**HERBS**

**Cretans once said that all herbs goats eat can be eaten. Some of these herbs are made into salads; some are cooked plainly or with meat.**

**MALLOW:** Mallow, cooked with olive oil, is grown in various regions of Anatolia. The mallow is used not only in cooking but also in alternative medicine. Furthermore, it is believed that the mallow is beneficial for healing bruises, swellings, and furuncles; when it is boiled, it strengthens the nerves.

**TANGLE:** The tangle has a powerful, aniseed-like scent thanks to the fennel, an essential oil, on the leaves. It is effective for gas extraction from the body and for increasing breastmilk in women; also, its roots are used as diuretics.

**ACI SOĞAN:** *Acı Soğan* is the onion of the catnip plant. It is grown in Alaçatı, İzmir. It is boiled twice because of its extremely bitter taste and consumed with olive oil and lemon.

**WILD RADISH:** It can be eaten as a salad if boiled or cooked with eggs. Wild radish has impacts on refreshing the body, easing the nerves, and relieving the pain because of the essential oils it contains.

**SEA COWPEA:** This salty, sour, but delicious herb is grown on the seaside after the tidal waves are gone. Although the cowpea salad with garlic and vinegar is utterly tasty, the making process is slightly challenging. It is helpful in goitre treatment since it is grown in soils rich in iodine. It is suggested that salt should not be included because of its already salty taste.

**IVY:** Ivy is one of the herbs grown in the Aegean Region, where herb kinds are abundant. Despite its slightly bitter taste, it is a delicious and beneficial herb. It is generally boiled to lessen its bitter taste and later cooked with eggs. It lowers the cholesterol and the urea level of the body. It prevents water retention.

**BLESSED THISTLE:** It is also known as milk thistle. This herb is found in nature from January to March. Some prefer to cook with lamb meat, and others prefer to boil and make it into salads. It is believed that if someone drinks the boiled water of blessed thistle in the morning with an empty stomach, it will be helpful for the health of the liver and kidneys.

**CIBEZ:** Cibes is known in and around İzmir as sprout (*cücük*), which also refers to wild cabbage. This soft and delicious herb can be flavoured with olive oil and lemon after being boiled.

**POPPY GRASS:** Despite being a meadow flower, the herb has a foul smell and bitter taste. However, before it springs, when the green sprouts of it are cooked, the result will be unimaginably healing. It is not only used for gastronomical purposes, but also in alternative medicine as an expectorant, tranquilizer, easing bronchitis and cough. In addition, it is believed it stops the bleeding and heals the damaged parts when the poppy grass is mashed and put on the scars.

**GOOSEFOOT:** It takes the name due to its resemblance to the goose foot. The smelly and grassy herb growing in the Mediterranean Region works as a nematicide to treat intestinal diseases.

**NETTLE (*DALAGAN*):** The beneficial nettle leaf, which comes to mind when Aegean Cuisine is mentioned, strengthens the immune system, enhances blood circulation, cleanses the blood, prevents ulcers, heals wounds, and blocks the spread of resistant microorganisms also, is beneficial in the treatment of pancreas, stomach, liver, intestines, and gallbladder diseases.

**CHICORY:** Chicory is an annual plant species from the daisy family that is used as a vegetable. With its leaves, the dishes and salads can be made. The chicory leaves are usually collected in spring and consumed as healing grass and vegetables. It has a slightly bitter taste, but it is definitely not inedible. It increases the working qualities of the kidneys and liver. It improves the connective tissue and helps a considerable amount of blood to reach all cells. Chicory contains abundant active substances and strengthens people with poor immunity. It is rich in calcium and minerals.

**HYSSOP (*TARHANA*):** It belongs to the umbelliferae family. They are soft-haired, biennial or perennial, yellow-flowered, and strongly scented plants with a shrub-like appearance of 20-50 centimetres in height, without thorns or thorns depending on the type. Its dried leaves and branches with flowers have a healing effect on the scars. They are put on the injured parts and eczema marks. Its leaves and flowers are added to pickles and tarhana (a Turkish soup with dried yoghurt) to give aromatic flavour and smell. Hyssop, kept waiting in boiled water and then consumed, has a positive effect on healing the ulcers and increasing the appetite.