys & fruit cake or anywhere you are using rich fruit flavours. It can be used to make a fruit strawberry eucalypt tea.

Native Mint

Plant information

Native Mint *Prostanthera incisa* is dense shrub that grows up to 1.5m high. It has an overpowering but delicious mint flavour & aroma – just brushing past one of these shrubs is enough to release its wonderful scent and oil. The native mint we have in stock is grown on small organic plantations in northern NSW.

How to use this spice

Native mint is strong robust mint with aromatic and cooling qualities. It has a complex minty flavour with a peppery after taste. A smooth but woody eucalyptus afternote comes from the Native Mint whilst the strong aroma has a 'wet forest' & Eucalypt sort of character. The flavour of native mint is quite strong therefore it should be used sparingly. It goes well with pork, lamb, veal and vegetarian dishes. When used in uncooked dishes the notable flavour of the leaf will enhance over time. It loses some flavour in baking but is well suited in microwave dishes or as a liquid infusion.

Cooking ideas

Native mint tastes great on it's own in cooking but also works well with ginger and lemon myrtle. Use native mint to flavour marinades, salad dressings, mustards and through chutneys where mint is called for. It can also be used in making sauces, savoury dressings, apple jellies & ice cream. Sprinkle a little on meat before light pan-frying. Add some native mint to your pasta dough or to your sauce. For a great tasting savoury bread try adding $\frac{3}{4}$ teaspoon of native mint to your favourite bread recipe. Mix it with some cream cheese and a little crème fraiche or sour cream for a delicious spread or dip. Allow to infuse in fresh boiled water for 3 to 5 minutes to make a soothing peppermint tea which may also help relieve period pain.

2) Recipes Galore!

Starters and Dips

'Akatjurra' Bush Tomato Dip Version 1

300 millilitres sour cream
2 tablespoons chopped purple or green basil
4 tablespoons tomato paste
1 teaspoon salt
1 teaspoon crushed garlic
dash or two of tobasco
1 teaspoon mountain pepper or ½ tablespoon pepperberries
2 tablespoons of bush tomato

Whack all the ingredients in your mixer and set on medium for about 3 minutes, scrapping sides with spatula until the mix is uniform in colour and texture. Alternatively, mix by hand until uniform. Flavour matures overnight, especially the finer tastes of Akatjurra so make the day before use. Keeps well for at least a week and freezes well.

Bush Tomato Dip Version 2

Serves: 10-12 people

Preparation time: 20 minutes

Cooking time: nil

250 millilitres sour cream
125 grams cream cheese
1 teaspoon mountain pepper leaf
1 teaspoon lemon myrtle
1-1½ tablespoons ground bush tomato
¼ teaspoon asafoetida powder or 1 tablespoon very finely chopped onion
½ teaspoon salt
½ teaspoon sugar
¼ teaspoon ground mountain pepperberry
1 skinned tomato, chopped finely
1 tablespoon chopped fresh coriander

Mix all ingredients. Leave to infuse overnight.

Bush Tomato Dip Version 3

300 millilitres sour cream
2 tablespoons chopped fresh basil
4 tablespoons tomato paste
1 teaspoon salt
1 teaspoon crushed garlic
dash of tobasco
1 teaspoon mountain pepper or ½ tablespoon pepperberries
2 tablespoons of bush tomato seasoning

Whack all the ingredients in your mixer and set on medium for about 3 minutes, scrapping sides with spatula until the mix is uniform in colour and texture. Alternatively, mix by hand until uniform. Flavour matures overnight, especially the finer tastes of Akajurra so make the day before use. Keeps well for at least a week and freezes well

Pumpkin Soup

Serves: 6-8 people

Preparation time: 15 minutes

Cooking time: 1 hour

4 cm fresh ginger

1 onion
1 kilogram pumpkin
750 millilitres stock, enough to cover pumpkin
lemon myrtle to taste
mountain pepper leaf to taste
salt to taste

Cut ginger and onion into smaller pieces and sauté in a little oil. Cut pumpkin into smaller pieces and add to onion and ginger. Pour the stock over and bring to a boil. Reduce heat and let the pumpkin simmer until very tender. Puree the pumpkin to a smooth soup. Add lemon myrtle, mountain pepper leaf and salt to taste. Serve with a dollop of sour cream and freshly chopped parsley.

