



# The Good Herb

Sharing ideas for  
using the bounty of the garden!

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Spring is finally here, and despite the colder temperatures nature is marching forward. You may think nothing much is going on out in your yard and garden, but there is already harvesting to be done!! Ever eat a tree?? The new growth on your spruce trees is edible, and adds a wonderful citrus-pine flavor to a variety of dishes. In the spring I always make spruce salt, spruce syrup and spruce vinegar to have on hand all year long.

To gather spruce or fir tree tips, look in spring-time for the light green colored new growth of the branches. These are the new growth shoots from the tree. Older shoots get too resinous to use for cooking. Work your way around the tree and pick from scattered places so you don't damage the tree — and never harvest from a young tree - you could stunt its future growth.

## Ideas for using Spruce Syrup:

- Make a cocktail with gin and club soda
- Drizzle over a fruit salad
- Use on pancakes
- Add to a cup of hot tea or iced tea
- Drizzle over pound cake

## Spruce Tip Vinegar

- 2 cups red wine vinegar
- 1 cup roughly chopped spruce tips
- 1 tsp. black peppercorns
- 1 lemon, quartered

Mix all the ingredients, put in a jar, and cover. Let the vinegar sit in a dark area at room temperature for 2 weeks, shaking the jar from time to time. Strain into a sterilized bottle. Use to add an interesting taste to homemade salad dressing.

## Chicken Salad with Spruce Salt

*I make enough Spruce Salt in the spring to last me all year long!! I love this unique flavor!!*

For **Spruce Salt**, use equal amounts of young spruce tips and sea salt. Put in a coffee or herb mill and pulse until well blended. This is a flavorful addition to meats, soups, stews, and roasted vegetables.

## Salad

Meat from 1 cooked chicken, cut into small pieces. (or use a rotisserie chicken)

1 apple, skin on, cut into small pieces and soaked for a few minutes in water and lemon juice to stop it from browning, then drain and add apples

to salad

1 cup dried cranberries or dried cherries

½ cup toasted pecan pieces

## Dressing

1 ½ cups Hellman's Mayonnaise

2 teaspoons lime juice

2 teaspoons Spruce Salt (or to taste)

1/8 teaspoon pepper, or to taste

Gently fold dressing into salad. For best flavor refrigerate overnight for flavors to blend.



## Spruce Syrup

- 2 cups water
- 2 cups sugar
- 2 cups fir or spruce tips, chopped
- 1-2 tablespoons lemon or lime juice (optional)

Simmer the water and sugar together for about 5 minutes until sugar is dissolved. Add the spruce tips and lemon/lime juice. Cover pan and continue to simmer on very low heat for 20 minutes, stirring occasionally. Cool and strain out spruce tips. Refrigerate for up to 4 weeks or freeze syrup for future use.