

LEMON BALM

QUICK INFO

- Lemon balm is a perennial in USDA hardiness zones 5b and 6a.
- The plant blooms with small, white flowers on and off throughout the summer months.
- Lemon balm is used in herbal teas, wines, liqueurs and many eau de colognes.
- The plant's leaves contain a lemon-scented oil and were once used to polish wooden furniture.

COOKING TIPS

- Lemon balm's lemon and mint scent go with most foods complemented by either of those flavors.
- Use the leaves in tea, salads, cordials, fruit dishes and chilled summer drinks.
- The leaves can be used in stuffings for poultry or fish.

OTHER USES

- Lemon balm branches can be added to a flower arrangement for color, texture and scent.
- Slightly bruised leaves added to a glass of white wine add a lemony/minty flavor.

STORAGE AND PRESERVATION

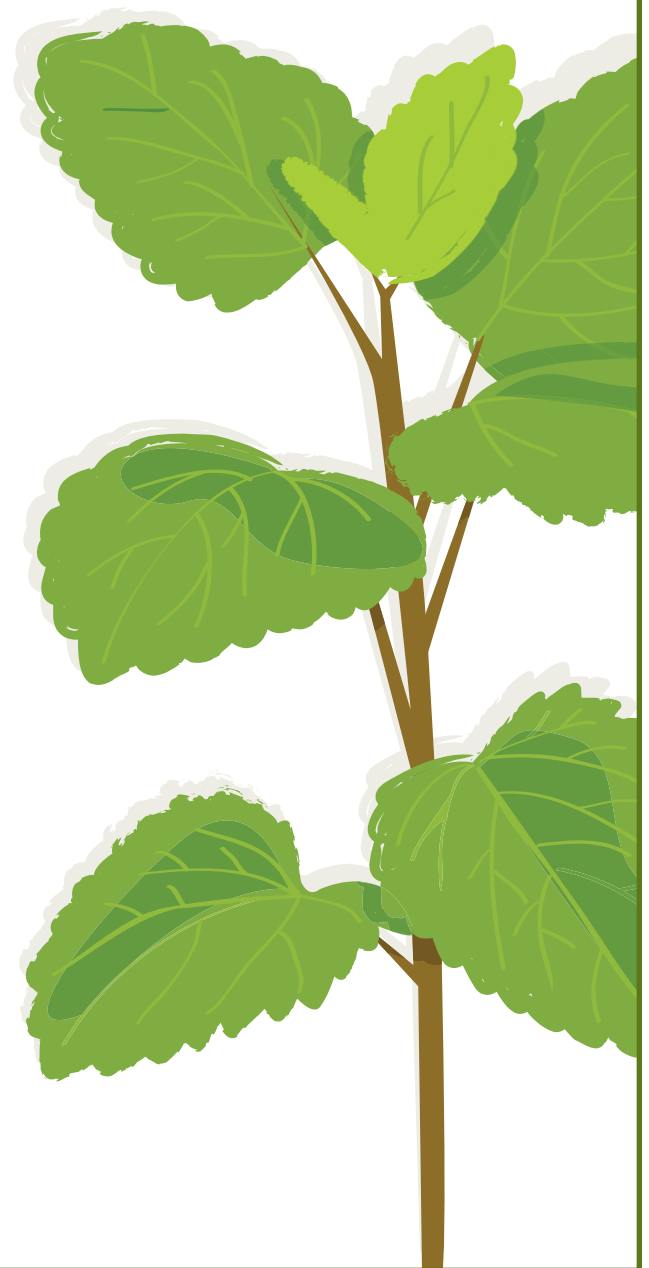
- Lemon balm leaves can be harvested any time during the growing season.
- Harvest only the upper half of the branches so the plant can quickly regenerate, giving you several harvests.
- To dry lemon balm, hang bunches upside down out of direct sun until dry, strip leaves and store the loose leaves in an airtight container in a cool, dry place.

GROWING TIPS

- Lemon balm grows in clumps and should be planted about 12 inches apart.
- Lemon balm reseeds vigorously and will spread through the garden.
- The plant prefers full sun to part shade and well-drained, moist soil.
- Lemon balm grows well in containers.

QUICK & EASY RECIPE

- **Lemon balm and basil tea (fresh leaves):** Cut a 3- to 4-inch square of 100% cotton cheesecloth. Place into the center of the square: 1 teaspoon chopped, fresh lemon balm leaves, 1 teaspoon chopped fresh basil, 1 teaspoon loose-leaf green tea, and ¼ teaspoon dried lavender buds. Bring corners of cloth together and tie with cotton string. Place teabag in a 6-ounce mug or cup of hot water and let steep for 3 minutes. A tea infuser can be used instead of the cheesecloth.



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