Noodle Soup

Serves 6

1.2 litres good quality vegetable stock
1 stick celery
1 small leek
250 grams fresh rice noodle
150 grams baby bok choy or other Asian green
½ teaspoon lemon myrtle or to taste

Bring the stock to the boil. Add celery and leek and cook for a few minutes, then add rice noodles and help them to separate using a fork. Add the baby bok choy, cook for minute then add lemon myrtle to taste and serve in individual bowls.

Bush Spiced Polenta with Baked Beetroot and Fennel Salad

Serves 6

250 millilitres polenta
1 ½ teaspoon mountain pepper leaf
1 teaspoon lemon myrtle
1 litre water salted

Salad

6 small beetroots
4 tablespoons pine nuts, roasted
2 small fennel
80 grams fetta cheese
Rocket leaves (enough for six small salads)

Dressing

2 tablespoons Dijon mustard
2 tablespoons balsamic vinegar
2 tablespoons macadamia oil

To make polenta follow instructions on polenta pack. Add spices towards the end of cooking. Wet a square disk or container, press polenta into dish, levelling the top and allow to cool. Roast the beetroot and fennel in a moderate oven until cooked. Allow to cool. Slice polenta into 1cm thick slices and grill until golden brown. Arrange on six plates. Mix dressing. Chop beetroot and fennel into large chunks. Dizzle some of the balsamic vinegar over the beetroot and separate. Toss fennel with rocket and remaining dressing. Serve on top of polenta with beetroot, sprinkle with pine nuts and crumbled fetta

Main Courses

Potato Pancake with Mushroom Sauté and Rocket Salad.

Serves 6

1 kilogram potatoes
1 teaspoon salt
2 teaspoons mountain pepper leaf
180 gram flour (wheat or a gluten free mix) amount needed may depend on type of potato used
Oil for frying

Potato pancake

Boil the potatoes with their skin on. Cool slightly, peel and mash with salt and mountain pepper. Cool completely. Knead the mash with the flour. Amount of flour needed may vary depending on the type of potato used. The dough should be a consistency that can be rolled out. Divide the dough into 12 balls. Roll each ball out into a pancake 15-20 cm in diameter. Fry the pancakes on a pan with a little oil, turning frequently. This step can be done hours before serving. Reheat the pancakes in oven or microwave.

Mixed mushroom sauté

200 grams mixed mushrooms (whatever is available, even better if you can collect your own)
10 grams of dried shiitake mushrooms
1 small leek
1 small zucchini (100 grams)
100 millilitres cream (optional, you can use water or stock with a little cornflour instead)
1 sprig rosemary
Lemon myrtle to taste
Salt to taste

Soak shiitake mushrooms in just enough warm water to cover them. Slice the leek and zucchini in one centimetre slices. Break or cut mushrooms into desirable pieces (not too small). Sauté leek and rosemary then add zucchini. Sauté for a few minutes and add the mixed mushrooms. Add shiitake and cream. Add salt and lemon myrtle to taste.

To serve

Arrange two folded pancakes on each plate. Arrange the mixed mushroom sauté inside the folded pancake. Serve it with a rocket salad tossed with vinaigrette.

Avocado and Tomato Sandwiches with Lemon Myrtle Pepperberry Seasoning

1/3 ripe avocado per sandwich
2/3 ripe tomato thickly sliced & not refrigerated
fresh soy-linseed bread
lemon myrtle pepperberry seasoning

Moosh the avocado on one slice of bread. Sprinkle well with the seasoning. Lay the tomato over right to the edges. Sprinkle with a tiny bit more seasoning. Top with bread and hook right into it! Repeat....

Scrambled Eggs with Bush Tomato Seasoning

2 to 4 eggs per person
1 tablespoon of milk per egg
Fresh parsley and garlic chives to taste

1 tablespoon of bush tomato seasoning

Add eggs and milk to saucepan, bamiz or wizz the mix until it is creamy and uniform in colour and texture and has bubbles in it. Add parsley and small amount of garlic chives and bush tomato seasoning. Cook over medium heat, stirring continuously until cooked, careful not to burn on the base of the saucepan. Serve on seed toast and sprinkle liberally with bush tomato seasoning.

