Long thought of as an Italian herb, **sweet basil** is actually a native of India and the Middle East. In addition to its many culinary uses, basil has a number of symbolic and medicinal uses. Wearing a sprig of basil in your hair may attract a potential spouse, while carrying the herb with you will bring wealth. A pot of basil given as a house-warming gift will bring good luck. Burning basil oil in a lamp is thought to aid concentration, and a basil oil massage may alleviate depression.

**Cooking Tip:** That wonderful basil flavor tends to deteriorate quickly, so for best results add to cooked dishes at the last minute!

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### Thyme & Lemon All-purpose Cleaner

- Lemon
- Handful of fresh Thyme
- Vodka or clear food grade alcohol
- White vinegar
- Glass pint jar with lid

1. Slice the lemon into thin rounds. Place the lemon and thyme into glass pint jar.
2. Pour in vodka/food grade alcohol until the thyme and lemon slices are just covered. Seal the lid. Let the mixture steep in a cool, dark place for 2 weeks.
3. After 2 weeks, strain the mixture into a spray bottle. Top off the mixture with white vinegar.

This cleaner can be used on most surfaces, including your kitchen countertops since this spray is completely natural!

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### Basil

**SUPPLIES IN YOUR KIT**
- Seeds
- Coloring page
- Craft instructions
- Planting log
- Recipe

**SUPPLIES AT HOME**
For planting:
- Soil
- Container and/or garden plot
- Water

### Italian Large Leaf Basil (*Ocimum basilicum*)

Large, dark green leaves, pointed, and sturdy. Plants are about 2’ tall. Excellent choice as micro-greens.

**Seed Package Instructions:**

**Cultivation:** Prepare fertile, well-drained soil. Sow seeds in late spring/summer after last frost in a warm, sunny location. Or start seeds inside 6 weeks before last frost date. Plant 1/4” deep with 2-4” between seeds, thinned to 8-10”.

Keep soil moist. Fertilize as needed. Plants grow well in warm temperatures but can show cold damage if grown below 50°F. Harvest older leaves and pinch back flower buds for continuous leaf production.

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**Share your gardening experience with us for a chance to win a prize!**
Recipe

Tomato Basil Soup

Serves: 6

Prep time: 10 minutes        Cook Time: 20 minutes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Amount</th>
<th>Ingredients</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2 tbsp.</td>
<td>extra virgin olive oil</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>medium onion diced</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>cloves garlic minced</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>fresh basil leaves chopped</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1/2 cup</td>
<td>heavy cream or coconut milk</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 cups</td>
<td>vegetable or chicken stock</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>bay leaves</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>28 oz can whole tomatoes or 2 14.5 oz whole or diced tomatoes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 tbsp.</td>
<td>sugar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To taste</td>
<td>kosher salt and ground pepper</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1. Heat olive oil in a large pot over medium high heat. Add in the diced onions and saute for 5 -7 minutes until soft and translucent. Stir in minced garlic and cook for 1 minute.

2. Add in the canned tomatoes with their juices, broth, bay leaves, and sugar. Bring to a boil and lower to simmer for 10 - 15 minutes.

3. Remove from heat. Remove bay leaves and add basil leaves. Transfer to a blender or use a handheld immersion blender to puree the soup.

4. Return soup to pot, add cream or coconut milk and reheat. Season with salt and pepper.

5. Note: Recommend using canned whole San Marzano tomatoes.