

Description

Oregano True Greek
Origanum Vulgare ssp. Hirtum
Family: Lamiaceae

Oregano True Greek is a hardy, perennial, bushy plant with pointed, green, hairy leaves with a strong aroma, arranged in opposite pairs along a thin, woody stem. Grows up to 50cm high and produces several groups of white flowers arranged in small groups along the branched stem.

Growing Tips

It likes well-drained, rich soil and frequent water in a sunny position. The hairy leaves serve to conserve water during dry spells. It will flower during early summer and then start a new growth of leaves towards autumn. For best results trim back dead growth and plant 30cm apart.

Parts Used

Leaves.

Uses

This variety of Oregano is the strongest of the Origanum group, and numbs the tongue when a fresh leaf is chewed. It is used in pizza and tomato sauces, cheese melts, sauté and stir-fry dishes. Grind fresh leaves, olive oil, salt and garlic to make a marinade for pork, beef or potato bake. It can also be dried.

Origin & History

Marjoram is native to the Mediterranean regions and Greek Mythology tells that it 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 preservative and disinfectant and for its pleasant scent in hair rinses. In the 16th century it was used to ward off the plague as inhalations.

