

## Herb "Chips"

Oil

Basil

Celery leaves

Literally any other soft herb (no woody stemmed ones like rosemary)



Frying herbs is a good trick to know if you need an interesting garnish, or a lot of herb oil made quickly. They're also addictive little crunchy snacks, and possibly the most beautiful thing I've ever made. The leaves turn translucent and almost like stained glass. It only takes a few minutes to fry herbs, but there are 2 particular pieces of equipment that, if you're missing them, makes it very difficult to do safely. You need a thermometer that can take the temperature of the oil reliably. I have a digital one that clips to the side of the pot with a metal clip, so it can stay in the oil for a while. You also need a splatter screen. Herbs have a high water content, and they will splatter when they hit the oil. It's also important that you pluck the herb leaves off their stems. Frying stems is bulky, awkward, and messy, and the stems really become edible so it's not worth the headache.

Once your herbs are stemmed, wash and very thoroughly dry them. You do not want to put water in hot oil. Trust me.

Fill a large pot with enough oil to come 1/3 of the way up the side of the pot. Heat your oil (I used a refined olive oil but any oil with a high smoke point will do) over medium high heat until the oil reaches 375 degrees F.

Take your splatter screen in one hand, and a small handful of herbs in the other, and carefully drop the herbs in the hot oil. Immediately cover with the splatter screen.

Fry for 10-15 seconds, or until the popping subsides. The herbs will not turn translucent until they're taken out of the oil and cooled. Transfer to a paper-towel lined plate using a heat proof frying spider or slotted spoon, and season immediately. I like them Hippy Dorito seasoning if I'm going to snack on them, but plain if they are a garnish.

Save your oil! It's now infused with herbs and will be delicious in anything from salad dressing to stir-frys. If you fry herbs often enough, you can keep reusing the herby oil up to 4 times, and then use it for other purposes. The more herbs you fry in the oil, the stronger the flavor will be.