Roasted Capsicum and Bush Tomato Pasta Sauce

Serves: 8 people

Preparation time: 45 minutes

Cooking time: 25 minutes

3 red capsicums
1 onion
oil for frying
1 pear
2 large tomatoes
1 teaspoon ground mountain pepper berry
1 tablespoon finely chopped bush tomato
2 dessertspoons vinegar
½ teaspoon salt (optional)

Roast and skin capsicums. To do this cut capsicums into large flat sections then place under griller on high until skin turns black. Place in plastic bag to cool, remove skin and discard, then chop into small pieces. Sauté onion in a little oil, chop pear and tomatoes into small pieces and add to onions. Simmer for 15 minutes then add roasted capsicum, spices and vinegar. Using a hand blender, blend into a sauce. Serve with pasta.

Pasta Sauce with Native Mint

Serves: 4 people

Preparation time: 15 minutes

Cooking time: 30 minutes

600 grams ripe tomatoes (skinned)
250 grams mushrooms (cleaned, sliced)
50 grams pitted black olives (sliced in half)
1 teaspoon native mint
½ tablespoon bush tomato (finely chopped)
50 millilitres dry white wine
100 grams firm feta cheese (chopped into 1cm squares)

Pan fry mushroom slices to reduce moisture, set aside. Chop tomatoes into large chunks and cook in a saucepan until excess juice has been reduced. Add mushrooms, olives, native mint, bush tomato and wine then simmer for 5 minutes or until sauce consistency is achieved. Add more wine if necessary. Finally, reduce heat and add the feta cheese stirring only enough to mix evenly. Too much stirring will break the feta down. Allow to heat through (approx 2 minutes) then remove from heat.

Serve with pasta of choice and prosciutto ham on the side. Garnish with parmesan cheese.

Side Dishes and Condiments

Baked or Semi Dried Tomatoes

Serves: 6 people

Preparation time: 10 minutes

Cooking time: 2-4 hours

Roma tomatoes
Ground bush tomatoes
Mountain pepper leaf
Salt
Oil

Halve the tomatoes, spray them with cooking oil and sprinkle them with salt, ground bush tomatoes and mountain pepper. Bake them for 2-4 hours depending on how moist you want them at 150°C (300°F)

Bush Spiced Potatoes

Serves: 6 people

Preparation time: 20 minutes

Cooking time: 45 minutes

800 grams potatoes
50 millilitres oil
½ teaspoon salt
1 teaspoon mountain pepper leaf
1 teaspoon ground bush tomatoes

Peel potatoes and cut wedges or small squares. Mix oil, spices and potatoes. Bake in oven for 45 minutes at 200°C (400°F). Turn regularly while cooking.

Crispy Potato Wedges

Serves: 4 people

Preparation time: 20 minutes

Cooking time: 45 minutes

600 gram potatoes
100 millilitres breadcrumbs
½ teaspoon salt
1 teaspoon ground bush tomatoes
½ teaspoon mountain pepper leaf
½ teaspoon wattle seed
1½ teaspoon thyme

Mix spices and breadcrumbs in a plastic bag. Peel potatoes and cut into wedges. Place a handful of potato wedges in the plastic bag and shake it to cover the potatoes with the crumb mix. Repeat with all potato wedges. Place the "crumbed" wedges on baking paper and bake in the oven for 30-45 minutes at 200°C (400°F). Turn them a couple of times while cooking.

Grilled Marinated Vegetables

Serves: 4-6 people Preparation time: 40 minutes + 1½ hours marinating

Cooking time:

30 minutes

2 eggplants
2 red capsicums
3 small squash/zucchini
12 small mushrooms
12 walnuts, optional

Marinade

50 millilitres olive oil

50 millilitres white balsamic vinegar
2 cloves of garlic, crushed or chopped very finely
¼ teaspoon lemon myrtle
½ mountain pepper leaf
1 tablespoon broad leaf parsley, chopped

Cut the eggplant and squash in 5 mm slices (lengthwise, diagonal or crosswise). If the eggplant is a little bit old, sprinkle with salt and leave for 15 minutes then rinse off and dry them. The salt will reduce the bitter taste from an older eggplant. Cut the stem off the mushroom to make it level with the cap. Cut the capsicum in strips, removing seeds and membrane. Place all the vegetables in a dish and pour the marinade over them. Leave in fridge for 1½ hours. Leave the marinated vegetables on the bench top for 15 minutes before you either: 1) Fry on a pan, 2) Bake them under the grill in the oven or 3) Grill them on your BBQ. Brush frequently with the marinade while cooking. You can serve them warm, lukewarm or cold as a side dish, in pita bread, as a sandwich with Turkish bread or with some crisp Italian bread, lemon myrtle pesto or yoghurt dip.

