



Chapter 7

Chapter 7: Medicinal Plants for Anti-aging

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Types and Benefits of Anti-Aging Herbs

Thailand is home to numerous medicinal herbs known for their powerful anti-aging properties. These herbs are rich in antioxidants, vitamins, and bioactive compounds that help slow aging, improve skin health, and boost overall well-being. Here are some of the most effective anti-aging Thai herbs

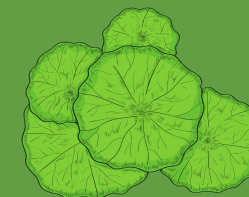


Types and Benefits of Anti-Aging Herbs



Turmeric (*Curcuma longa*)

- Contains **curcumin**, a potent antioxidant and anti-inflammatory compound.
- Helps reduce wrinkles, protect skin cells, and support brain health.



Gotu Kola (*Centella asiatica*)

- Boosts collagen production, improves skin elasticity, and enhances memory.
- Known for its ability to reduce stress and promote relaxation.



Ginger (*Zingiber officinale*)

- Rich in gingerol, which fights oxidative stress and improves circulation.
- Aids digestion, enhances immunity, and reduces inflammation.

Types and Benefits of Anti-Aging Herbs



Pandan Leaves (Pandanus amaryllifolius)

- High in antioxidants, helps detoxify the body, and supports heart health.



Lemongrass (Cymbopogon citratus)

- Contains citral, which has anti-inflammatory and antibacterial properties.
- Aids digestion, relieves stress, and supports skin health.



Kaffir Lime (Citrus hystrix)

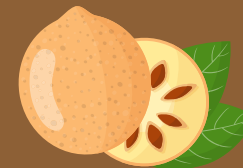
Vitamin C plays a key role in collagen synthesis, which is essential for maintaining skin elasticity and reducing the appearance of wrinkles.

Types and Benefits of Anti-Aging Herbs



Butterfly Pea (*Clitoria ternatea*)

- Rich in anthocyanins, which help fight free radicals and protect skin from aging.
- Enhances memory, hair growth, and skin elasticity.



Bael Fruit (*Aegle marmelos*)

- Contains polyphenols and vitamin C, which promote collagen production.
- Aids digestion, improves immunity, and reduces inflammation.



Fingerroot (*Boesenbergia rotunda*)

- Contains flavonoids and antioxidants that support skin protection.
- Helps boost energy, improve digestion, and reduce inflammation.



Cooking with Herbs for Anti-Aging

7 Principles of Cooking with Thai Herbs

Thai herbs are widely used in cooking for their health benefits, aromatic flavors, and medicinal properties. Incorporating these herbs into meals can enhance both taste and nutritional value while promoting overall well-being. Here are the key principles of cooking with Thai herbs



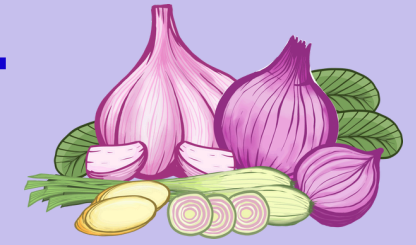
7 Principles of Cooking with Thai Herbs

1. Selecting Fresh and High-Quality Herbs



- Use fresh herbs whenever possible to maximize flavor and nutrients.
- Dried herbs can be used but may have a milder taste and reduced medicinal properties.

2. Combining Herbs for Enhanced Benefits



- Many Thai herbs work best when combined for a synergistic effect.
- Example: Turmeric and black pepper improve curcumin absorption for better anti-inflammatory effects.

7 Principles of Cooking with Thai Herbs

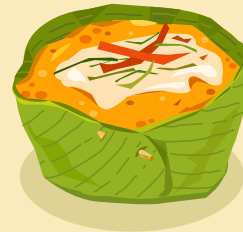
3. Using the Right Cooking Techniques



- Raw Consumption, some herbs, like holy basil and gotu kola, can be eaten raw in salads.
- Boiling/Simmering used for making soups, teas, and curries (e.g., tom yum with lemongrass).
- Stir-Frying herbs like garlic, ginger, and kaffir lime leaves release their aroma when lightly stir-fried.
- Infusion herbs like pandan leaves and butterfly pea flowers can be infused in drinks or desserts.

7 Principles of Cooking with Thai Herbs

4. Preserving Nutrients While Cooking



- Avoid overcooking herbs, as high heat can destroy essential nutrients and antioxidants.
- Add delicate herbs like holy basil and kaffir lime leaves at the end of cooking for maximum flavor and benefit.

