

Description

Mint Vietnamese *Polygonum Odoratum* Family: Polygonaceae – Knotweed family

Mint Vietnamese is not from the Mint family and is also known as Cambodian Mint. It is a perennial, frost tender herb that grows up to 30cm tall with narrow pointed, matt green, smooth spicy leaves that have a typical, dark rounded marking right across the leaf with a flavour that is a mix of pepper, mint and lemon. Each leaf node is marked by a knot along the purple round stem. A pink flower appears in summer.

Growing Tips

It likes sun with partial shade, (not above 32°) and keep soil moist and protection from frost. Pick leaves frequently to keep steady growth and avoid stems growing too long. For best results, grow 50cm apart as it forms quite an extensive root system. The root forms a clump and needs to be divided regularly.

Parts Used

Leaves

Uses

The fresh leaf is used typically in Vietnamese cooking and can be used in place of Coriander in all Asian cooking, soups, salads and fish. It can also be dried. Its essential oils may be of medicinal benefit, as a diuretic and for fevers.

Origin & History

The name *Polygonum* refers to the stem with its typical characteristic of being made up of short sections each connected by a proper joint (referred to as knots above).

It is indigenous to peninsular South-East Asia. Vietnamese people maintain that it suppresses sexual urges and Buddhist monks use it to help them maintain celibacy.

Not to be confused with *Polygonatum Odoratum*, the Solomon's Seal, used in Chinese medicine.

