

Did you know...

Oregano comes from the mint, or Lamiaceae, family. Its strong flavour has been used in dishes around the world, but is featured heavily in Italian, Mexican, Greek, and other Mediterranean cuisines. The Greek translation for oregano is "joy of the mountains", as it is commonly found growing on the mountainside.

Oregano did not become popular in North America until World War II, when returning soldiers brought back their love of pizza. Dried oregano has a stronger flavour than its fresh counterpart, as with most herbs.

Along with being delicious, oregano is known for its health benefits as well, including its high vitamin K levels and antioxidants.

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March
Spice of the Month:
Dried Oregano



Brown Rice Stuffed Peppers

Ingredients:

- 4 medium bell peppers (any colour)
- 1 1/4 tsp. kosher salt, divided
- 2 tbsp. olive oil
- 1/2 lb. ground meat of your choice
- 2 shallots, chopped
- 1 fennel, cut into 1/3-inch pieces
- 1/4 tsp. dried oregano
- 1 1/2 cups cooked brown rice
- one 14-ounce can baby Roma or cherry tomatoes, crushed
- 1 cup baby spinach, chopped
- 1/2 cup grated parmesan cheese
- 1/4 cup fresh basil leaves, chopped
- 1/4 tsp. freshly ground black pepper
- 3/4 cup grated mozzarella cheese



Directions:

- Preheat the oven to 375 degrees F.
- Cut off the top 1/3 inch of each pepper, remove and discard the seeds. If needed, cut a small amount of the bottom off each pepper so that they sit flat. Season the insides evenly with 1/4 teaspoon salt. Nestle the peppers inside an 8-inch baking dish and set aside.
- Heat a large skillet over medium-high heat. Add the oil and heat another minute. Add the meat and cook, stirring occasionally, until the meat is browned, about 5 minutes. Add the shallots, fennel, oregano and 1 tsp. salt and cook another 4 minutes or until fragrant and the vegetables begin to soften. Stir in the rice, tomatoes, spinach, parmesan cheese, basil and pepper and cook until the spinach wilts and the cheese is melted. Divide the mixture among the peppers. Top with the mozzarella. Add 1/2 cup of water to the bottom of the pan. Bake the peppers for 40 minutes or until the cheese is melted and peppers are soft but not falling apart. Serve hot.

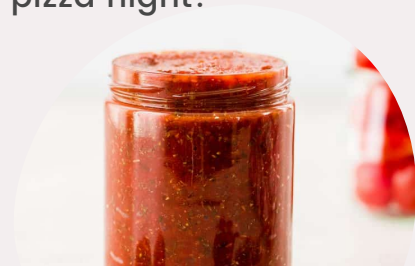
Homemade Pizza Sauce

Ingredients:

- 6 oz. tomato paste
- one 15-ounce can. tomato sauce
- 1-2 tbsp. oregano to taste
- 2 tbsp. Italian seasoning
- 1/2 tsp. garlic powder
- 1/2 tsp. onion powder
- 1/2 tbsp. garlic salt
- 1/4 tsp. freshly ground black pepper
- 1 tsp. sugar

Directions:

- Mix tomato paste and sauce together in a medium size bowl until well combined.
- Add the rest of the ingredients and mix well! Use for your next homemade pizza night!



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