

Rosemary Deglazing and Barbecue Spray

BY CHRISTOPHE BERNARD

I learned this from a chef, and I love it. You make a strong infusion of aromatic herbs and you spray it on food as it cooks. Here, we will pick rosemary because it is a remarkable antioxidant and protects food against damage and oxidation, which is a process happening at high temperature during cooking.

ingredients

Ingredients:

- Rosemary
- Water

Variations :

- Add thyme
- Add a bit of lavender
- Add oregano, savory, etc.

directions

1. Make a strong infusion by pouring just-boiled water over rosemary leaves; let it steep up to 5 minutes, strain, and let cool before placing it in a spray bottle. Then spray food cooking on the barbecue several times during cooking, as you turn over the food, etc. You can also use to deglaze a pan and enjoy the taste of herbs in a simple and yet very aromatic way.
2. Rosemary is kick-ass by itself (a wonderful protector of fragile fatty acids, for instance), but play with the different variations to compare tastes. Let herbs like *Monarda fistulosa* (wild bergamot) surprise you, for instance.

Yield: One to two cups

The infusion will start to ferment fairly quickly. So do not keep more than 2 or 3 days in the fridge.



HERBS
with ROSALEE

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Find more from Christophe at his website: <https://www.altheaprovence.com>

Tips for making your strong infusion:

- For this recipe, you want a tea that is strong and aromatic, that is still drinkable but you think “wow it is strong, I could drink it, but I would prefer something a little milder”. Fresh rosemary is always better. You use just the leaves, not the branches, so you have to “pluck” the leaves by pulling them from the tip of the branch to the base, opposite to the direction they grow. Otherwise, they don’t detach easily when fresh. A good, strong rosemary will leave your fingers sticky and quite smelly.
- Infusion time is short, no more than 5 minutes. The aromatics come out in the water fairly quickly, but then the more you steep, the more you will get the tannins, and the astringent taste is not really what we are looking for in a cooking context.
- Use your senses when deciding how much rosemary to use. For aromatic plants, we rarely weigh anything because it depends on the quality of the plant. Whether it’s fresh or dried, the strength very much depends upon where it’s grown and the weather of the last few days.
- After a first attempt (either spraying on barbecue or deglazing), if the taste was too mild, make the next batch stronger. You could double-steep if necessary (infusing a first batch, filtering, then infusing a second batch while the liquid is still hot). Sometimes double-steeping is helpful if the rosemary is not aromatic enough. I must say that when you buy from stores, you are sometimes disappointed.