



Spice for February 2026: **Basil**



The Etna Library's **Spice** of the **Month** Program

Basil (*Ocimum basilicum*) is a member of the large mint family along with other culinary herbs like rosemary, sage, and lavender. It is closely identified with Italian cooking, although it is originally from India.

The extremely aromatic leaves also have a delightful variety of flavors, depending on the cultivar. Examples include 'Genovese' (*Ocimum basilicum* 'Genovese', with larger leaves than sweet basil), 'Cinnamon' (*Ocimum basilicum* 'Cinnamon', with purple flowers and a spicy, cinnamon scent),

In ancient Egypt, basil was likely used as an embalming and preserving herb as it has been found in tombs and with mummies.

<https://www.thespruceeats.com/what-is-basil-1807985>
<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cardamom>



The Etna Library
130 Etna Road
Etna, NH 03750

www.etna-library.org
(603) 643-3116

Pantry Pesto



Ingredients:

- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup dried basil
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup dried parsley flakes
- $\frac{1}{4}$ cup whole walnuts (chopped)
- $\frac{1}{4}$ cup whole almonds (chopped)
- $\frac{3}{4}$ teaspoon garlic powder
- $\frac{1}{4}$ cup nutritional yeast
- 1 teaspoon salt

Directions:

1. Combine nuts in the bowl of a mini food processor. Process on low speed until finely chopped.
2. Add the rest of the ingredients – basil, parsley, nutritional yeast, and salt – and pulse a few more times until you have a fine powder.
3. Transfer to an airtight container and store in a cool, dark place for up to 3 months at room temperature, or up to 6 months in the fridge or freezer.
4. Serving option: Toss with cooked pasta, chicken/protein/veggies along with a large glug or two of olive oil, enough to get the dried pesto mixture to stick.

Recipe Source:

<https://thepracticalkitchen.com/pantry-pesto/>



Enjoy!