



BROWN BAG LUNCH IN THE GARDEN

August 6, 2010—Lemon Verbena

This Week's Recipe:

Lemon Verbena Ice Cream

(from Epicurious.com)

- 1 c. packed fresh lemon verbena sprigs
- 2 c. whole milk
- 1 c. heavy cream
- 2 large eggs
- 3/4 c. sugar
- 1/8 tsp. salt

Bring verbena, milk, cream, and salt to a simmer in a small saucepan over medium-low heat, then remove from heat and let steep, covered, 30 minutes.

Whisk together eggs and sugar until combined, then whisk in verbena mixture. Return mixture to saucepan and cook over medium heat, stirring constantly with a wooden spoon, until custard thickens slightly and registers 175 F on an instant-read thermometer (do not let boil).

Immediately strain through a fine-mesh sieve into a bowl, pressing on and then discarding verbena leaves. Cool custard, stirring occasionally, about 30 minutes, then chill, covered, until cold, at least 2 hours.

Freeze custard in ice cream maker, then transfer to an airtight container and put in freezer to harden, about 1 hour.

Harvesting & Storing Lemon Verbena

- Harvest in cooler morning.
- Pick large leaves individually or 3-4" sprigs
- Store leaves in a bag in refrigerator until ready to use.
- Put sprigs in refrigerator or in a jar with water until ready to use.
- Will turn black at temps below 40 after a couple days.

Other Points of Interest in the Garden This Week:

- Cucumbers and squash are slowing down production and looking rough.
- We WILL be planting some seeds for fall this week, regardless of the heat.
 - Carrots
 - Beets
 - Fall Radishes
 - Turnips
 - Greens?

Coming Next Week—Tomatillos

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Lemon Verbena Cake

1 2/3 cups granulated sugar
1/8 tsp. salt
1 cup butter flavored shortening
2 drops lemon extract
2 cups cake flour or regular flour sifted several times
1/4 cup fresh chopped Lemon Verbena leaves
5 eggs

Cream together the sugar and shortening until well mixed. Add the eggs 1 at a time, mixing for one minute after each addition. Add dry ingredients gradually, scraping down the sides. Add the extract and the verbena leaves. Pour into a Bundt or tube pan, which is well coated with the shortening and floured. Bake at 325 degrees for 1 hour and 15 minutes or until golden brown (testing with a toothpick). Remove to a cooling rack for 15 minutes. Remove from pan onto a serving plate. Drizzle with glaze or dust with confectioners' sugar.

Lemon Verbena Scones

2 cups all purpose flour
1 1/2 cups rolled oats
2 tsp. baking powder
1/2 tsp. baking soda
1/2 tsp. salt
1/4 cup brown sugar
1/4 cup cold butter
1/4 cup finely chopped fresh lemon verbena leaves
1 egg, beaten
1/2 cup plain yogurt
1/4 cup milk

Preheat oven to 425° F. In a large bowl, combine flour, oats, baking powder, baking soda, salt, and brown sugar. Cut in the butter with your fingers or a pastry cutter until the mixture resembles coarse crumbs. Add the lemon verbena leaves; mix until combined just combined. Make a well in the center of flour mixture. Add the egg, yogurt, and milk, stirring well. Mix in with the flour mixture to form a soft dough. Coat a 12-inch cast iron skillet with a non-stick cooking spray. With floured hands, pat the dough into skillet. Cut with a

sharp, serrated knife into eight wedges. (You can also pat the dough into a circle this same size on a baking sheet, and then cut into wedges.) Bake at 425° F for 15 minutes, or until lightly browned. Serve warm. Makes 8 servings.

Raspberry-Lemon Verbena Butter

1/2 pound unsalted butter
1 tablespoon sugar, or to taste
4 ounces fresh or frozen raspberries (not in syrup)
1 small handful young, tender lemon verbena leaves

Thaw the raspberries if frozen, and pour off any excess liquid. With all ingredients at room temperature, blend butter, sugar, and raspberries until smooth (about 3 minutes). Strip out any large veins in the lemon verbena leaves, then add the leaves (chopped if you're mixing by hand) and blend until the texture is pleasing.

Other Ideas for Using Lemon Verbena

1. Bury 6-8 whole leaves in a cup of sugar in a covered container for lemon-infused sugar.
2. Use in place of lemon zest in recipes—minced very fine.
3. Place 10-15 whole leaves and sugar in a food processor and mix until combined, then use the sugar for making sugar cookies.
4. Dry on the lowest setting in the oven and then use with mint and other herbs to make tea.
5. Make a simple syrup of sugar and water, then add the lemon verbena leaves overnight. Strain, and use as a dessert topping.
6. Simmer 2 Tbl. Cream, 2 Tbl sugar, and 2 Tbl chopped lemon verbena over medium heat until sugar dissolves. Let cool, strain. Chill. Mix with 1 c. of chilled cream and whip until stiff. Serve with berries or other desserts.