

# Recipes

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## Oregano, *Origanum* spp.

### Tips for Using Oregano:

- Marjoram has a milder and sweeter flavor than oregano
- Marjoram or sweet marjoram, *Origanum majorana* is mild and sweet, the hybrid *Origanum xmajoricum*, is a cross between oregano and marjoram and is often called Italian Oregano. It's mild flavor blends well with other herbs.
- *O. vulgare* subsp. *hirtum* or *O. onites* are both commonly referred to as Greek Oregano (or Turkish Oregano in Turkey) has a stronger more pungent flavor.
- Flavor varies with varieties so select plants pleasant to your own sense of smell and palate.
- Za'atar, commonly used in Middle Eastern cooking, is either a blend of herbs or just one herb depending on the region of origin. *O. maru* or *O. syriacum* is one such za'atar with a spicy fragrance and flavor. This plant is also known as Syrian oregano, bible hyssop and Lebanese oregano.

### Oregano & Lemon Cocktail

3 ounces vodka  
1.5 ounces Lemoncello  
1 ounce oregano simple syrup

Add all three ingredients to a shaker with ice. Shake for 25 seconds. Strain over crushed ice. Serve with a fresh oregano stem and lemon wedge.

#### Oregan Simple Syrup

Combine ½ cup sugar, ½ cup water and 2 sprigs of oregano into a saucepan. Heat over medium heat until sugar is fully dissolved. Strain into a container and chill in the fridge before using.

TheExperimentalSpoon.com

### Basil and Oregano Pesto

2 cups fresh basil leaves	¼ cup walnuts
3 tablespoons fresh oregano leaves	½ cup olive oil
2 cloves garlic	Salt and pepper
¼ cup freshly grated Parmesan cheese	

Combine the basil, oregano, garlic, cheese and walnuts in a food processor. With the machine running, slowly add the olive oil through the filler tube. Season with salt and pepper and process to desired consistency. Store tightly covered in the refrigerator for up to a week or freeze.

Joe Money, South Jersey Unit

*The Herb Society of America's Essential Guide to Growing and Cooking with Herbs*

## Za'atar

*Za'atar recipes vary from region to region and family to family. Below are two examples. The za'atar blends can be used to make many dishes. The blends can also be mixed with olive oil for bread dipping or spread on bread or pita and toasted. The blends can also be sprinkled on chicken, lamb or vegetables and roasted, or used on grilled fish.*

1 tablespoon chopped fresh oregano  
1 tablespoon sumac  
1 tablespoon ground cumin

1 tablespoon sesame seeds  
1 teaspoon kosher salt  
1 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper

Combine chopped fresh oregano, sumac, ground cumin and sesame seeds. Stir in kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper. Can be made 2 weeks ahead. Store airtight at room temperature.

Silvena Rowe

Bon appetite, [www.bonappetit.com](http://www.bonappetit.com)

## Za'atar Recipe: Middle Eastern Spice Mixture

¼ cup sumac  
2 tablespoons thyme  
1 tablespoon roasted sesame seeds  
2 tablespoons marjoram

2 tablespoons oregano  
1 teaspoon coarse salt

Grind the sesame seeds in a food processor or with a mortar and pestle. Add remaining ingredients and mix well.

Store za'atar in a cool, dark place in a plastic zip bag or in an airtight container. When stored properly, za'atar can be used from 3-6 months.

Saad Fayed

[www.mideastfood.about.com](http://www.mideastfood.about.com)

## Roasted Greek Chicken

5 pounds chicken quarters (leg and thigh together)  
2/3 cup minced garlic (about 3 heads)  
1/2 cup lemon juice  
1/4 cup olive oil

6 tablespoons chopped fresh oregano  
2 tablespoons black pepper  
2 teaspoons salt  
1/4 cup chopped fresh parsley

Preheat oven to 375°F. Rinse chicken, pat dry and remove any visible fat. Place the quarters in a large pan.

In a large bowl, mix the minced garlic, lemon juice, olive oil, oregano, pepper and salt. Smear the garlic mixture evenly over the chicken, then arrange the chicken in a single layer. Bake about 1 1/2 hours (until skin is well browned). After 45 minutes, baste the chicken with pan juices about every 15 minutes.

When done, transfer chicken to a warm platter. Skim the fat off of the juices and discard. Add 1/2 cup boiling water to the pan, stirring to loosen browned bits, while heating on a medium burner. Boil for a minute or so and transfer to a bowl or gravy server.

Sprinkle the chopped parsley over the chicken and serve with the sauce. Yields 8 servings.

Debra Seibert, Rocky Mountain Unit

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**Do you have a recipe using oregano to share?  
Please send it to [educator@herbsociety.org](mailto:educator@herbsociety.org)**