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Peppermint, *Mentha x piperita* L.

There are many varieties of mint, spearmint, pouliot mint, pineapple mint, ginger mint etc... We have chosen to grow peppermint in the herb garden of Les Verrières VI. The mint being invasive, we planted it in a pot. The nasturtiums hide it a little but it is there.



Botanical description

Mint is a perennial that is easy to grow. Its stems are straight, quadrangular and purplish. Its leaves are a beautiful dark green, toothed and sometimes purplish. The tiny, pale lilac flowers are clustered in the axils of the upper leaves. Its strongly aromatic smell is due to the menthol it contains. Its slightly peppery and spicy taste is very refreshing. This is why it is widely used in chewing gum and candies to freshen breath.

How to grow

Mint likes rich, moist soil and prefers partial shade to full sun. It needs a regular supply of good compost. It spreads by runners or plant division. The mint grows well with radishes, cabbage, turnips, tomatoes and peas. Insects stay away from mint plants.



Parts used

The leaves are used in cooking and the flowering tops are used for medicinal purposes.

Cosmetic uses.

Mint promotes skin exchanges and tightens the vessels. It is suitable for couperose skin and makes an excellent facial steam bath. It rests tired feet.

Foot bath

1 handful of lavender*
1 handful of mint
1 handful of sea salt

Infuse the plants in boiling water, leave to cool, add sea salt and soak sore or tired feet for at least 10 minutes.

**You will find lavender at the foot of the shrub grove with variegated green and white leaves near the kiosk.*

Domestic uses

Mint is widespread, it gives fragrance to soaps, candles, toothpaste etc... It also keeps rodents away.

Culinary uses and recipes

Mint has been known for a very long time for adding flavour to dishes and drinks. It is widely used in North Africa, the Middle East and all around the Mediterranean: mint tea, tabbouleh, tzatziki, tagines, with lamb etc.

Tzatziki with mint



Ingredients

- 300 g plain yogurt
- 1 cucumber
- 2 cloves of garlic
- 15 ml olive oil
- 5 leaves of mint
- Salt and pepper

Preparation

- Peel and remove the seeds from the cucumber.

- Cut them into small pieces or grate them with a large-hole grater.
- Leave the cucumber pieces to drain for 15 minutes.
- Chop the mint leaves
- Mix all ingredients together.
- Season with salt and pepper.
- Let stand for one hour in a cool place.
- Mix again before serving.
- Enjoy with toast, pita bread or as an accompaniment to grilled lamb chops.

Cold Green Pea and Mint Soup



Ingredients

- 1 sweet onion, finely chopped
- 1 clove of garlic
- 1 tbsp. olive oil
- 4 cups chicken broth
- 5 cups of fresh (or frozen) green peas
- 1/2 cup 15% cream
- Salt and pepper
- A dozen fresh mint leaves

Preparation

- Slowly brown the onion and garlic in oil in a saucepan and then add the stock and peas.

- Bring to a boil and simmer gently for 6 minutes.
- Set aside a few whole peas for decoration.
- Remove from heat. Then add the 10 mint leaves. Season with salt and pepper. Let cool.
- Stir in the cream and blend in a food processor or blender until smooth.
- Let cool and then refrigerate.
- Serve in cold bowls, decorated with mint leaves, a few whole peas, a few croutons and a drizzle of virgin olive oil.

Medicinal uses

Peppermint is a friendly plant to the digestive system. It will be useful for motion sickness and nausea. It stimulates bile and the secretion of digestive juices. Peppermint could bring some relief, especially in the patient suffering from diarrhea. It combats flatulence, colic and cramps. The analgesic effect of menthol is also recognized. The first phase is refreshing and is followed by a feeling of warmth. Crushed or chewed fresh mint leaves act well on insect bites. In small quantities, mint is calming, but in high doses, it is stimulating and can interfere with sleep.

Calming digestive herbal tea :

- 5 ml of chamomile flowers + 5 ml of mint leaves + 750 ml of water.
- - Infuse and enjoy after meals.

The legend and popularity of mint

According to legend, the mint was born as a result of the Homeric anger of Persephone, wife of Hades, god of the underworld. Persephone couldn't bear to have her husband abandon her for the charms of the nymph Mint. She threw her to the ground, trampled her until her bones were crushed. A strong, heady smell came out of the room. A heady, strong odour came out, and mint was born. The Egyptians used mint in cooking, perfumery and medicine. The ancient Greeks used it in funeral rites. The Assyrians and Babylonians used it to combat slow digestion. The Romans flavoured their sauces and wines with mint. The Arabs worshipped it. They used to carry a little bouquet with them. Menthol was used as an antiseptic, keeping flies away from flies carrying infectious germs. It was even considered an aphrodisiac.

The information contained in these sheets are partly taken and adapted from the Herb Art notebooks published by the Herbothèque. herbothèque.com/