



Bulletin no. 11

August 2020

Wild pansy, *Viola tricolor* L.

The wild pansy is one of the first flowers that we plant in the spring since it tolerates cold nights and even light frosts. The flowering continues in autumn until the arrival of snow. Obviously with the heat of this summer, the pansies in the garden started to look less pretty. We have pruned them a little and we believe that they will be at their peak again when the cooler weather returns.



Botanical description

The pansy is a small herbaceous plant usually annual but can be perennial for a short period of time. It spreads easily, which is why it returns to the garden each year, often growing in the lawn. The pansy flowers are tricolored, yellow, purple, white or all three at once. The heart is always yellow. It blooms from April to October but is at its peak during the month of May. Its smell is light and its flavour is bitter and salty with a light minty taste.

How to cultivate

Pansies like cool temperatures, wet soils and sandy ground. They prefer full sun but tolerate partial shade. From the seeds, pansies replenish abundantly on their own. They grow well with cereals such as wheat and rye.

What parts to use

Flowers are used in the kitchen. The whole plant, flowers, stems and even the roots, are used for medicinal purposes.

Cosmetic uses.

Wild pansy is excellent for skin care as a cleansing lotion, facial steam bath, cream, cleanser, and in a facemask.

Wild pansy facemask

For beautiful skin or to fight acne, apply the following mask once a week:

- 15 ml pansy flower and pansy leaf powder
- 15 ml white or pink clay

Mix in a little water, infusion or cleansing milk to make a smooth and homogeneous paste. Apply to the face and leave on for about 20 minutes. Rinse with plenty of water.

Culinary uses



Pansies' colors are pretty and its subtle minty taste is very refreshing. It can be added in spring salads and desserts. It can be used to decorate plates and drinks.

You can also add a flower in each compartment of the ice cube tray and add it to our cool summer drinks.



RECIPE

Pansies in cantaloupe

- 1 cantaloupe
 - 6 pansy flowers
 - 10 ml Cointreau
- Cut the cantaloupe in half and seed, reserving the juice.
Combine cantaloupe juice and Cointreau, and then pour into both halves of the cantaloupe.
To decorate, float the flowers on top. Refrigerate and serve cold.

Medicinal uses

Pansy is thought to be particularly useful for the integumentary system by its beneficial effect on the blood. It is ideal for a spring cure. Drink one infusion on an empty stomach in the morning and one before the evening meal for a minimum of three weeks. It also acts on the respiratory system, the saponins it contains are expectorant and its mucilage is soothing for coughs, bronchitis and asthma. It would have regulatory properties on the urinary system.

The legend and popularity of pansy: *Why pansy doesn't have a smell?*



"There's rosemary, that's for remembrance. Pray you, love, remember. And there is pansies, that's for thoughts." Shakespeare, Hamlet, Ophelia, Act IV, Scene 5 – Ophelia, Painting by John Everett Millais, 1852

According to an old legend, field pansies, also known as tricolour violets and Trinity grass, once had such a sweet scent that it drove crazy women and girls who went out to the fields to pick them without worrying about the wheat

being trampled. Sad to cause so much damage, they asked the Trinity, its patron Saint (gold for the Father, white for the Son and pensive purple for the Holy Spirit), to remove its scent so that humanity could eat its fill.

The information contained in these sheets are partly taken and adapted from the HerbArt notebooks published by the Herbothèque herbotheque.com

