

# 'Tis the Season to Use Sage

By Kate Wheeler

**M**ost people think of sage as only a winter herb—something to be used around the holidays—but, that doesn't have to be the case. Sage has a comfort food quality and can be used in a range of dishes from soup to pasta and stuffing. Like many other herbs, sage originates from the mint family. It comes from an evergreen shrub native to Albania, now widely grown in the United States. It has long grayish green leaves that take on a velvety texture when rubbed. The crumbled leaves can be rolled to crack them and release flavor. Use crumbled sage with pork, chicken, seafood and vegetables. Sage is one of the main ingredients in chicken or veal saltimbocca. Here are two of my favorite recipes that feature sage:

## Sage & Savory Sweet Potato Bisque

*Serves 4*

- 1 Tbsp. butter
- 1 Tbsp. olive oil
- ½ small yellow onion, diced
- 2 cloves garlic, minced
- Salt & freshly ground black pepper for seasoning, plus 1½ tsp. salt
- 1 cup frozen corn, thawed
- 1½ lbs. sweet potatoes, peeled & diced
- 2 cups chicken broth
- 2 cups apple juice
- 2 tsp. Sage & Savory Stuffing Seasoning, divided
- ½ tsp. fine white pepper
- ⅛ tsp. allspice
- ⅛ tsp. cayenne
- ½ cup heavy cream

*Note: You may use an immersion blender or hand blender if needed, although the end product may be a little chunkier.*

Add butter and oil to a large saucepan over medium-high heat. Once the butter foams, add the onion and garlic and saute until soft, about 3 to 4 minutes. Season with salt and pepper, to taste. Add the corn and cook for 1 more minute. Add the sweet potatoes, chicken broth, apple juice, 2 tsp. seasoning, white pepper, remaining 1½ teaspoons of salt, allspice and cayenne. Bring to a boil, then reduce the heat and simmer until the potatoes are cooked through and fork tender, about 20 minutes. Use an immersion blender and puree the bisque until smooth. Taste for seasoning, then stir in the heavy cream. Rewarm over low heat.

### Serving Suggestion

This bisque is wonderful served with Sage & Savory croutons. Cube day-old French bread and drizzle with olive oil. Dust with 1 tsp. Sage & Savory seasoning per cup of bread. Bake on cookie sheet in 300 degree oven for 10-15 minutes or until crispy and browned.

*Recipe by Jennifer Spengler, Savory Spice Shop Manager.*



Photo by Andreja Donko/123rf.com

## Savory Salad

- 8 oz. elbow macaroni pasta
- 1 lb. diced cooked ham
- 2 cups Brown Sugar & Spice Honey Ham Glaze
- 1 lb. bacon, cooked and diced
- 2 apples, peeled and diced
- 1 Tbsp. rubbed sage
- 1 cup feta cheese, crumbled

*Note: This is a great way to use left-over baked ham. The salad can be served warm or cold. If serving warm, you can first bring the apples to a boil in water or apple juice to soften them.*

Cook pasta in large pot, drain and put pasta back in pot. In a large saucepan, warm the diced ham in the Brown Sugar & Spice Honey Ham Glaze for about 10 minutes. To the pot of pasta, add ham, glaze, bacon and apples and blend. Stir in feta cheese and sage and mix thoroughly.

*Inspired by Matt Shealy, Savory Spice Shop Manager*

When it comes to making stuffing around this wonderful time of year, go on and make your classic stuffing. But to shake things up, add cornbread instead of bread, then season with sage, celery seed and a pinch of nutmeg. This will add a new holiday favorite to your menu.

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