

## Description

**Mint Chocolate**  
**Mentha X Piperita**  
**Family: Lamiaceae**

## Growing Tips

Mint Chocolate is a perennial herbaceous rhizomatous plant that has square-edged fibrous stems up to 60cm tall. It produces very fragrant oval dark green leaves 4-9cm long and with strong reddish venation which are slightly hairy. Small white to pale purple flowers form towards the tip of the stem in spaced whorls.

## Parts Used

It likes part sun or shade and somewhere airy with fertile moist soil. It mostly dies down in winter. The main way to propagate this plant is through the new shoots from the creeping rhizomes. For best results plant 45cm apart and preferably in a pot to prevent spreading.

## Uses

Leaves

Mint Chocolate is particularly nice to use in desserts with chocolate. Line a cake tin with leaves of this plant when making chocolate cake or add to fruit jellies, ice-creams and drinks.

The medicinal use of mint is due to its volatile oil menthol and derivatives and is used for its freshening flavour in toothpaste, chewing gum and also hair care. As a tea it aids digestion, freshens breath and helps cope with summer heat and hot flushes due to its cooling properties.

New research has shown it to be effective in treating Irritable Bowel Syndrome, to protect during radiation therapy and to improve recall. Inhalation of the essential oil has also proven to help in weight loss as it reduces the calorie intake.

## Origin & History

Mint is indigenous to Europe and has been naturalised throughout the world with many different varieties.

In Greek mythology it was called the herb of hospitality. Leaves were strewn over loam floors to dispel the earthy smell in rooms and replace it with the fresh mint flavour.

Its medicinal qualities are recorded since prehistoric archaeological times.

