

ANOTHER HERB HERBERT FAVOURITE HERBS

FACT SHEET

Marjoram Sweet

Origanum marjorana



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There are 36 species of perennials and sub-shrubs in this genus, which is Eurasians distribution. About 20 are grown as ornamentals, for their attractive, aromatic foliage and purple-pink to white flowers, which in certain species are surrounded by conspicuous bracts.

The name *Origanum* comes from origanon ("bitter herb"), the original Greek name used by Hippocrates for these plants.

Origanum marjorana (sweet marjoram) is a perennial shrub with wiry, red-brown stems and downy, gray-green leaves. Very small white to pink flowers are produced in clustered spikes from late summer to mid-autumn. **Compactum** form has green compact leaves and said to be a superior form of Marjoram.

PARTS USED

Whole plant, leaves, oil



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PROPERTIES

Similar to *O. vulgare*, but more relaxing.

USES OF THE HERB

Culinary

O. marjorana has a more delicate flavour than *O. vulgare*, and is best-used fresh toward the end of cooking. Leaves and flowering sprigs are popular in Italian and Greek cooking, with meat dishes, soups, tomato sauces, and pasta, and to flavour oil and vinegar.

Medicinal

Internally for bronchial complaints, tension headache, anxiety, minor digestive upsets, and painful menstruation. Not given to pregnant women. Externally for bronchial congestion, muscular pain, arthritis, sprains, and stiff joints.

Economic

Seeds are added to condiments and meat products. Oil is used in commercial food flavoring, liqueurs, perfumery, soaps, and hair products.

Height and Spread 45cm/18in



CULTIVATION

Well-drained soil in sun. Propagate by cuttings of non-flowering shoots in early spring to summer.

HARVEST

Plants are cut as flowering begins, and leaves during the growing season, to be used fresh or dried.