

SPICE OF THE MONTH

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October's spice is oregano!

We see this month's spice in those shakers on every table at the pizza shop. But how well do we *really* know oregano?

In honor of National Pasta Month — and Italian American Heritage Month, and National Cookbook Month — we present a versatile spice with an old-school vibe.

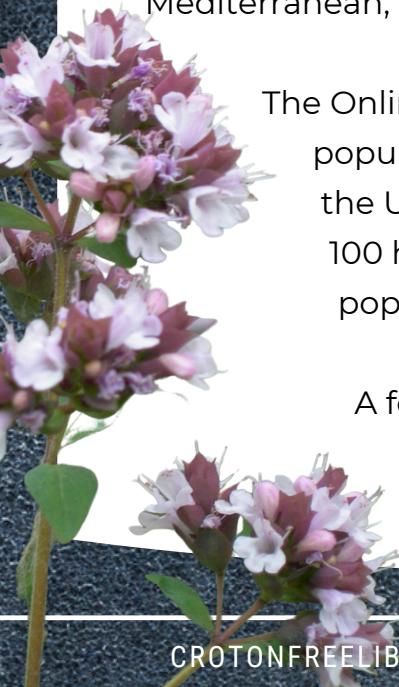
Oregano dates back at least to the 1300s. Its name comes from Spanish, Latin, and Greek — the Greek word *oreiganon* is from *oros*, meaning "mountain," and *ganos*, meaning "brightness" or "ornament." Its tiny purple, pink, or white flowers decorate mountainsides and attract pollinators, and its hardy stems can turn woody and become a large bush.

It's a perennial plant that grows easily in many different climates — including ours. The oregano included in this month's kit is from Turkey.

Oregano shows up frequently in dishes all over the world, especially the Mediterranean, Mexico, and parts of Europe. It's often a part of spice blends, as well.

The Online Etymology Dictionary notes that in the United States, it became popular around World War II, and that "a 1957 food industry publication in the U.S. says of oregano, 'Here is a spice that was unheard of in 99 out of 100 households just a few years ago.' Its rise seems to coincide with the popularity of pizza."

A few of the included recipes call for fresh oregano; one tablespoon of fresh oregano equals about one teaspoon of dried.



Sources - oregano

All the books listed here are available to check out from the Croton Free Library.

- *The Encyclopedia of Herbs, Spices & Flavorings: A Cook's Compendium* by Elisabeth Lambert Ortiz
- Online Etymology Dictionary: etymonline.com/word/oregano
- The Spruce: thespruce.com/herb-profile-oregano-1761786

These recipes are from:

- *Food from Many Greek Kitchens* by Tessa Kiros
- *Italian Comfort Food: Intensive Eating from Fresco* by Scotto Restaurant
- *Rustico: Regional Italian Country Cooking* by Micol Negrin

What did you cook with your
oregano?

Post it on social media with the hashtag
#CrotonSpiceClub and tag us, or send a
photo & description to
gglazer@wlsmail.org!

Oregano purchased from Penzey's Spices.