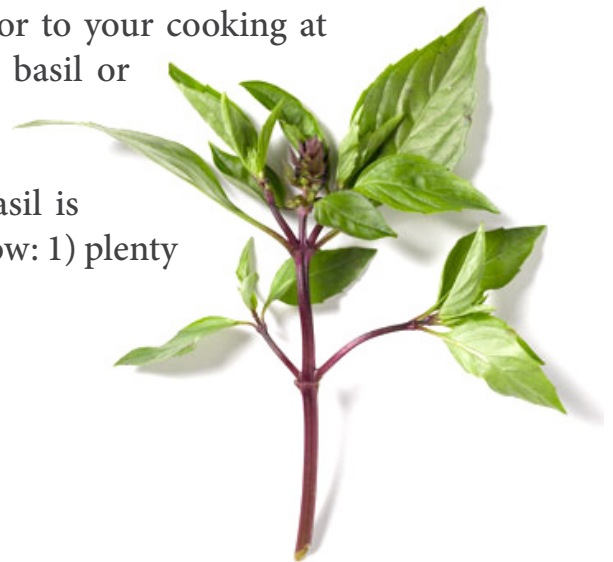


How to Grow Thai Basil



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Basil comes in many varieties and can add flavor to your cooking at every meal. Thai basil, also known as Oriental basil or Asian basil, provides more of a kick for cuisines that call for heavy spices, such as Indian or Thai foods. As with the other basil varieties, Thai basil is easy to care for and needs two key elements to grow: 1) plenty of sunlight and 2) well drained soil.



Things You'll Need

- Thai basil seeds
- Soil
- Small pots

Instructions

1. Plant Thai basil seeds in a shallow container indoors, outside after the danger of frost has passed, or when the day and night temperatures are above 50 degrees.
2. Spread seed thinly and cover with 1/8 inch of rich soil. Space rows of plants about 12 to 18 inches apart.
3. Keep your Thai basil plant exposed to heavy sunlight all the time, if possible, or at least 4 to 6 hours per day. Moisten soil often. Expect germination to occur 1 to 2 weeks after planting seeds.
4. Move indoor plants outside when they reach 2 to 3 inches tall. Spread seedlings 8 to 10 inches apart, as basil's root system is very vigorous. Continue to feed the Thai basil plant with compost and fertilizer to keep the soil rich.



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5. Remove leaves at the top section of a stem instead of one-by-one. Pinch off leaves at the intersection of the leaves to encourage new growth. Prevent flowering of the Thai basil plant by removing shoots often.
6. Rinse newly cut leaves under cool water and pat dry before using. Add Thai basil to Thai, Indian and Italian recipes for salads, soups, stir fry and other meals. Include Thai basil in tea or oil and vinegar dressing.



Tips & Warnings

- Don't waterlog the plant. Allow the soil to dry out between waterings.
- Don't allow exposure to frost. Keep the basil plant in warm climates or temperatures as long as possible.