TIP! The marinade makes a good salad dressing as well.

Grilled Polenta with Bush Spices

Serves: 6 people Preparation: 20 minutes + cooling time Cooking time: 30 minutes

1 litre water or stock
250 millilitres polenta
1 tablespoon finely ground bush tomato
1 tablespoon ground coriander
1 teaspoon mountain pepper leaf
1 teaspoon lemon myrtle

Bring water/stock to the boil and pour in the polenta while continuously stirring. Reduce the heat and let it simmer while stirring until it becomes thick enough to hold a spoon. Approximately 10 minutes. Mix in the spices. Rinse a dish (10 x 20 cm approximately) in cold water and spoon the cooked polenta into it. Let it cool, preferably until the next day. Tip the polenta and out cut 5-10mm slices. Spray the slices with cooking oil and grill or fry on pan until golden and crisp.

Bush Tomato and Red Wine Sauce

1 ½ tablespoons ground bush tomato
¼ teaspoon mountain pepper
Pinch of salt
1 ½ onions, finely chopped
1 tablespoon tomato paste
3 cups lambrusco or rose
3 tablespoons sugar
1 ½ tablespoons butter

Gently cook the onions, tomato paste, bush tomato, wine, salt and sugar in a pan until the volume has reduced by half. Add the mountain pepper and cooking juices from your tofu or steaks. Remove from heat and whisk through the butter, pouring over the tofu or steaks so serve or put in a gravy jug to serve. Serve with tofu or beef or lamb with steamed potatoes or rice and a good bottle of red.

Beurre Blanc

Serves: 4 people

Preparation time: 10 minutes

Cooking time: 30 minutes

50 g chopped onion

100 millilitres white wine

250 millilitres cream

50 g butter

1 stock cube

½-1 teaspoon lemon myrtle

Sauté the onion and add the wine. Reduce until the wine has almost gone. Add the cream, lemon myrtle and stock cube. Reduce until it has the desired consistency. Remove the sauce from the heat and whisk in the cold butter.

TIP! You can use stock instead of cream.

TIP! You can use mountain pepper leaf instead of lemon myrtle.

Lemon Myrtle Hollandaise

Serves: 4-6 people

Preparation time: 10 minutes

Cooking time: 15 minutes

3 egg yolks

3 teaspoons white wine

150 grams clarified butter

½ teaspoon lemon myrtle

Whisk egg yolk and wine in a bowl over a saucepan with simmering water. Continue whipping while gradually adding butter and lemon myrtle.

TIP! If the egg mixture is too thick, the temperature is too high. Turn the heat down and add a few drops of water. If egg mixture gets frothy and not thickening, the temperature needs to be increased.

TIP! This sauce goes very well with seafood, eye fillet, asparagus spears, egg dishes, chicken, tofu or steamed vegetables

Bush Butters

Serves: 6-8 people for each of the butters

Preparation time: 10 minutes

Cooking: nil

Mountain Pepper Butter

125 grams butter

1½ teaspoons mountain pepper leaf

1 tablespoon chopped capers

1 tablespoon chopped olives

¼ teaspoon freshly ground mountain pepper berry

Bush Tomato Butter

125 grams butter

1 tablespoons tomato concentrate
2 teaspoons bush tomato
¼ teaspoon freshly ground mountain pepper berry
2 tablespoons chopped sun dried tomatoes (optional)

Lemon Pepper Butter

125 grams butter
1 teaspoon lemon myrtle
½ teaspoon freshly ground mountain pepper berry

Lemon Dill Butter

125 grams butter
1 tablespoon chopped fresh dill
1 teaspoon lemon myrtle

Cream the butter and mix with the rest of the ingredients. For a fuller flavour leave overnight to infuse.

