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Herbs are always at their best in warm still air. A hedge provides both seclusion and a decorative back-drop (i.e. lavender or roses). Small herb borders, as part of the vegetable garden, to provide flavourings for culinary use, are best treated like vegetable borders. The plants should be set in rows so that the hoe can run between them as regularly as in the remaining part of the kitchen garden.



ROSEMARY



SAGE



PARSLEY



SORREL



MARJORAM



CHIVES

(Illustrations by H. J. Thomson)

Rosemary (*Rosmarinus officinalis*)

Rosemary is a perennial evergreen shrub, highly aromatic, and has always been greatly valued for its use both in medicine and cooking. It has a pungent, resinous taste with a delightful perfume and imparts its subtle but lasting flavour to many foods. Rosemary acts on a weak digestion, flatulence, neuralgic pains, and has qualities which help to stimulate the circulation and other functions.

Rosemary grows to about 5 ft. in this country, prefers a light, sandy, rather dry soil and requires lime. Like most herbs it thrives in a sunny, sheltered spot and needs little attention, once established.

Sage (*Salvia officinalis*) is a hardy, evergreen plant with oval, grey-green wrinkled leaves which are good in cooking and can be picked all the year round. As Sage has a strong flavour it is best with rich meats, such as pork, liver, duck and goose. In June to July it has small purple-blue flowers.

Parsley (*Carum petroselinum*)

Parsley is a health-giving herb, rich in vitamins and very popular for garnishing, sauces, etc. Old-fashioned gardeners still sow parsley near their onion beds to keep away Onion Fly. In the second summer Parsley has yellow flowers which should be cut off as soon as they appear.

Sage (*Salvia officinalis*)

Sorrel or French Sorrel (*Rumex acetosa*)

The broad-leaved French Sorrel is the most popular among the Sorrel varieties. French Sorrel is an easily cultivated perennial with oblong, slightly arrow-shaped leaves, about 60 cm high. It grows best in light, rich soil and full sun and flowers from May to July. The flowering plant should be cut back to prevent it from going to seed and the leaves from becoming tough.

Sorrel leaves (fresh or dried) have to be used in moderation because of their content of oxalic acid. They provide a slightly sour seasoning and the young leaves are best in salads or make a delicious soup.

Sorrel is considered to have blood-cleansing qualities and to contain vitamin C.

Sweet Marjoram (*Origanum majorana*)

In our regions marjoram has to be considered as an annual plant. It has a leafy, bush-like appearance, grows about 20 cm high, with a knotty flower growth, blossoming from June to September. The plant has a strong aromatic scent.

Sweet Marjoram is easily affected by frost and should only be planted in the warmest and most sheltered spot the garden can offer, in a medium rich soil with plenty of well-rotted compost. Marjoram is one of the oldest herbs, introduced by the Romans to this country and the most popular for flavouring purposes.

Chives (*Allium schoenoprasum*)

Chives are herbs with a delicate onion-like flavour. The plants are a mass of leaves like blades of fine grass, but round and 6–10 in. high. They are easy to grow in pots as well as a garden, and ready to cut from March continuing to October. The mauve flowers are also attractive in the flower border.