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To the non-French ear, everything seems to sound better and more refined when said in French unless, of course, [the French happens to be coming out of Steve Martin's mouth](#) [1].

Take, for example, the term "bouquet garni" translated literally as a "garnished bouquet" which doesn't sound nearly as nice but still sounds better than "herb bundle" which is essentially what it is. Bouquet garni is nothing more than an assortment of herbs usually tied together with string and added to give flavor to soup, stock, or a stew.

There's no one "right" collection of herbs to use. Most recipes include parsley, thyme and bay leaf, but basil, burnet, chervil, rosemary, peppercorns, savory and tarragon can also be added depending on the recipe. The advantage of the "bouquet" approach over adding loose herbs is that you can remove the bundle of herbs once they've surrendered all their flavor which for some recipes is preferable.

If you don't have untreated string or twine, you wrap the herbs in a small piece of cheese cloth.

Photo credit: David Monniaux

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