



Perilla frutescens SHISO 'GREEN'

Love basil? Try Shiso. This flavorful herb, often used in Asian cooking, deserves a place beside basil and cilantro in every culinary herb garden. Similar to the more commonly found red and purple perillas, Shiso 'Green' has a stronger, more gingery flavor. Use chopped shiso in fruit salads or with tossed greens, steamed vegetables, grilled fish or chicken. Add shredded shiso to tuna and humus sandwich spreads, mild curries, and stir fries, or to garnish entrees and cold soups and entrees. Wrap grilled prawns in large shiso leaves before serving, or sprinkle it over fresh tomato slices. The plant's cinnamon-scented white or pink flowers are edible and can be added to soups, salads, or used as garnish as well.

ABOUT SHISO

Also known as Japanese basil, cinnamon plant, or beefsteak plant, Shiso 'Green' is found naturally in Asia from India to Japan, where it is popular as a culinary and medicinal herb. Shiso was brought to the U.S. as early as 1800 by Japanese and Korean immigrants, who grew this useful herb wherever they settled. Shiso has now naturalized in much of Missouri, Arkansas, and the Blue Ridge Mountains.

Today, ethnic food stores in the United States that cater to people from Korea and Japan generally carry some perilla products including fresh greens in season, seed oil, pickled plums, plum sauce, and other condiments. Vigorous and attractive, shiso is easy to grow, providing fresh greens and herbs for your table and making an attractive backdrop in the border. Red, purple, and green shiso often sold as perillas are becoming popular summer bedding annuals. Their dramatic, colorful, textured foliage make sun loving perillas valuable in mixed containers and borders as well as the kitchen garden.

CULINARY USES

A member of the mint (Lamiaceae) family, Shiso 'Green' has bright green, ginger-flavored leaves with a spicy cinnamon scent and is rich in carotene, vitamin C, and iron. Japanese and Korean cooks use perilla leaves fresh or pickled to flavor rice, fish, soups, and vegetables, or chopped with ginger root in stir fries, tempura, and salads. Sweet, pungent Shiso leaves also make a tasty addition to mesclun salad mixes, as a garnish for sushi, or chopped and added to pesto, cheese balls, or herb mustards. And, unlike Red or Purple Perilla, which can dye any dish a deep pink, Shiso 'Green' won't discolor other foods to which it is added. The flowers are edible as well and make a delicious, fragrant tea.

Harvest leaves from the plant as needed throughout the summer, selecting fragrant leaves with a fresh green color.

Summery Shiso Salad

- 2 cups jicama, peeled and thinly sliced
- 2 cups cherry tomatoes, cut in half
- 1/4 teaspoon sea salt
- 1/3 cup shiso, shredded
- 1 lime, quartered

In a bowl, combine jicama, tomatoes, and sea salt. Toss gently. Add shiso and serve, spritzed with a lime wedge.
Serves 4.

Green Tea and Shiso Granita Ice with Fresh Cherries:

Place 2 tablespoons of loose green tea, 6 shiso leaves and 3/4 cup sugar in a medium-sized mixing bowl. Add 3 cups of boiling water, stir to dissolve the sugar, and let steep for 5 minutes. Strain into a clean bowl and cool to room temperature. Once it's cooled, stir again and place the bowl in the freezer for about an hour, until the mixture begins to freeze around the edges and across the surface. Whisk to break up the ice crystals. Return to the freezer. Remove and whisk again once an hour until all the liquid has frozen and has a grainy consistency, about five hours. When you're ready to serve it, spoon scoops into serving bowls and top with fresh cherries.