5. Pairing Herbs with Other Healthy Ingredients



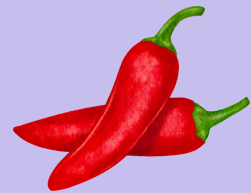
- Use herbs with healthy fats (e.g., coconut milk, olive oil) to enhance absorption of fat-soluble nutrients.
- Combine herbs with lean proteins, whole grains, and fresh vegetables for a well-balanced meal.

7 Principles of Cooking with Thai Herbs

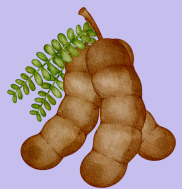
6. Balancing Flavors for Thai Cuisine



Thai cuisine follows a balance of five flavors



Spicy – Chilies, ginger, black pepper



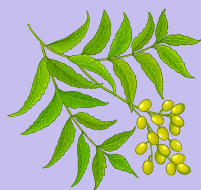
Sour – Kaffir lime, tamarind, lemongrass



Sweet – Palm sugar, coconut milk, pandan leaves



Salty – Fish sauce, soy sauce, sea salt

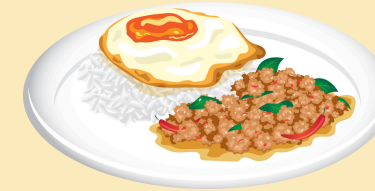


Bitter – Gotu kola, neem leaves



7 Principles of Cooking with Thai Herbs

7. Utilizing Herbs for Health Benefits



- Anti-Aging



Turmeric, butterfly pea, mulberry leaves

- Digestive Health



Ginger, lemongrass, fingerroot

- Immune Boosting



Holy basil, garlic, Indian gooseberry

- Detoxification



Pandan leaves, kaffir lime, gotu kola

Preparing Beverages with Herbs for Anti-Aging

Herbal Drinks for Balancing Elements

Water is essential for human survival, and Thai traditional wisdom has long utilized herbal drinks to cool the body, quench thirst, balance internal elements, and prevent illnesses. These drinks are rich in vitamins and bioactive compounds that promote health and have gained popularity as natural health beverages.





Preparing Beverages with Herbs for Anti-Aging



Earth Element

People with a dominant Earth element should consume foods with astringent, sweet, rich, and salty flavors.

- Astringent: Guava juice, bael juice, santol juice, olive juice, Indian gooseberry juice, jambolan plum juice.
- Sweet: Watermelon juice, papaya juice, banana juice, jackfruit juice, rambutan juice.



Water Element

People with a dominant Water element should consume sour and bitter foods.

- Sour: Tamarind juice, star gooseberry juice, roselle juice, sour plum juice, grapefruit juice, tomato juice.
- Bitter: Bitter melon juice, reishi mushroom tea, centella asiatica juice.



Wind Element

People with a dominant Wind element should consume spicy and hot foods. Suitable herbal drinks include

- Spicy: Red holy basil juice, ginger tea, galangal tea, lemongrass tea, clove tea.



Fire Element

People with a dominant Fire element should consume bitter, cooling, and bland foods.

- Bitter: Bitter melon juice, reishi mushroom tea, centella asiatica juice.
- Cooling: Pandan leaf juice, coix seed juice, basil seed juice, cantaloupe juice, coconut water, lotus root juice, nipa palm juice.

Techniques for Preparing Herbal Drinks

Selecting Herbs



- Use fresh herbs whenever possible or high-quality dried herbs.
- Ensure herbs are clean and free from mold or contamination.

Maintaining Cleanliness



- Clean both the herbs and utensils properly to prevent contamination.
- Unclean preparation can lead to spoilage or digestive issues.

Choosing the Right Utensils



Use **stainless steel pots** for boiling to avoid metal contamination. Avoid aluminum pots. Store herbal drinks in glass bottles.

Balancing Taste



Avoid adding too much sugar, let the natural flavors of herbs dominate. Natural sweeteners like honey or palm sugar are better alternatives.

Preparing Beverages with Herbs for Anti-Aging

Examples of Thai Herbal Drinks

Roselle Juice

Ingredients

- ½ cup dried roselle
- 2 cups sugar
- 1 tbsp salt
- 5 cups water

Preparation

Boil roselle in water, strain, add sugar and salt, and serve chilled.

Benefits

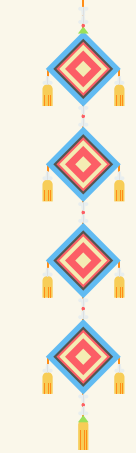
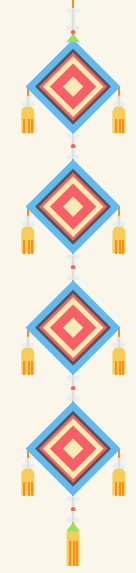
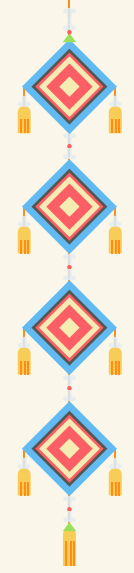
Refreshing, reduces fever, improves digestion, and prevents kidney stones.



