

History | Origin

Za'atar [ZAH-tahr] 1. A pungent, strongly aromatic herb with soft, dark green leaves. It's native to the Middle East and tastes like an amalgam of marjoram, oregano and thyme. In Arabic, za'atar means "thyme," and, to confuse matters, this herb is also called Syrian marjoram. 2. A popular, pungent Middle Eastern spice blend composed of toasted sesame seeds, dried thyme, dried marjoram and sumac. It's mixed with olive oil and salt and is drizzled over hot bread or used as a dip for bread. Za'atar (also spelled zahtar) is also sprinkled over meats and vegetables as a seasoning. It can be found at most Middle Eastern groceries.

Taken from The New Food Lover's Companion by Sharon Tyler Herbst and Ron Herbst, 2007;
Call Number: 641.03 HERBST

Discussion and Potluck Participation

Saturday, April 8, 2023

1:00 pm - 2:30 pm

Peninsula Center Community Room
701 Silver Spur Road, R.H.E., 90274

www.pvld.org

We will be meeting in-person to discuss and share your findings, recipes, and opinions about the featured spice. Bringing a dish is not mandatory but encouraged.

- If bringing a dish to share, please keep your dish serving size to no more than 6 people.
- Food will need to be ready to serve. There is no reheating, microwave, oven, stove, or refrigeration available. We will provide serving utensils, paper plates, and water.
- Please be respectful of people's dishes. Please be advised if you have food allergies we cannot guarantee that shared dishes will be free of allergens.



Spice of the month: Za'atar

Questions

If you have any questions please feel free to contact us at
JHernandez@pvld.org or
IRabot@pvld.org.
(310) 377-9584 ext 217 or 218

This program is made possible by the support of the Peninsula Friends of the Library

 Palos Verdes Library District

Spice Club

Book Recommendations

Print Books

- *Our Syria: Recipes from Home* by Itab Azzam and Dina Mousawi
 - Call #: 641.5956 AZZAM
- *Olives, Lemons & Za'atar: The Best Middle Eastern Home Cooking* by Rawia Bishara
 - Call #: 641.5956 BISHARA
- *Persiana: Recipes from the Middle East & Beyond* by Sabrina Ghayour
 - Call #: 641.5956 GHAYOR
- *Zaitoun: Recipes from the Palestinian Kitchen* by Yasmin Khan
 - Call #: 641.5956 KHAN
- *Artichoke to Za'atar: Modern Middle Eastern Food* by Greg Malouf
 - Call #: 641.5956 MALOUF
- *Ottolenghi Simple: A Cookbook* by Yotam Ottolenghi
 - Call #: 641.512 OTTOLENGHI
- *Saffron in the Souks: Vibrant Recipes from the Heart of Lebanon* by John Gregory-Smith
 - Call #: 641.5956 SMITH

Digital eBooks from Hoopla

- *The Food of Oman* by Felicia Campbell
- *The Food of Morocco* by Paula Wolfert
- *Israel Eats* by Steven Rothfeld



Recipes to Try

Za'atar Flatbread

Taken from *Our Syria: Recipes from Home* by Itab Azzam and Dina Mousawi, 2017
Call number: 641.5956 AZZAM

Serves 6

Ingredients

5 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil
3 tablespoons za'atar
1 (14-ounce/400 g) frozen puff pastry, defrosted overnight in the refrigerator
½ tomato, diced, to serve
Fresh mint leaves, to serve

1. Preheat oven to 320°F/160°C. Line a baking sheet with parchment. Mix the olive oil with the za'atar
2. Unfold the pastry on the prepared baking sheet and, using a pastry brush, spread the za'atar olive oil all over, leaving a 1-inch/2.5 cm border around the edges.
3. Bake in the oven for about 15 minutes, until the pastry puffs up and turns golden brown.
4. Serve with tomato and fresh mint on top.

Crispy Za'atar Calamari

Taken from *Saffron in the Souks: Vibrant Recipes from the Heart of Lebanon* by John Gregory-Smith, 2019
Call number: 641.5956 SMITH

Serves 4 as part of a Meze

Ingredients

Vegetable oil, for deep-frying
14 ounces squid tubes
3 tablespoons cornstarch
3 tablespoons all-purpose flour
2 tablespoons za'atar
Lemon wedges, to serve
Sea salt

1. Heat 3-4 inches of oil in a saucepan over high heat. Pat the squid tubes dry with paper towels and cut into ½-inch lengths.
2. Mix the cornstarch and flour in a bowl. Working in 3 or 4 batches, toss the squid in the flour and then put a batch straight into the hot oil. (Don't leave any squid standing in flour otherwise it becomes soggy. Leave to bubble furiously for 2-3 minutes. Once the bubbles die down and the squid looks golden and crispy, remove with a slotted spoon and drain on paper towels. Repeat with the remaining squid.
3. Put the za'atar into a bowl and add a good pinch of salt. Add the cooked squid and toss together. Serve immediately with lemon wedges.

