

ANOTHER HERB HERBERT FAVOURITE HERBS FACT SHEET

Lavender *Lavandula species*

Lavender has been the best known fragrant herb throughout history. Its scent being used for numerous applications. Most lavenders are native to the Mediterranean. There are 28 genus, and many cultivars of these aromatic shrubs and perennials, with the most common being English lavender and its many forms.

USES OF THE HERB

Culinary

Fresh flowers are crystallized or added to jams, ice creams, and vinegar.

Medicinal

Internally for indigestion, depression, anxiety, tension headaches, migraine and bronchial complaints. Externally for burns, sunburn, rheumatism, muscular pain, cold sores and insect.

Economic

Oil is used in perfumery and toiletries.

PROPERTIES

An aromatic, tonic herb with sweet scent. It relaxes spasms, benefits the digestion, stimulates the circulation and uterus, and lowers fever.

STOECHYS-TYPE LAVENDERS

These are distinguished by coloured bracts at the head of the flower. These are technically, coloured leaves.

Lavandula pendunculata (Spanish) is relatively new to Australia. It is similar to *L. stoechas* (Italian *L.*) which in some states of Australia has been classified as a noxious weed as it seeds quite prolifically. *L. pendunculata* does not seem to do this and in fact is just as pretty with larger bracts than *L.s.* another feature is that it flowers in late winter.

Lavandula viridis (Green) has spear shaped, sticky green leaves with a pine-lavender scent. It has tiny flowers set in a greenish cone, which flowers less freely than *L. dentata*, beginning in spring.

PTEROSTACHYS LAVENDERS

L. multifida (Fernleaved) the foliage is finely cut, with a ferny appearance. Flowers are borne in winged spikes of showy deep lavender in colour over summer.

INTERMEDIA

Grosso, Fat Spike, Dutch and 'Margaret Roberts'. Lavender intermedia, a perennial that is said to have the best overall appearance, color, size, flavor and fragrance of all Lavender types. Popular in France. Highly disease resistance, drought tolerant. Height 24in/60cm



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Height and Spread
60-90cm/24-36in

ENGLISH OR TRUE LAVENDERS

All have grey foliage with abundant spiked flowers, from mauve through to pink and white. The dwarf varieties having more compact flowers. These only flower once a year, but a second flowering can be obtained if pruned in summer. Lavender oil is extracted from english or true lavender varieties. *L. vera* and *L. spica* are now both termed *L. angustifolia*.

L. a. 'Munstead', which is a dwarf form of *L. angustifolia* have the same mauve flowers, but with a more compact growth.

L. a. 'Hidcote' is the same as Munstead but the flowers are a richer blue.

L. a. Rosea growth habit is the same as english lavender but pink flowers.

L. angustifolia the most commonly grown, and used.

Cutting grown plants obtain best flower spikes, colour and scent.

L. a. 'Alba' a white flowering form with large flower spikes. 2 other forms are *L. spica* (true spica) and *L. latifolia*, their flowers are very insignificant. We do not grow these types. *lanata* (Woolly) has showy broad-leaves covered with grey hairs appearing like felt. The flowers however very plain.

CULTIVATION

All lavenders especially the stoechys respond extremely well to pruning, otherwise they become very woody. The best time is late winter when fertilizer should also be applied. Suitable, mediums are well rotted cow manure, blood and bone (well spread and watered in, so as not to burn the roots). Mulching also will help the plants from drying out in the coming warm months. This procedure will force new growth for spring and help to thicken foliage, producing more flowers. For hedging, plants should be set 50 cm apart.

HARVEST

Flowers are picked as they begin to open and used fresh, distilled for oil, or dried for use in infusions, spirits, and tinctures

