**Marjoram (Origanum majorana)**

**In the Kitchen...**

Marjoram is a close relative of oregano; however, you'll find its flavor to be brighter and sweeter than its cousin. Substitute marjoram for oregano, thyme or savory in Italian recipes, or use it in stuffing for fowl. Marjoram is a popular herb for flavored vinegars, but it will enliven any bean, rice or meat dish you add it to. Excellent with green vegetables, tomatoes, eggplant, peppers, potatoes, mushrooms, salad dressings, cheese, soups and herb butters. Blends well with bay, garlic, onion, thyme and basil.

**Caponetta** Peel and cube 1 large eggplant. In saucepan sauté in 1/3 cup olive oil, eggplant, 1/3 cup chopped green pepper, 1 chopped onion, 2 cloves minced garlic and 1/4 lb sliced mushrooms. Cover and cook over medium heat for 10 minutes. In a bowl blend 1 small can tomato paste, 1/4 cup water, 2 tbsp wine vinegar, fresh marjoram leaves of one 4" sprig. 1/2 cup sliced black olives, salt and pepper to taste. Add to saucepan and simmer covered for 30 minutes. Serve with crusty bread or chips. Can be frozen.

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**In the Garden...**

Transplant your marjoram after the last frost into warm soil. Up to 3 starts can be planted together in a clump. If you have more than 3, divide the roots carefully and space the clumps 6–8” apart. Choose a sunny spot in a drier area: you may want to add a little sand to the soil before transplanting. Marjoram takes a while to establish itself so keep the area weed-free.

Harvest up to 20% of the plant by pinching off the last few inches from each branch. Marjoram dries well; or freeze sprigs you don’t use right away. Marjoram will spread by rooting its new stems; you can divide these in subsequent years if your plant successfully over-winters. Pinch off any flower buds that appear and prune your plant in late summer to promote root growth.

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