

SPICE OF THE MONTH

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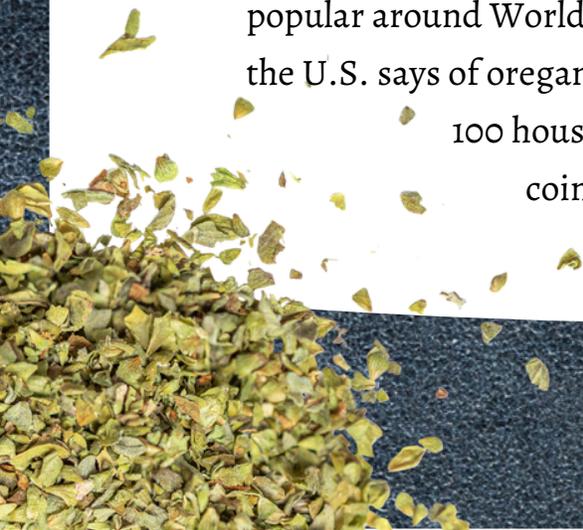
February's spice is oregano (again)!

Oregano is a spice so nice, we're featuring it twice! We first offered a Spice of the Month kit with oregano back in [October 2022](#) – that was Turkish oregano, but this time it's Mexican.

This multicultural herb 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 most of North America's — and it shows up frequently in dishes all over the world. It's often a part of traditional 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."



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Free
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All books listed here are available to check out from the Westchester Library System!

Our sources:

- *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

The recipes in this kit are:

- Bucatini con Melanzane Spappolate (Bucatini in Chunky Eggplant Sauce) from *Rustica* by Micol Negrin (p. 322)
- Mexican Chorizo from *Simply Mexican* by Lourdes Castro (p. 71)

See our cookbook collection for additional info & recipes, like:

- Fresco Chicken Milanese with Cheese from *Italian Comfort Food* by the Scotto family (p. 106)
- Mozzarella and Provolone with Roasted Tomatoes and Black Olives (p. 104) and Raisin-Pinenut Relish (p. 194) from *wichcraft* by Tom Colicchio
- The Pork & Fries Gyro from *Middle Eastern Street Food* by Sally Butcher (p. 60)

What did you make with your oregano?

Post it on social media with the hashtag

#CrotonSpiceClub and tag us,

or send a photo & description to

ref@crotonfreelibrary.org!

Oregano purchased from Penzey's.