

Description

Lavender Stoecha or Spanish Lavender
Lavandula Stoecha
Family: Lamiaceae

Lavender Stoecha is a hardy perennial shrub growing up to 60cm high with grey-green needle-like leaves about 3cm long. It produces small pale flowers arranged on a 3cm long calyx topped by larger purple bracts that look like rabbit ears which gives this plant its other name, 'Rabbit-Ear Lavender'. The whole plant emanates a strong sweet scent that combines lemon and cinnamon which attracts bees.

Growing Tips

It likes a sunny position in light well-drained sandy soil. Apply lime before planting as it likes alkaline condition. It flowers from early spring to late autumn and is frost tender but drought resistant.

Parts Used

Flowers and leaves.

Uses

This variety of Lavender is mainly used for its fragrance and easy-care as an ornamental garden plant. It is best suited to hot climates. The dried flower pods can be used for their fragrance in potpourris and sleep cushions as the essential oils have a calming effect. A tea made with its leaves is soothing for stomach upsets.

Origin & History

The Lavender plant is native to Canary Islands, East Africa, Arabia, India, Southern Europe, Mediterranean and was brought to England by the Romans who used it to cleanse and perfume themselves - the name *lavandula* comes from the latin *lava* - to wash.

It is now widely cultivated throughout the world.

The Stoecha variety is native to Northern Africa and the Mediterranean region.