Local Dishes from Thailand's Four Regions for Anti-Aging

Thai cuisine varies across the country's four regions, with each offering unique flavors and health benefits. Many traditional Thai dishes contain herbs and ingredients rich in antioxidants, vitamins, and essential nutrients that help slow aging, improve skin health, and promote overall well-being.



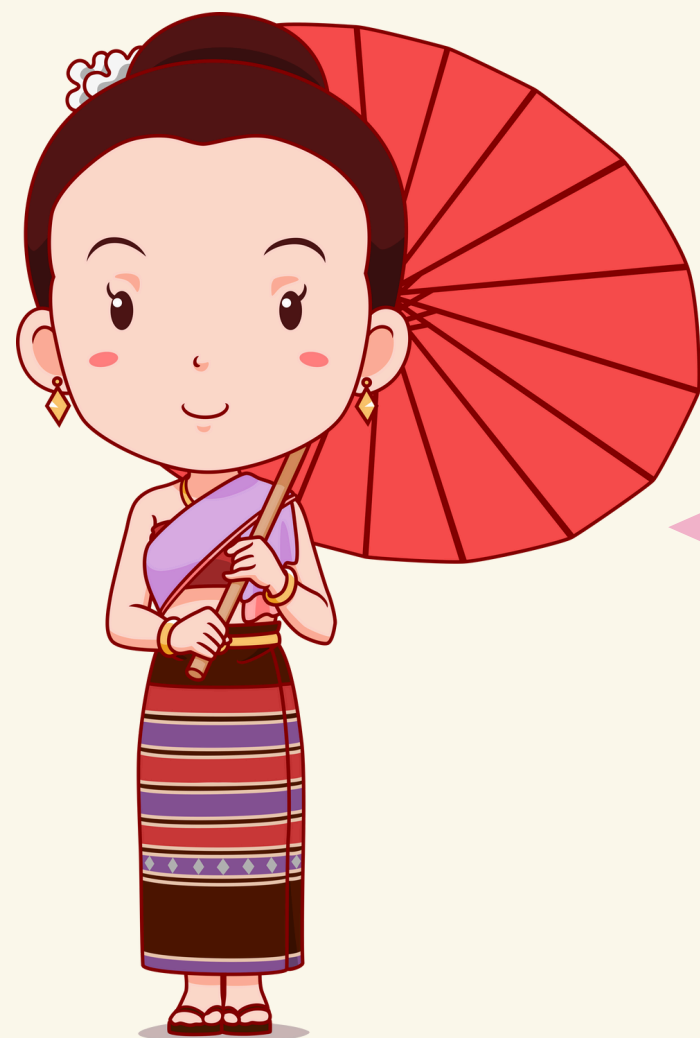


Northern Thailand (Lanna Cuisine)

The cuisine of Northern Thailand features mild, herb-infused dishes with fermented ingredients, fresh vegetables, and lean proteins, all of which help boost immunity and reduce oxidative stress.

Nam Prik Num (Green Chili Dip) with Fresh Vegetables

- Green chili is high in vitamin C, which supports collagen production.
- Fermented fish sauce provides probiotics for gut health.
- Fresh vegetables like cucumbers, long beans, and eggplants provide fiber and antioxidants.



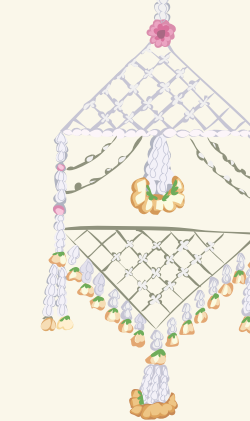
Northeastern Thailand (Isaan Cuisine)

Isaan food is known for its bold flavors, fermented ingredients, and fresh herbs, which help with digestion and cellular regeneration.

