



Kathy Gehrt, local author of "Discover Cooking with Lavender"

MORE THAN A Pretty Flower

Lavender Adds Beauty and Flavor to Food

In the Pacific Northwest, the evergreen bushes with fragrant bluish-purple flowers grow with ease. But lavender is more than a treat for bees in the summertime, or a knock-out in the garden. It also can bring something extra special to your favorite recipes. Local author, gardener and foodie Kathy Gehrt of Seattle shows you how in her new book, "Discover Cooking with Lavender."

"My passion for fresh food and my discovery of lavender paired up like long-lost lovers," she writes in the book's intro. Gehrt was introduced to cooking with lavender years ago when she spent the summer assisting a chef at cooking classes. Growing up in the area and learning how to live off the land also inspired her lavender-infused mission.

Gehrt tested lots of recipes — and used her husband as a taste-testing guinea pig — and found that lavender brought out flavors in all sorts of foods, from salmon to citrus and more. In her book, she not only shows you how to make fabulous dishes with lavender, but she explains how easy it is to grow, store and dry.

Here are a few recipes from her book: >>

BY 425 STAFF
PHOTOS BY BRIAN SMALE

Recipes Courtesy of "Discover
Cooking with Lavender"



<< *Lavender Lemon Drop*

1 tablespoon lavender sugar
1 tablespoon freshly-squeezed lemon juice
4 ounces of citrus vodka
2 tablespoons triple sec
Ice

Directions:

Rub glass rims with lemon wedge to moisten and dip rims into lavender sugar mixture. Pour vodka, triple sec and lemon juice into a cocktail shaker with ice and shake. Makes two cocktails. Garnish with a candied lavender wand!

Lavender Sugar

Lavender sugar is simple to make and can be used to rim cocktail glasses, sprinkle in your favorite fruit, stir in your tea and more.

1 tablespoon lavender buds
2 cups granulated sugar

Directions:

Put lavender buds and ¼ cup of sugar in a spice grinder or clean coffee grinder; blend for about 1 minute or until the mixture forms a soft powder. Add the lavender sugar mixture into the remaining 1¾ cups sugar. Put sugar into a container with a tight-fitting lid and let it sit for three days to infuse the sugar with the lavender flavor. You can also layer sugar and lavender buds in a jar, and strain the buds when you're ready to use the sugar. Or simply place whole sprigs of lavender in a jar with sugar. >>

get this book!

"Discover Cooking with Lavender" by Kathy Gehrt is available directly from her Web site, discoverlavender.com and other major book retailers for \$24.95.





Candied Lavender Wands

What a great idea! These wands make pretty garnishes for drinks and are edible!

Six to 12 fresh lavender stems, leaves removed
½ cup lavender syrup
½ cup lavender sugar

Directions:

Dip lavender stems in lavender syrup. Roll stems in lavender sugar. Place sugared lavender wands on parchment paper and let dry for at least an hour.

Lavender Syrup

1 cup water
1 cup sugar
2 tablespoons of fresh or 1 tablespoon dried lavender
1 strip of lemon zest

Directions:

Combine the water and sugar in a small saucepan. Boil mixture until sugar dissolves. Remove the syrup from the heat and add lavender and lemon zest. Allow to steep for 30 minutes to infuse the sugar water with flavor. Strain the liquid into a jar with a tight-fitting lid. Store in refrigerator until ready to use.

PHOTOS COURTESY OF SEQUIM LAVENDER FESTIVAL



Head to a Lavender Farm

The photos in the book are beautiful — many of them were shot at Crescent Falls Organic Farm, Fox Farm and Lavender Hill Farm, all located on scenic Vashon Island. There are Lavender Farms all over the state and beyond. Summer is the best time to visit, when the lavender is in full bloom. The 14th-annual Sequim Lavender Festival will be held July 16-18. Go to lavenderfestival.com for more information. 🌿