

# An Indoor Herb Box

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**H**aving fresh herbs on hand is possible at any time of year. This indoor window box is filled with popular culinary herbs that can be overwintered on a bright south-facing kitchen windowsill. Ours measures 19¼ inches long, six inches wide, and six inches deep, but whatever size fits your space is fine. The box shown here is made of painted wood, but feel free to choose a wood, metal, or plastic model. Make sure there are several drainage holes in the bottom; to avoid losing soil through the holes, cover them with a piece of hardware cloth screening, or even a coffee filter. Purchase herb plants in two- to three-inch pots (the rosemary will probably be in a larger pot) from your local nursery or garden center. An all-purpose potting soil mix is suitable; premoisten it before planting the herbs. To maintain active growth, water



thoroughly only when the soil surface dries out; feed with half-strength liquid fertilizer once a month. Mist underneath the leaves daily to discourage pests such as white fly and red spider mites. Harvest the leaves as needed; be sure to keep the plants clipped regularly, to maintain a compact habit. Turn the window box around every couple of weeks to ensure even light and growth. The plants may be transplanted into the garden in the spring after the last frost. ■

## the herb box at a glance

- 1. Curly-leaved parsley** (*Petroselinum crispum*) 1 plant; 8" tall; bright green curly leaves useful as a garnish or in combination with thyme and bay for a *bouquet garni*. Biennial.
- 2. Flat-leaved, or Italian, parsley** (*P. crispum*) 1 plant; 8" to 12" tall; flat dark green leaves, with stronger flavor than the curly-leaved type. Biennial.
- 3. Common thyme** (*Thymus vulgaris*) 1 plant; 8" tall; evergreen shrublet with trailing stems bearing ¼"-long gray-green leaves that are aromatic.
- 4. Variegated lemon thyme** (*T. x citriodorus* 'Silver Queen') 1 plant; 10" to 12" tall; evergreen shrublet with tiny, strongly lemon-scented leaves, grayish-green bordered with white.
- 5. Chives** (*Allium schoenoprasum*) 2 plants plant-

ed singly; 12" to 15" tall; very slender pointed dark green leaves, with mild onion flavor. Perennial.

**6. Tricolor sage** (*Salvia officinalis* 'Tricolor') 1 plant; up to 2' tall; 2"-long leaves variegated with cream, purple, and green; pungent flavor. Evergreen shrub.

**7. Purple sage** (*S. officinalis* 'Purpurea') 1 plant; up to 18" tall; pungent 2"-long pur-

ple leaves. The color is best on the young growth. Evergreen shrub.

**8. Rosemary** (*Rosmarinus officinalis*) 1 plant; up to 4' tall; dark green needlelike leaves with a pungent, piney fragrance. Evergreen shrub, with small pale blue or white flowers. Can be trained as a topiary if desired.

