



Mint fresh

Allée Bleue farm in the picturesque Franschhoek Valley produces the freshest mint for Pick n Pay

Herb specialist, Lario Moolman, has been working with herbs as a production manager for five years at the historic Allée Bleue farm, founded way back in 1690.

"Our mint crop at Allée Bleue is two years old and still looks fantastic, but we recently planted a new tunnel to get some fresh bushes growing. Mint is a perennial herb so you can actually harvest beautiful leaves for years from the same plant," explains Lario.

Mint stalks are harvested by hand early each morning while it's still fresh and full of vigour. The mint is then gently placed into crates and

a tractor driver transports it to an on-site refrigerated container where it's packed into punnets. The following day it finds itself at PnP after quick flights to the various stores nationwide. "From the moment the herbs are harvested up until the moment they end up in your shopping basket, the cold chain remains unbroken, so you're assured of fresh quality mint," she smiles.

However, Lario warns that although growing mint in your garden is fairly easy, it can quickly become an invasive plant. "Rather plant it in a container with holes for drainage, sunk into the ground or in

a nice pot. Mint prefers rich soil and although it can handle full sun, it grows best in shady areas. Place it under an outside tap where it can catch any leaking water droplets, or at your front door where your guests will be greeted with the wonderful fragrance," says Lario. "Buy a punnet of mint at PnP and put the stalks in a glass of water to keep the leaves fresh and oxygenated. Just make sure you replace the water every day so the roots always have a fresh supply of oxygen."

And, Lario's recipe for the best chocolate mint sauce ever? "Simply boil water, add sugar, cocoa powder and mint chocolate and mix well."