

Press Release

Preparation and effect of wild herbs

Herbal wizards work with ceramic knives by Kyocera

Kyoto / Neuss, 28 July 2010 – Wild herbs are often regarded as weeds because they appear unsolicited in the garden and grow there without any assistance from us. Yet anyone familiar with their effects and preparation will not only tolerate stinging nettles, dandelion and ground elder in the flower bed but will also invite them into the kitchen as well. Autumn is a good time to set up a herb garden in a sheltered place such as in a conservatory. Professional organic chef Christopher Hinze therefore reveals two of his recipes, and TV herb expert Christel Berweiler explains the effect that wild herbs have. The Japanese technology corporation Kyocera, a specialist in fine ceramic products, offers the perfect assistants for preparing herbs in its ceramic knives.

With their astonishing effects, delicious recipes and the right kitchen assistants, wild herbs transform from being uninvited visitors in our gardens to welcome permanent guests in our kitchens. Anyone wishing to continue enjoying fresh herbs in autumn will find an ideal place for a herb garden in a glazed balcony, a conservatory or a frost-free greenhouse.

To ensure that there is no adulteration or loss of flavour during preparation of the herbs, the ceramic knives by Kyocera have special properties to make them particularly suitable for this task.

The knives absorb neither the taste nor the odour of the ingredients being cut.

This makes it possible to chop different herbs in direct succession,

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without having to rinse off the blade in between. The herbs thus retain all their own flavour and are not crushed during cutting thanks to the sharp blade. This is particularly important in the case of herbs because otherwise the ethereal oils they contain will be lost.

“Our native wild herbs supply the body with vitamins, minerals and trace elements. Most herbs have an action that cleanses the blood, promotes digestion and loosens mucous. With their combination of active ingredients, they support the inner organs and simply do us good,” says TV herb expert Christel Berweiler, who uses ceramic knives exclusively for the preparation of herbs. She knows what effects the wild herbs have:

Stinging nettles contain the most iron of all domestic herbs and vegetables. They cleanse the blood, have a flushing action, remove water and help to ensure an attractive skin.

Dandelion has a detoxifying, cleansing and dehydrating effect. The bitter substances contained support the liver and gall bladder.

Ground elder deacidifies the body, dissolves waste materials and has a blood-cleansing effect – ideal for all people with arthrosis, gout and rheumatism.

Lavender has a calming, relaxing and loosening effect.

The properties described above make the attractive ceramic blades of the Kyocera FK series an outstanding implement for herbs and, thanks to their sharpness, the blades also glide effortlessly through sensitive ingredients such as fish and meat. Combined with the ergonomic handle and the surprisingly low weight of the ceramic blade, these knives reduce the effects of fatigue even during lengthy periods of cutting. What is more, because they are made of high-quality zirconia ceramic, the blades retain their sharpness for a long

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period and are easy to maintain.

Master of organic dishes Christopher Hinze presents two of his own unusual recipes with wild herbs:

Nettle crisps

Ingredients for 3-4 people

50-70 freshly picked, young stinging nettle leaves

200 g ghee (clarified butter, butteroil)

Herb mixture from the mortar:

2 tbsp rock salt (Himalayan unrefined salt)

1 tsp mixed peppercorns (white, black, pink, green)

pinch of paprika

pinch of cayenne pepper

Preparation:

Carefully pluck the nettle leaves from the top, using the upper leaves from preferably young plants, and place them in a bowl. (Kyocera Ceramic Scissors represent a good alternative for cutting off the leaves if you do not wish to pluck them by hand.)

Finely grind the spice mixture in the mortar, adding paprika and cayenne pepper to taste. The cayenne pepper adds a spicy note to the nettle crisps.

Now heat the ghee in a pan and then fry the nettle leaves while stirring until they are slightly crispy and start to curl. Take the nettle leaves out of the pan and allow the fat to drip off.

Now season the chips with the spice mixture and serve hot.

Crème brûlée with fresh lavender and Bourbon vanilla

Ingredients for 4-5 people

250 ml fresh full-cream milk

250 ml fresh whipping cream

1-2 untreated oranges, peel only

1 cinnamon stick

½ tsp Bourbon vanilla, ground

1 tsp fresh finely chopped lavender blossoms

4 eggs, yolks only

40 g raw cane sugar

4 tbsp fine raw cane sugar for forming the sugar crust

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Preheat the oven to 150 °C. Line a deep baking tray with kitchen paper, fill it to a level of 2 cm with the hot water and then place it with the filled oven-proof ramekins in the centre of the oven.

Preparation:

Place the milk, sweet whipping cream with the untreated orange peel, cinnamon stick, Bourbon vanilla and fine lavender blossoms into a pot and bring to the boil. Allow to boil briefly, remove the pot from the heat, take out the orange peel, leaving the remainder to cool down a little.

Beat the egg yolks with the sugar until frothy, then slowly stir in the milk/cream mixture and pour it through a fine sieve.

Now pour the egg/milk mixture carefully into small oven-proof ramekins, making sure that there is no froth on the surface. If necessary, remove the froth with a spoon.

Now place the ramekins into the water bath you have prepared, so that they are immersed to half their height in water.

Leave to thicken in the oven for 1 hour.

Take the ramekins out of the oven and leave them to cool down.

Before serving, sprinkle 1 tbs of fine raw cane sugar over the surface of each ramekin and burn the sugar crust with a blowtorch. Simply stroke the flame of the blowtorch over the sugar until it has caramelized. And there you have it!

About Kyocera

Headquartered in Kyoto, Japan, the Kyocera Corporation is one of the world's leading manufacturers of fine ceramic components for the technology industry. The strategically important divisions in the Kyocera Group, which comprises 213 subsidiaries (April 1st, 2010), are information and communications technologies, products to increase the quality of life, and environmentally friendly products. The technology group is also one of the largest producers of solar energy systems worldwide.

With a workforce of about 63.000 employees, Kyocera posted net sales of approximately €8.59 billion in fiscal year 2009/2010. The products marketed by the company in Europe include laser printers, digital copying systems, microelectronic components, finceramic products and complete solar systems. The corporation has two independent companies in the Federal Republic of Germany: the Kyocera Finceramics GmbH in Neuss and Esslingen and the Kyocera Mita Deutschland GmbH in Meerbusch.

The company also takes a lively interest in cultural affairs. The Kyoto Prize, one of the most prominent international awards, is presented each year by the Inamori Foundation, once established by Kyocera founder Dr. Kazuo Inamori, to individuals and groups worldwide for their outstanding human achievement (converted at present €450.000 per prize category).

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