



# Rosemary

*Rosmarinus officinalis*

**Zone:** zones 8-11, not frost tender.

**Soil:** Light (sandy), medium (loamy), well-drained, slightly alkaline soil.

**Evergreen:** 4 feet, can be six feet in diameter after several years.

**Germination:** plant seeds in well-drained soil in full sun in spring. Protect the plant from cold, wet winters.

**Plant:** in full sun. Can tolerate drought but must have sun. Trim after full flowering. It should not be planted near potatoes, but it makes a good companion for beans, cabbage, carrots, and sage.

**Flowers:** dark blue

**Harvest:** leaves can be harvested in the spring or summer. They can be used fresh or dried.

**Uses:** both the leaves and flowers are edible in small quantities as a garnish or flavoring. They can be eaten either raw or cooked. The flowers are milder tasting, but the leaves are a somewhat bitter and resinous. They are also a little tough so need to be finely chopped. Sachets can be used in closets and drawers to ward off moths. A yellowish-green dye is obtained from the leaves and flowers.

**Medicinal Uses:** though sometimes regarded as a rather simple home remedy for mental fatigue and mild depression, rosemary has some potent medicinal benefits, including relief for toxic shock syndrome. The flowers can be used to make an eyewash. One of its flavonoids is superior to rutin in helping to maintain capillary integrity. Rosemary leaves yield a lovely, aromatic oil that is antiseptic and antioxidant in effect as well as mood elevating. It is also said to prevent baldness. The oil is stimulating and relieves congestion. Oil made with the flowering tops is rare but higher in quality.

**Taste:** tangy and slightly bitter.

**Warnings:** not to be used excessively during pregnancy because higher amounts might result in miscarriage.

**Habitat Considerations:** the plant repels insects from neighboring plants. It can be grown as a hedge. It produces pollen early in the year and is loved by bees.

**Notes:** rosemary has traditionally been used as a symbol of loyalty and fidelity.

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