

ANOTHER HERB HERBERT FAVOURITE HERBS

FACT SHEET

Purple Basil *Ocimum basilicum*

Basils are rich in volatile oils, which often vary considerably within the same species and according to growing conditions.

The composition of oils in a particular plant affects its aroma, flavour and uses, and may make identification difficult.

Rubin variety is a dwarf dark opal basil. *O. basilicum* 'Rubin' is an attractive, highly aromatic cultivar, bred at the University of Connecticut in the 1950s with purple-black leaves and cerise-pink flowers.

The name *Ocimum* is from the Greek *okimon*, used by Theophrastus for basil.

PARTS USED

Whole plant, leaves, seeds, oil.

PROPERTIES

A restorative warming, aromatic herb that relaxes spasms, lowers fever, improves digestion and is effective against bacterial infections and intestinal parasites.

USES OF THE HERB

Culinary

Leaves are used with tomatoes and tomato flavored dishes, pasta sauces, vegetables especially beans, peppers, and eggplant, soups and stuffing for duck.

Aromatic

Oil is used in perfumery and aromatherapy.

Medicinal

Internally for feverish illnesses especially colds and influenza, poor digestion, nausea, abdominal cramps.

Externally for acne, loss of smell, insect stings and skin infections.

CULTIVATION

Ornamental. Rich, light, well drained soil in sun. Slugs, aphids, white fly, spider mites and *Botrytis* may attack plants. Good companion plant for tomatoes.

HARVEST

Whole plants are cut as flowering begins and distilled for oil. Leaves are picked during the growing season and used fresh or dried.



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H 30cm/12in