Tom Saep (Spicy Herb Soup with Lemongrass & Kaffir Lime Leaves)

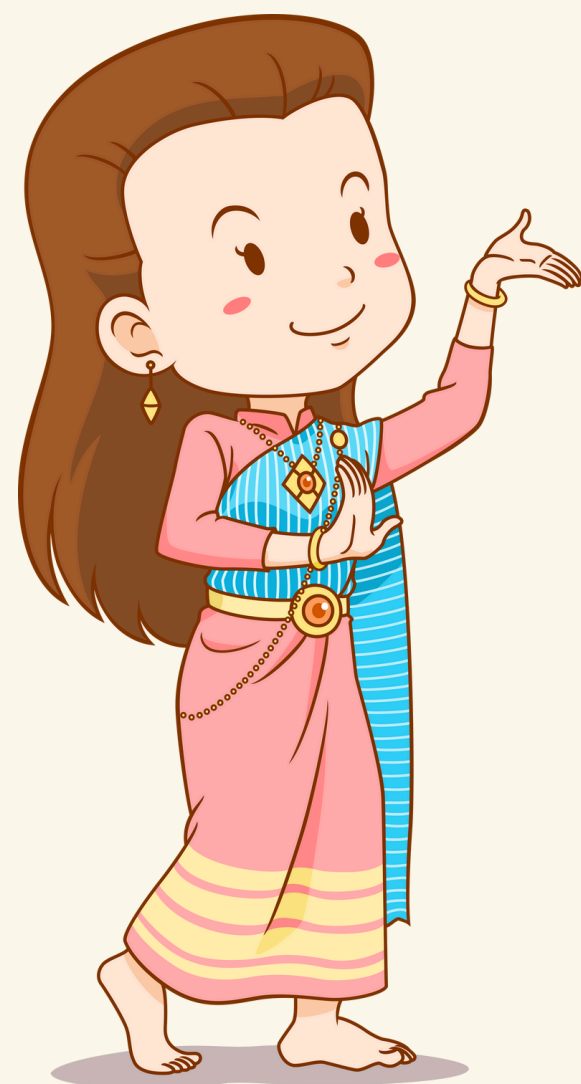
- Lemongrass and kaffir lime leaves detoxify the liver and support collagen synthesis.
- Galangal and garlic have anti-inflammatory properties that slow aging.
- Lean protein (chicken or fish) aids muscle retention and skin elasticity.





Central Thailand

(Royal Thai Cuisine & River-Based Diet)



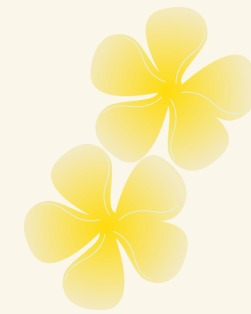
Central Thai cuisine blends rich coconut-based curries, fresh seafood, and aromatic herbs, making it ideal for anti-aging.

Kaeng Liang (Thai Herbal Vegetable Soup)

- Fingerroot and basil improve digestion and boost immunity.
- Pumpkin is high in beta-carotene, which enhances skin glow.
- Zucchini and mushrooms provide antioxidants that fight free radicals.



Southern Thailand (Spicy & Turmeric-Rich Cuisine)



Southern Thai food is spicy, coconut-rich, and packed with anti-inflammatory herbs, making it ideal for longevity and disease prevention.

Gaeng Tai Pla (Spicy Fish Kidney Curry with Turmeric & Herbs)

- Turmeric fights oxidative stress and reduces wrinkles.
- Fish protein supports collagen production and joint health.
- Fermented ingredients promote gut health and immunity.



Key Takeaways for an Anti-Aging Thai Diet



Eat a variety of herbs and spices – Turmeric, garlic, ginger, kaffir lime, and lemongrass have powerful anti-aging benefits.

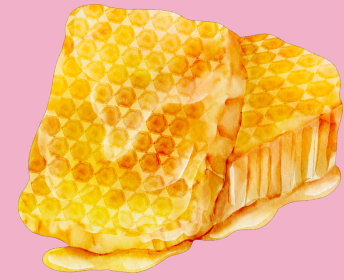


Consume fresh vegetables and fruits – Papaya, tomatoes, and green leafy vegetables protect the skin and slow aging.



Include healthy fats – Coconut milk, fish, and nuts help maintain hydration and brain function.

Key Takeaways for an Anti-Aging Thai Diet



Limit processed foods and sugar – Stick to naturally sweet ingredients like palm sugar and honey.



Stay hydrated with herbal drinks – Herbal teas like butterfly pea, pandan, and lemongrass tea provide antioxidants and hydration.

By incorporating these anti-aging local dishes from Thailand's four regions into your diet, you can enjoy delicious flavors while promoting youthful skin, strong immunity, and long-lasting health.



Lesson Summary and Application

- **Supporting Holistic Health Approaches**

Understanding the role of herbs in disease prevention and longevity allows students to **promote complementary health practices alongside medical care**. Herbal remedies can be integrated into wellness plans to reduce oxidative stress and age-related conditions.

- **Cultural Sensitivity and Community Engagement**

Exploring local dishes from Thailand's four regions helps students appreciate regional differences in food traditions. This knowledge can be used to promote culturally sensitive care and **develop community-based health promotion activities using familiar local ingredients**.



Thank you!

