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2015 CSA

Fall

November 13th

Planet Earth Diversified

- **Mixed Field Greens**
- **Collard Greens**
- **Arugula Greens**
- **Baby Ginger**
- **Poultry Herbs**
- **Dill**
- **Bay Laurel**
- **Tarragon**
- **Cilantro**
- **Sweet Potatoes**
- **Butternut Squash**



Pictures top to bottom, clockwise: Itineranttrader and Benjamint444 from Wikipedia; leslie jenkins the two below.

We like to experiment beyond just cooking with the plant materials garnered from farming, and we included an anciently revered plant this week: the bay laurel tree. The following text is ripped from Wikipedia; please visit and donate: "*Laurus nobilis* is a widespread relic of the laurel forests that originally covered much of the Mediterranean Basin when the climate of the region was more humid. With the drying of the Mediterranean during the Pliocene era, the laurel forests gradually retreated, and were replaced by the more drought-tolerant sclerophyll plant communities familiar today. Most of the last remaining laurel forests around the Mediterranean are believed to have disappeared approximately ten thousand years ago, although some remnants still persist in the mountains of southern Turkey, northern Syria, southern Spain, north-central Portugal, northern Morocco, Canary Islands and in Madeira. Chemical constituents: The most abundant component found in laurel essential oil is 1,8-cineole, also called eucalyptol. The leaves contain about 1.3% essential oils (*ol. lauri folii*), consisting of 45% eucalyptol, 12% other terpenes, 8-12% terpinyl acetate, 3-4% sesquiterpenes, 3% methyleugenol, and other α - and β -pinenes, phellandrene, linalool, geraniol, and terpineol, contains lauric acid also. Both essential and fatty oils are present in the fruit. The fruit is pressed and water-extracted to obtain these products. The fruit contains up to 30% fatty oils and about 1% essential oils (terpenes, sesquiterpenes, alcohols, and ketones). The plant is the source of several popular herbs and one spice used in a wide variety of recipes, particularly among Mediterranean cuisines. Most commonly, the aromatic leaves are added whole to Italian pasta sauces. However, even when cooked, whole bay leaves can be sharp and abrasive enough to damage internal organs, so they are typically removed from dishes before serving, unless used as a simple garnish. Whole bay leaves have a long shelf life of about one year, under normal temperature and humidity. Whole bay leaves are used almost exclusively as specials.planetearthdiversified.com

flavor agents during the food preparation stage. Ground bay leaves, however, can be ingested safely and are often used in soups and stocks, as well as being a common addition to a Bloody Mary. Dried laurel berries and pressed leaf oil can both be used as robust spices, and the wood can be burnt for strong smoke flavoring. Alternative medicine: Aqueous extracts of bay laurel can also be used as astringents and even as a reasonable salve for open wounds. In massage therapy, the essential oil of bay laurel is reputed to alleviate arthritis and rheumatism, while in aromatherapy, it is used to treat earaches and high blood pressure. A traditional folk remedy for rashes caused by poison ivy, poison oak, and stinging nettle is a poultice soaked in boiled bay leaves. The chemical compound lauroside B isolated from *Laurus nobilis* is an inhibitor of human melanoma (skin cancer) cell proliferation at high concentrations in-vitro. Other: Bay is widely cultivated as an ornamental plant in regions with Mediterranean or oceanic climates, and as a house plant or greenhouse plant in colder regions. It is used in topiary to create single erect stems with ball-shaped, box-shaped or twisted crowns; also for low hedges. Together with a gold form, *L. nobilis* 'Aurea', it has gained the Royal Horticultural Society's Award of Garden Merit. Laurel oil is a main ingredient, and the distinguishing characteristic of Aleppo soap. European symbolism: Bay laurel was used to fashion the laurel wreath of ancient Greece, a symbol of highest status. A wreath of bay laurels was given as the prize at the Pythian Games because the games were in honor of Apollo, and the laurel was one of his symbols. The symbolism carried over to Roman culture, which held the laurel as a symbol of victory. It is also the source of the words *baccalaureate* and *poet laureate*, as well as the expressions "assume the laurel" and "resting on one's laurels". Ovid tells the story in the *Metamorphoses* that laurel tree was first formed when the nymph Daphne was changed into a laurel tree because of Apollo's pursuit of her. *Daphne* is the Greek name for the tree. In the Bible, the laurel is often an emblem of prosperity and fame. In Christian tradition, it symbolizes the resurrection of Christ. In Italy, graduating college students wear crowns of laurel instead of the normal graduation hat." And there is more! Great for a quick visit when you cannot get to an Encyclopedia Britannica or find Deni's herbal of all herbal books...we love our CSA members: you all deserve some Laurel in your life. <3