Use the butter for roasted jacket potatoes, on your steak or vegetables. You can also serve on bruschetta or fresh Italian bread as tapas or a side dish.

Bread

Country Bread

Serves 6
minutes

Preparation time: 30 minutes + 1 hour resting time

Cooking time: 30

25 gram butter or margarine
200 millilitres milk
200 millilitres buttermilk
25 grams fresh yeast or 2 ½ teaspoons dried yeast
2 teaspoons salt
1 teaspoon mountain pepper leaf
200 grams wholemeal flour
300 grams white flour

Handmade with fresh yeast

Heat the milk and butter, until the butter has melted. Mix with buttermilk. Make sure the mix is slightly warm then add the yeast. Add salt and mountain pepper. Mix in the flour, holding back a little. Knead the dough on a flat surface adding more flour if necessary. Knead for 10 minutes. Let the dough rest until double in size, approximately 45 minutes. Punch down the dough and shape the bread. Let it rest 20 minutes. Brush with milk, sprinkle with flour and score the top of the bread with a knife. Bake for 30 minutes at 200° C (400° F).

Bread machine

This bread is easily made in a bread machine. Follow the manufacturers instruction. Use dried yeast instead of fresh.

Tips for bread making

Kneading:

Kneading the bread dough is a very important part of bread making. The kneading develops the gluten in the flour ensuring a well-structured loaf of bread. It will rise better and give a soft crumb and a crisp crust. You should knead your dough for 5-10 minutes or until it feels elastic and has a smooth surface.

Baking time

If you tap your finger on the underside of the bread and it sounds hollow - the bread is finished.

Flour

There is a big variation in flour. Ideally you should use flour with about 12% protein. It is the protein that forms the gluten. You can add gluten flour to your flour if it is low in protein. The water content in the flour is variable too. You might have to add more liquid or use less than what is stated in the recipe. If you use stone ground, whole meal, rye flour etc, the protein level will be lower or nil. Mix it with fine wheat flour or expect much denser bread.

Desserts

Lemon Myrtle & Wattle Seed Mousse

Serves: 6 people

Preparation time: 30 minutes + 2-3 hours setting time + overnight infusion

Cooking time: nil

400 millilitres buttermilk
400 millilitres cream
6 tablespoons caster sugar
2 tablespoons gelatine
1½ teaspoons lemon myrtle
3 teaspoons wattle seed
Fruit and fruit pulp to serve

Take two bowls. Put 200 ml buttermilk and 3 tablespoons of caster sugar in each. Whisk to dissolve sugar. Grind lemon myrtle to a powder in a mortar and add to one bowl then grind the wattle seed and add to the other bowl. Add one tablespoon of gelatine dissolved in a little hot water to each bowl. Put the bowls in the fridge to cool and start setting while whipping the cream. When the two mixtures have started to set, gently mix in half the cream in each bowl. Transfer to your desired mould, refrigerate and allow setting.

TIP! To enhance the flavour let the mousse infuse overnight.

Lemon Myrtle Ice Cream

Serves: 8 people

Preparation time: 20 minutes + 4 hours freezing time

Cooking time: nil

½ litre of cream

4 egg whites

4 egg yolks

4 tablespoons pure icing sugar

1 tablespoon lemon myrtle

Whip egg whites till they form soft peaks. Set aside. Whip egg yolks and sugar till light and fluffy. Set aside. Whip the cream. Mix with egg yolk and sugar mix and lemon myrtle. Gently mix in egg whites, making sure you don't beat the air out of the egg whites. Pour into your choice of container and freeze till hardened (approximately 4 hours, depending on the size of your container).

Tip! For a different flavour you can substitute the lemon myrtle with 1 tablespoon wattle seed

Wattle Seed Ice Cream

1 litre of premium vanilla ice cream

2 teaspoons of wattle seed

Simply add the wattle seed into a glass and add just enough boiling water to cover to the grounds. Allow to cool. Allow ice cream to partially thaw, put in a large mixing bowl and add the cooled wattleseed grounds. Mix well, put back into the ice cream tub and refreeze. If making your own ice cream, add wattleseed before churning.

