

## **LOVE STARTS IN THE KITCHEN!™**

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### **RITA ON THE WEB!**

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### **AN OLD FASHIONED EASTER WITH SPONGEWARE AND TIE DYED EGGS**

**Using natural food coloring from the Natural Food area (and yes, they are featured in this week's ad!) is a fun way to create beautiful, old fashioned eggs. So get the kids in the kitchen and start making fun, and memories!**

#### **Spongeware eggs**

These dappled eggs are so pretty – put them in a spongeware bowl if you have one, or in a wire egg basket.

12 white eggs

12 brown eggs

2 tablespoons white vinegar

Blue and brown food coloring (or any color you like)

Put eggs in large saucepan. Add water to cover a couple inches. Heat to boiling over medium heat. Cover, remove from heat and let stand 15 minutes. Eggs will cook perfectly. Rinse under cool water and drain until completely dry.

Heat oven to 250. In small cup, combine 1 tablespoon vinegar with 8-10 drops liquid food coloring to make blue, and 1 tablespoon vinegar plus 3 drops blue, 4 drops red, and 4 drops yellow to make brown.

Dip small piece of dry sponge or crumpled paper towel into blue coloring. Squeeze it almost dry. Hold white egg by one end. Lightly sponge blue coloring over top half. Place, sponged side up, in cardboard egg carton. Repeat with rest of white eggs. Set in oven until dry, about 5 minutes or so. When they are dry, sponge coloring onto other half and dry. Repeat with brown coloring on brown eggs.

Note: if you have plastic egg cartons, don't put the eggs in the cartons in the oven; dry them on the counter.

#### **Tie-dyed Easter eggs**

These are fun to make!

12 hard cooked eggs

12 cheesecloth squares, about 8" ea

1/4 cup clear vinegar

Liquid food coloring.

Dry eggs. Dampen cheesecloth with vinegar; wrap a square around each egg, gathering edges together and securing with a rubber band or string. Holding tied end, squeeze drops of food coloring in random patterns on wrapped eggs. Repeat with other colors. Unwrap very carefully; place in egg carton to dry.

#### **RITA'S HERB OF THE WEEK: BASIL**

Excerpted from my book *Culinary Herbs that Heal Body and Soul*.

This sun loving annual is used in aromatherapy to uplift and harmonize the spirit. Common sweet basil should be added during the last 5 minutes of cooking time for an explosion of flavor. The flavor of sweet basil is simple: anise with tones of clove. The more exotic Thai and hybrid basil have complex flavor profiles, like tones of citrus/mint/thyme/anise. Basil contains potassium and iron, so use it often!

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