

Living Herbs

Description

Chamomile German
Matricaria Recutita
Family: Asteraceae

This is a spindly-looking plant with branched stems and bright green pinnate leaves. Its flowers are daisy-like with a scent similar to apple with small white petals arranged around the base of a cushion-like yellow centre. It can grow up to 30cm tall.

Growing Tips

It grows annually and propagates by seed, sometimes producing several crops per year, in warm sunny locations with rich fertile soil. It is frost resistant and its growing season runs from spring to late autumn in northern regions.

Parts Used

Flowers.

Uses

As well as for decorative purposes, German Chamomile's medicinal properties are attributed mainly to the presence of volatile oils, chamazulene and bisabolol. Flowers are gathered when fully ripe and dried in a dark airy place.

An infusion can be taken for calming the nerves, easing digestion and can also be used to ward off allergic reactions. If applied externally it helps with healing and acts as an antiseptic and anti-inflammatory, it can also be applied to acne, eczema and other skin irritations or wounds. If made into an essential oil it is added to aromatherapy mixtures for its relaxing component. It's a very safe herb to use for babies with colic or restlessness.

Origin & History

Chamomile German originates in Western Asia, Europe, Egypt, Hungary and cultivated in New Zealand.

It was known as a medicinal herb since ancient times; the Egyptians assigned it to the sun for its effect on fevers and the moon for its cooling and calming properties.

It came to Europe and England during the conquests by the Roman empirical forces and was used in baths to ease pain and anxiety and as a tea for bowel inflammation.

It was also known to heal plants growing in its vicinity.



Chamomile, German