Lemon Myrtle Cheese Cake Version 1

Serves: 10 people

Preparation time: 30 minutes

Cooking time: nil

250 grams sweet biscuits (Granita)

150 grams butter

250 grams cream cheese

250 grams ricotta cheese

300 millilitres cream

200 millilitres castor sugar

1 - 1½ tablespoon lemon myrtle

1 tablespoon gelatine

100 millilitres hot water

Base

Combine crushed biscuits and melted butter and press into a cheesecake dish.

Topping

Beat cream the cheeses until soft. Add sugar and lemon myrtle. Dissolve gelatine in the water. Whip cream. Combine gelatine and cheese mixture. Fold the whipped cream through. Pour over biscuit base and leave in fridge to set.

Lemon Myrtle Cheesecake Version 2

Base

¾ packet of plain sweet biscuits
130 grams melted butter

Crush into small crumbs, mix in butter and press into a pie or flan plate.

Filling

125 grams margarine
250 grams cream cheese
1 cup caster sugar
1 teaspoon vanilla essence
1 tablespoon lemon myrtle.

Put all the ingredients in a mixer and cream until light and fluffy. Pour over biscuit base and place in refrigerator overnight. Flavour improves over two days so make a day or so before use to allow the lemon myrtle to infuse the filling.

Lemon Myrtle Pancakes

1 ½ teaspoons lemon myrtle
200 millilitres milk
2 eggs
1 ¼ cups self raising flour
2 tablespoons sugar
Pinch of salt
Butter for frying

Whack all ingredients in your mixer and set on high for about three minutes until the mix is smooth and bubbly. Alternatively whisk until lumps are gone. Grease fry pan with butter/ oil. Pour dollops into a thick based frypan over medium heat, flip each pancake after bubbles have risen and popped and the bottom is golden brown. Serve with coulis, ice cream, maple syrup etc. sprinkle with a little lemon myrtle for effect.

Rhubarb, Vanilla and Lemon Myrtle Tart

Rhubarb

300 gram rhubarb
½ teaspoon lemon myrtle
75 gram sugar
1 vanilla bean or 1 teaspoon vanilla essence
Sour cream or whipped cream to serve

Thinly slice rhubarb diagonally. Place in saucepan with sugar and vanilla bean cut in half length ways. Warm up slowly to allow sugar to melt. Boil gently until rhubarb is tender. Stir lightly to keep the texture of sliced rhubarb. When cooked add the lemon myrtle to taste. Can be made days ahead. Keep refrigerated in a sealed jar.

Biscuit base

60 gram butter
75 gram rice flour
40 gram sugar

1 tablespoon wattle seed
2 tablespoons shredded coconut (10 grams)
100 grams finely chopped macadamia nuts

Beat butter and sugar. Mix in wattle seed, water and coconut. Add the nuts and flour. Divide into six portions. Press each portion into a biscuit 10 cm in diameter. Bake at 175 ° Cook for 15 minutes or until golden brown. Keeps in an airtight container like any biscuit.

To serve

Place a biscuit base on each plate. Spoon some rhubarb on top and finish with a dollop of sour cream (or whipped cream). You can garnish with a sprinkle of lemon myrtle.

Wattle Seed Pavlova

Serves 6

Meringue

3 egg whites (easier to separate cold)
Pinch of cream of tartar
130 grams castor sugar

Filling

300 millilitres cream
100 gram white chocolate (melted)
1 tablespoons wattle seed
1 teaspoon white vinegar

Topping

50 gram caster sugar
1 tablespoon wattle seed
25 gram hazelnuts chopped
2 tablespoons water
80 grams macadamia nuts, chopped

Preheat oven to 150° C. beat egg whites with cream of tartar (at room temperature) until soft peaks form. Gradually add sugar, beating constantly for five to ten minutes until sugar dissolves. Fold in vinegar. On a lined baking tray form six bases, 8 centimetres in diameter. Bake for 40 minutes or until crisp on the surface. Allow to cool slowly in oven.

Filling

Beat cream until soft peaks form, add cooled chocolate and wattle seed

Topping

Roast nuts five minutes in a 200° C oven. Melt sugar and water in a small pan, when boiling add wattle seed and nuts. Stir until nuts are covered in caramel then turn it out onto grease proof paper to cool. You might have to crumble it when cooled.

Divide filling between the six bases and decorate with topping and a sprinkle of cinnamon.

