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Rosemary, *Romarinus officinalis* L.

Botanical description



Rosemary has small, narrow, evergreen leaves, reminiscent of resinous needles. The pale blue flowers grow in small clusters in the axils of the leaves. But rosemary rarely flowers in our climate. Its smell is strong, heady and camphorated. The taste is pronounced, minty, pine scented and with a slight touch of ginger. It is a plant characteristic of Provence and the American Southwest where it grows year round as a fragrant bush, especially in arid and rocky scrubland on limestone soils. Rosemary is rich in essential oil.

How to cultivate

In Quebec, rosemary is cultivated as an annual plant. It needs a sunny site, sheltered from the wind, and poor, calcareous soil. Wood ash or eggshells are beneficial and recommended.

What parts to use

In cooking, the leaves are used, in herbalism the leaves and flowering tops are prized.

Cosmetic uses

It is said that an infusion of 15 ml of rosemary in a cup of water would stop hair loss and stimulate regrowth. A compress soaked with an infusion of 50 ml of water, 5 ml of rosemary and 2 ml of chamomile would be beneficial for puffy eyes and bags under the eyes. It is also a product frequently used in perfumery.



Cooking with rosemary

Rosemary is one of the main ingredients of *Herbes de Provence*. Thyme, savory and marjoram are the other ingredients of this celebrated herb mix. The bare woody stems can be used as a skewer, they add flavor to meat and vegetables. Keep a small bunch of leaves at the end of the stem. Oven or BBQ dried leaves are crisp and delicious.

RECIPES



Rosemary is a versatile herb. It goes well with grilled meats, especially chicken, lamb and pork, which can be stuffed with sprigs of fresh rosemary. It is the ideal companion for vegetables such as zucchini, eggplant, mushrooms and dried vegetables. Rosemary goes perfectly with thyme and garlic

Potatoes with rosemary

Ingredients

- Potatoes
- olive oil
- curry
- rosemary
- salt and pepper

Preparation

- Cut the potatoes lengthwise into six pieces.
- Place in a bowl and coat with oil and herbs.
- Bake on a baking sheet covered with parchment paper at 220°C (425°F) for 15 to 20 minutes.



Rosemary-flavoured oil



Ingredients

- 750 ml olive oil
- 4 sprigs of rosemary
- 2 or 3 cloves of dried garlic
- 1 whole French shallot

Preparation

Leave to macerate for 2 to 3 weeks and then remove the shallot before using it. The rosemary stem can be left in the bottle.

Excellent in salads, on tomatoes, and grilled fish.

Medicinal uses

Rosemary is attributed many phytotherapeutic virtues. It may, among other things, have beneficial effects on the digestive system and it is said to help the work of filtration of the liver and kidneys. It is a general tonic, and is said to help for the relief of muscular pain and dizziness. It is one of the oldest plants in pharmacopoeia. Its essential oil contains 10 to 20% camphor.

«Anti-vertigo» Herbal Tea

Ingredients

- 1 sprig of fresh rosemary
- Lemon balm leaves
- Verbena leaves
- 750 ml water

Preparation

- Bring the rosemary and water to a boil, simmer for 1 or 2 minutes.
- Remove from the heat and add the other plants.
- Let infuse for 10 minutes.
- ...To be taken throughout the day.

Tales and Legends

You may want to research the famous *Queen of Hungary Water* with rosemary flowers and the mysterious *Vinegar of the Four Thieves*...



The information contained in these bulletins are taken, in part, from the Herb Art Notebooks published by l'Herbothèque herbotheque.com

