



Beyond the Herb Rack: Using Herbs Creatively in the Vegetable Garden

Build an herb spiral

I was inspired to build my herb spiral by the book, *The Vegetable Gardener's Guide to Permaculture*, by Christopher Shein.

Check out my segment on the PBS show, *The Victory Garden*, for a how-to video that was shot in my yard. My part starts at minute 13 -

<https://www.theperennialplate.com/episodes/2015/03/vgef-episode-7-madison/>

Search Pinterest for "herb spiral" for lots of other ideas and photos

You can find my Pinterest boards here: <https://www.pinterest.com/createveggies/>

I sourced my bricks from Deconstruction Inc. in Madison: <http://www.dcisalvage.com/>

My herb spiral is 5 ft. wide and 20 inches tall at the highest point. I used about 120 bricks. Try to make your planting area at least 8" wide.

Herbs I've planted in my spiral from top to bottom:

Rosemary

Lavender

Silver Edged Thyme

Parsley

Onion Chives

Golden Sage

Purple Ruffles Basil

Calendula

Golden Oregano

More of my favorite varieties of vegetables, herbs, and flowers can be found in my book, *Smart Start Garden Planner*.

Plant in blocks

Contrast shape, color and texture

Plant the bed ends

Use herbs and flowers to bring color and interest to the garden by planting the ends of some of your garden beds.

Grow unique varieties

Look in seed catalogs for interesting varieties you can start at home or scout the local nurseries and farmers markets.

Favorite varieties: Basil Perpetuo, Globe Basil, Purple Ruffles Basil, Tricolor Sage, Pineapple Sage, Golden Oregano, Silver-edged Thyme, Golden Sage, Strawberry Blonde Calendula

Favorite seed companies: Johnny's Selected Seeds, High Mowing Seeds, Seed Savers Exchange, Baker Creek Seeds, Botanical Interestes

Recipes that use a lot of herbs!

5 Herb Pesto - <http://www.101cookbooks.com/archives/five-herb-pesto-recipe.html>

Favorite fresh herb recipe: Quick Pickled Vegetables over Herb-y Black Lentils at <http://happyolks.com/joy-is-not-a-crumb/>

I make the chimichurri sauce for this recipe in the summer when I have fresh herbs and freeze it for winter eating. <http://frannycakes.com/recipes/cooking-the-books-the-blender-girl>

Shiitake Mushroom + Asian Lentil Tacos:

<https://www.sproutedkitchen.com/home/2012/4/24/shitake-mushroom-lentil-asian-tacos.html>

Pay attention to how you use herbs during the season. Can you make some of those recipes for later use?

Preserving Herbs for Off Season Use

Freeze Herbs

Basil Ice Cubes

Parsley Logs - <http://awaytogarden.com/growing-and-storing-a-year-of-parsley/>

Rosemary Stems

Freeze Sauces

Basil Pesto

Asian Taco Sauce (recipe link above)

Chimichurri Sauce (recipe link above)

Other Ideas: Dry herbs for tea & winter use; Salts, Butter, Oil, Vinegar

Search for ideas on Pinterest. Check out my board, Gardening & Cooking with Herbs, at <https://www.pinterest.com/createveggies/gardening-cooking-with-herbs/>

Keep Records

Garden map: write down date planted, variety and how many

Food preserving record: write down recipe used and how many you preserved

Ways to join my community:

1. Sign up for my email list and receive seasonal tips and reminders every Sunday.
2. Build your skills with a how-to video series. Find them at CreativeVegetableGardener.com/learningcenter
3. Find me on Pinterest, Facebook, Youtube, and Instagram.

Happy Gardening! Megan Cain, CreativeVegetableGardener.com