Wattle Seed Cheese Cake

Serves: 10 people Preparation time: 30 minutes

Cooking time: nil

250 grams sweet biscuits (Nice)
150 grams butter
250 grams cream cheese
250 grams ricotta cheese
300 millilitres cream
200 millilitres castor sugar
1 - 1½ tablespoons wattle seed
1 teaspoons vanilla essence

1 tablespoons gelatine 100 ml hot water

Base

Combine crushed biscuits and melted butter and press into a cheesecake dish.

Topping

Beat cream the cheeses until soft. Add sugar, vanilla and wattle seed. Dissolve gelatine in the water. Whip cream. Combine gelatine and cheese mixture. Fold the whipped cream through. Pour over biscuit base and leave in fridge to set.

Anisata Spice Cookies

125 grams raisins, chopped fine
2 tablespoons dark rum
150 grams continental butter
125 grams dark brown sugar
60 millilitres light cream
1 teaspoon cinnamon powder
1/4 teaspoon clove powder
60 grams semi-sweet chocolate
125 grams sugar
500 grams flour
1/2 teaspoon bicarbonate of soda
1/2 teaspoon salt
3/4 teaspoon anisata ground

Finely chop raisin and soak in rum for 20 minutes. Mix soft butter with sugar and blend with cream until smooth and creamy. Blend flour, bicarbonate of soda, salt cinnamon, anisata and cloves. Add to creamy butter mix and blend well. Chop chocolate into fine pieces and add to flour mix. Add rum raisins and mix well. Form a 5 cm diameter log of the dough between waxed paper and rest in refrigerator for minimum of 2 hours. Cut log into 1/2 cm slices, place cookies on baking paper lined non-greased tray for 10 minutes at 175°C. Cool on rack and store in airtight container.

Nanna's Lemon Myrtle Biscuits

Serves: 6 Preparation time: 20 minutes

Cooking time: 12 minutes

200 grams margarine
100 grams sugar
100 grams macadamia nuts (almonds can be used)
225 grams flour
1 teaspoon baking powder
1 tablespoon lemon myrtle

Cream margarine and sugar until light and fluffy. Add nuts, lemon myrtle, baking powder and flour. Form little balls (teaspoon sized) and press them flat with a fork. Bake at 200° C until light brown, approximately 12 minutes.

Banana and Wattle Seed Cake

Serves: 12 people

Preparation time: 20 minutes

Cooking time: 1 hour

125 grams butter
125 grams sugar

2 eggs
1 teaspoon vanilla essence
1 tablespoon wattle seed
4 medium sized bananas
1 teaspoon bicarbonate of soda
125 millilitres milk
300 grams flour
3 teaspoons baking powder

Beat butter and sugar until light and fluffy. Add the eggs beating thoroughly after each egg. Add vanilla essence, wattle seed and bananas. Beat until just combined. Sift the flour with soda and baking powder. Fold in the flour alternately with milk. Pour the mixture into a cake tin and bake for approximately 1 hour at 180° C (350° F).

Wattle Seed Truffles

200 g plain sweet biscuits, crushed
1 tablespoon cocoa powder
½ teaspoon vanilla essence
100 millilitres sweetened condensed milk
1½ tablespoons wattle seed
shredded coconut

Mix Cocoa powder and biscuit crumbs in a bowl. In another bowl mix condensed milk, vanilla essence and wattle seed. Add the wattle seed mix to biscuit crumbs and mix into a dough. Roll walnut sized balls and toss in coconut.

Makes about 30 truffles.

TIP!: Add up to 2 tablespoons of wattle seed for a more intense flavour. Let the truffles set overnight to infuse for a full flavour.

TIP!: Use gluten free biscuits for a gluten free version and check the vanilla essence as imitation vanilla often contains gluten.

Lemon Myrtle Muffins

60 grams gluten free flour
30 grams macadamia nuts or walnuts chopped
60 grams sugar
2 teaspoons lemon myrtle
1 teaspoon vanilla
1 egg
1 egg yolk
50 millilitres macadamia oil (or 60g melted butter)
60 millilitres milk

Combine flour, nuts, sugar and lemon myrtle. Combine vanilla, egg, egg yolk, oil and milk then add to dry mix. Stir until just mixed. Spoon into muffin tin. Bake at 180°C for 15-20 minutes.