

Living Herbs

Description

Oregano Common is also known as wild marjoram
Origanum vulgare
Family: Lamiaceae

Growing Tips

Oregano Common is a perennial creeping plant with oval, slightly hairy, bright green leaves arranged in opposite pairs along a pale, semi woody stem. It exudes a fruity scent, similar to pineapple. The flower stem rises up to 60cm high and produces a pinkish-purple flower in groups that are arranged like balls along the branched stem, and leaves a dark-red calyx after the flower has fallen off.

Parts Used

It likes well-drained rich soil and frequent water in a sunny position. It is reasonably tolerant to drought and is dormant during winter months but will regrow in spring. For best results grow 30cm apart.

Uses

Leaves.

Oregano is a great addition to pizza and pasta sauces as well as salads, fruit salads and milk-based desserts.

Oregano tea is useful for colds, stomach upsets and calming, it can also prevent sea sickness. Another great tip is chewing a fresh leaf which can relieve toothache and gum disease.

Origin & History

Marjoram is native to the Mediterranean regions and Greek Mythology tells that Origanum was first grown in the garden of Venus. The name Origanum translates from Greek into "joy of the mountain".

The servant of the king of Cyprus was turned into an Origanum plant after he spilled a jar of precious perfume, and since then, the sight of this plant near burial places is seen as a good omen for the welfare of the dead's spirit. It was also used as a symbolic adornment in marriage ceremonies.

Both Romans and Greeks used it as a disinfectant and for its pleasant scent in hair rinses.

In the 16th century it was used to ward off the plague as inhalations.



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