

Description

Growing Tips

Parts Used

Uses

Origin & History

Sage Purple

Salvia Officinalis 'Purpurascens'

Family: Lamiaceae

Sage, Purple

Sage Purple is a perennial herb. It grows up to 75cm tall and produces oblong, matt purple leaves about 5-10cm long with a unique pebbly leathery surface that resembles that of a tongue. Its leaves turn more towards green as they age and purple or pink lipped flowers form at the tip of a stem and each produces four seeds. This is a very decorative plant.

It likes a warm sunny position and light, well-drained soil. For best results prune regularly to avoid it going woody and plant 50cm apart although it may need replacing after a few years. Does not like wet, cold winters.

Leaves and flowers

Sage Purple is mainly used for its colourful foliage and sweet flowers which are very attractive to bees, butterflies and hummingbirds. It bears the same strong flavour and bitter quality as the Sage Common and is therefore also useful for poultry stuffing and adds flavour to cheese dishes, stews and herb butter.

Medicinally, the Sage Purple has similar benefits as Sage Common. As a tea it is a general tonic, reducing sweating, aiding digestion, relieving coughs and colds and enhancing concentration. It is also good as a gargle and general wash for sore throats and ulcers. For the same purpose a fresh leaf can be chewed on. The essential oil from Sage is used in aromatherapy, as an insect repellent and in cosmetics.

Sage originates in the Egypt area and has been used to ward off evil, works against snake bites and to increase women's fertility.

The Romans used it as a diuretic, to numb the skin and stop bleeding. These uses gave it the name *salvia*, being Latin for saviour.

In Medieval time it was commonly called 'Sage the Saviour'.

