

Description

Borage
Borago Officinalis
Family: Boraginaceae

Borage

Growing Tips

Borage is a favourite companion plant. It's large fleshy leaves and blue star-shaped flower spread easily and fill any empty space in a vegetable or herb garden. The basal leaves grow to about 30cm long by 20cm wide and are furry dark green with strong mid rib and veins throughout. Along the flower stem, the leaves are smaller and sessile. The flowers are blue or pink with five pointy petals, about 2.5cm in diameter, arranged around a black stamen.

Parts Used

This is a tolerant plant that grows from seeds and prefers well drained soil, a sunny position and plenty of water. It is a favoured companion plant in the herb/vegetable patch and grows up to 75cm tall and 30cm in diameter. Be careful as it spreads widely and self sows.

Uses

Leaves and flowers

The Borage flower can be used fresh in salads, frozen in ice cubes, added to cocktails, and also crystallized and used to decorate cakes. The leaves are bland in taste, similar to cucumber, but full of nutrients such as potassium and calcium.

In Northern Italy it is part of the filling of ravioli and in Germany a "Green Sauce" is made from Borage. A poultice of fresh leaves can dampen inflammation or an infusion of dried leaves can assist in urinary tract infection, bronchitis and also helps with breast-feeding.

Oil made from the seeds (called Star Flower oil) is rich in essential fatty acids, including Omega 3 and 6.

If made into a tea it is said to lift the mind and dispel depression and strengthen the body.

Origin & History

Originating from Syria, it has been naturalized throughout North Africa, Europe, the Middle East and South Africa.

In Greek and Roman culture it was said to bring happiness and comfort.

