

# Pebrella (thymus piperella):

Paula Wolfert has an encyclopedic mind filled to the brim with food-facts. It seems that no ingredient is so rare to have escaped her attention. It was Paula who first told us of *Pebrella*, a rare form of wild thyme indigenous to the area between Valencia and Alicante. Our herbalist in Valencia was amazed that we had ever heard of *Pebrella*. It reminds one of savory, oregano and thyme all at once. We use it on meats, in salads, sprinkled on fresh cheeses and to marinate olives. To delve deeper into Paula Wolfert's *botanica*, ask us about her cookbook, *Mediterranean Grains & Greens*.



www.spanishtable.com

THE SPANISH TABLE 1427 Western Ave Seattle, WA 98101  
(206) 682-2827, FAX (206) 682-2814 email: seattle@spanishtable.com  
THE SPANISH TABLE<sup>2</sup> 1814 San Pablo Ave Berkeley, CA 94702  
(510) 548-1383, FAX (510) 548-1370 email:berkeley@spanishtable.com  
THE SPANISH TABLE<sup>3</sup> 109 N Guadalupe St Santa Fe, NM 87501  
(505) 986-0243, FAX (505) 986-0244 email: santafe@spanishtable.com

## PAULA WOLFERT'S PEBRELLA & MEMBRILLO MARINATED OLIVES

6 oz Spanish Membrillo (quince paste)  
pinch *Pebrella*  
½ Lemon  
¼ cup Olive Oil  
1½ cups Water

Crush a mixture of Spanish green & black olives lightly with a meat tenderizer or kitchen mallet, combine marinating ingredients and marinate for two days.

## CHRISTY'S PEBRELLA SALAD DRESSING

3 oz Spanish White Wine Vinegar  
3 oz Aged Sherry Vinegar  
¾ cup Fruity Spanish Extra Virgin Olive Oil  
2 tbs *Pebrella*, ground in a mortar & pestle  
1 tsp Ground Black Pepper  
1 tsp Spanish Sea Salt  
2 tbs Purple Spanish Garlic, chopped

Whisk ingredients together in order listed. Use to dress a Valencian salad of cubed cucumbers, red and green peppers, onions, tomatoes and *Queso de Cabra*. Toss with dressing then top with a sprinkle with chopped hazelnuts which have been fried in olive oil.

Our recipes were also inspired by **Patience Gray** who for over twenty-five years lived among the wild herbs along the Mediterranean littoral as near as possible to marble quarries but far from civilization. She shares her culinary experiences and recipes in her delightful book, *Honey from a Weed*.

## PUMPKIN & GARBANZO SOUP

1 large Onion, diced  
¼ cup Spanish Olive Oil  
½ tsp Minced ginger  
1 tsp *Pebrella*  
1 pint Water, warmed  
400 g Cooked Garbanzos  
29 oz tin pumpkin puree (pure & unsweetened)  
1 lemon, juice only  
1 pint Whipping Cream

In an *olla*, saute onion in olive oil until soft. Add ginger & *Pebrella* and cook together. Add warm water and bring to a boil. Add the pumpkin puree and garbanzos, then return to a boil. Reduce heat. Add the juice of the lemon and stir. Slowly stir in the cream. Heat but not to boil and serve.

## POTATOES BAKED IN PEBRELLA & GARLIC CREAM SAUCE

4 clove Garlic  
¼ cup Spanish Olive Oil  
4 Potatoes, sliced very thinly  
2 tbs *Pebrella*  
1 pint Half & Half

While the oven is preheating to 375°, brown the garlic in a medium cazuela then remove from heat. Layer the potatoes in the cazuela, sprinkling each layer with *Pebrella*. Cover with half & half and bake until potatoes are soft, at least one hour.

## TEPARY BEANS WITH WINTER GREENS

½ lb Tepary Beans, soaked in cold water for 12 hours.  
2 tbs Pebrella  
4 clove Garlic, with peals, crushed gently  
¼ cup Spanish Extra Virgin Olive Oil  
4 oz Lomo or other dry cured pork, diced  
½ lb Collard greens or other winter greens  
1 tsp Spanish Sea Salt

Drain the bean. Place them in an *olla* with the Pebrella, garlic, oil & Lomo. Cook until soft. One hour, or more. Add the greens and cook until done

## LAMB & ARTICHOKE HEART HASH

When they trim a rack of lamb, there are trimming that can be diced for hash.

1½ lb Lamb, diced into small chunks  
½ cup Extra Virgin Spanish Olive Oil  
4 clove Garlic, chopped  
4 tbs Pebrella  
pinch Saffron, about 25 threads  
1 onion, chopped  
2 red or yellow bell peppers, chopped  
240g Canned Artichoke hearts  
1 lemon, juice only  
2 Eggs, hard boiled & diced  
1 tbs Parsley, minced

Toss lamb with olive oil, garlic, Pebrella & saffron & let marinate for 4-8 hours. Brown the lamb in a large cazuela. When brown, add onions and cook until soft. Add pepper and cook until soft. Add artichoke hearts and heat through. Squeeze lemon juice over the hash. Top with egg and parsley. Serve hot.

- 1) Jazz up you vegetables: Toast, but do not burn, two tablespoons Pebrella in your favorite pot for cooking vegetables. Add water and bring to a boil. Reduce heat and allow to steep. Use this liquid to cook vegetables.
- 2) Jazz up flat breads: Brush with Spanish olive oil, spread on some chopped Spanish purple garlic, sprinkle with Pebrella and bake or heat. I use pizza dough and bake it in a cazuela right in the Weber BBQ.

## PEBRELLA AND ASPARAGUS PAELLA WITH PRAWNS

We were inspired to make the broth for this Paella by **Patricia Gray**'s description of Catalan shepherd's preference for wild thyme soups and teas in ***Honey from a Weed***. *Pebrella* is one of the native thymes unique to Spain and its gentle, but complex flavor seems to infuse the rice with the scent of a cooking fire high in a mountain meadow in the Pyrenees.

6 cups Clam Juice  
1 tbs Pebrella  
1 head Garlic ½ cloves crushed, skin left on  
½ cloves peeled and chopped  
½ cup Spanish olive oil  
1 lb Asparagus Spears broken into one inch sections.  
1 lb Large Prawns  
2 cups Bomba Rice

Heat the clam juice with the Pebrella and whole garlic cloves in a pot. Break off the tough ends of the asparagus spears and toss in the pot. Peel the prawns and toss the shells in the pot. Let this liquid broth brew over a moderate heat while you heat the olive oil in a six person Paella pan. When oil is hot, add the garlic and cook until golden brown. Toss in peeled prawns and toss in oil. When prawns turn pink, add the asparagus and toss. Stir in the rice. Strain the broth as you ladle or pour it into the Paella pan so you can discard the asparagus stalk butts, prawn shells and Pebrella leaves. Be sure to use Bomba rice for this Paella, it adsorbent properties will result in a rice infused with maximum flavor.



### THE SPANISH TABLE

1427 Western Ave  
Seattle, Washington 98101 USA  
(206) 682-2827, FAX (206) 682-2814  
email: seattle@spanishtable.com

### THE SPANISH TABLE<sup>2</sup>

1814 San Pablo Ave  
Berkeley, California 94702 USA  
(510) 548-1383, FAX (510) 548-1370  
email: berkeley@spanishtable.com

### THE SPANISH TABLE<sup>3</sup>

109 North Guadalupe Street  
Santa Fe, New Mexico 87501 USA  
(505) 986-0243, FAX (505) 986-0244  
email: santafe@spanishtable.com

www.spanishtable.com