

Description

Mint Common
Mentha Cordifolia
Family: Lamiaceae

Growing Tips

Mint Common is a perennial herbaceous rhizomatous plant that has square-edged fibrous stems growing up to 60cm tall. It produces very fragrant oval, dark green leaves 4-9cm long with strong reddish venation and 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. Mint Common must be propagated through its new shoots from the creeping rhizomes. For best results plant 45cm apart; to prevent spreading place them in a pot.

Uses

Leaves and flowering tops.

Origin & History

Mint Common's fresh leaves are used in mint sauce, vinegars, added to fruit jellies, ice creams and drinks. The leaves contain the nutrients vitamin C, provitamin A, phosphorus, iron, potassium and calcium.

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

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 proven to help in weight loss as it reduces the calorie intake.

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.

