

BASIL

Basil (*Ocimum* species) is a tender herb that grows as an annual in Wisconsin. Prized for its strong, pungent, sweet aroma, it is used fresh or dried in cooking. The essential oils in basil give it distinct flavors such as cinnamon, clove, anise, and lemon. Basil is very sensitive to the cold and does best in hot, dry conditions. Excessive moisture can cause fungal diseases. Basil is excellent for outdoor or container gardening. Continually harvesting the leaves discourages flowering and increases the overall yields.

VARIETY	COLOR	DESCRIPTION	CULINARY USE	HEIGHT
African Blue	purple	Shrubby plant tolerates shade, very drought resistant. Pink flowers. Great landscape plant, and culinary also (clove flavor). Plant is sterile so never goes to seed.	Italian dishes, pesto. Flowers are also edible.	48"
Ararat	purple/ green	Striking medium-sized foliage is green with purple. Strong sweet flavor with licorice overtone.	Salads, pestos, tomato dishes and as a garnish. Also ornamental.	18"
Aromatto	purple	Produces purple-green leaves and flowers. Doesn't wilt as quickly as other varieties when cut. Slightly spicy aroma and flavor.	Pesto, Italian dishes, ornamental.	18"
Cinnamon	green	This Mexican cultivar has stems that are purple-red with 2" long cinnamon scented leaves.	Fresh or dried in tomato dishes, pasta sauce, soups or brew for tea.	30"
Dark Opal	purple	1962 AAS winner, bred at the Univ. of Connecticut to have the darkest purple leaves. Beautiful deep purple 2" leaves are very fragrant and tasty.	Garnish, in salads and flavored vinegar.	24"
Genovese	green	Italian heirloom, tender, fragrant, large (2") dark green leaves. Tall uniform plants are slow to bolt.	Considered best for pesto and garlic based dishes.	24"
Lettuce Leaf	green	Heirloom from the 1880's. Very large succulent leaves with a strong spicy scent. High yields.	Perfect for pesto because of abundant yields of large leaves. Good with garlic, tomatoes, peppers, fish, eggs and chicken, in salads.	24"
Licorice	purple	Unique. Leaves have strong licorice scent and flavor.	Use with fish or salads.	24"
Magical Michael	green	This 2002 AAS winner has aromatic green leaves and purple/white flowers. Beautiful and floriferous.	Young leaves are used for cooking, also as an ornamental.	18"
Pesto Perpetuo	green/ cream	Light green with cream variegation. Non-flowering, columnar. Culinary and ornamental! Grows well indoors with enough light.	Great for pesto.	48"
Purple Ruffles	purple	1987 AAS winner has large, shiny purple-black leaves that are heavily fringed and crinkled.	Tomato dishes, sauces, pasta, soup, garnish, or as an ornamental.	24"
Queen of Sheba	green	Very ornamental, beautiful purple flower spikes, mild flavor.	Use in any recipe calling for basil.	12"

Red Lettuce Leaved	purple	Enormous, deep red ruffled leaves with a delicious vibrant flavor.	Use as a wrap, or any dish that calls for basil.	18"
Red Rubin	purple	1992 AAS winner. Most consistent of the purple basil with a minimum of green leaves. Great traditional flavor.	Stronger flavor than Sweet Basil. Salads, garnish, or ornamental.	18"
Siam Queen	green	1997 AAS winner, tender and intensely flavored. Strong licorice aroma. Late flowering.	Thai and Italian recipes.	24"
Spicy Globe Bush	green	Sturdy uniform plant forms a dense globe-like bush. 1/2" long leaves.	Use in cooking like Sweet Basil.	16"
Summerlong	green	Vigorous dwarf plant produces flavorful medium-sized leaves nonstop all summer. Late bloomer.	Use fresh or dried.	10"
Sweet (broadleaf)	green	Sweeter, milder taste and smell.	Use fresh or dried in pesto, Italian dishes.	18"
Sweet Dani	green	1998 AAS winner has 75% more essential oil than other lemon basil.	Vinegars, fish dishes, salads, teas.	30"
Violetta	purple	Italian violet basil is red with glossy ruffled purple leaves. Intensely sweet scent and flavor.	Pesto, Italian dishes, tomato dishes.	24"