PLANT FACT SHEET

Iris x germanica Falk.

GENUS *Iris* **FAMILY** Iridaceae

COMMON NAMES Dagger flower, German iris, Tall bearded iris

EDIBLE PARTS AND USES

Edible parts: Root - flavouring

Caution: Fresh roots and leaves are highly poisonous.
The starch of the root is a famine food used for extending bread flour, after removal of the bitter element.
It is also crushed and used to flavour gin.
The peeled and dried rhizome is used in flavouring.
An essential oil is used to flavour drinks amd chewing gum and to enhance fruit flavours.

DESCRIPTION

An attractive plant which keeps growing from year to year. An iris with an underground stem or rhizome. The rhizome or rootstock is pale cream in colour. It grows 1 m tall. The rhizome is thick and spreads on the surface of the ground. The leaves are bluish-green. They are flat, narrow and sword like. They are 2-4.5 cm wide. The spathes are green in the lower half. The flower stems are 1 m high. The flowers are white and tinged with violet and may or may not have a yellow beard. Flowers can be purple, yellow and blue. They are 9-11 cm long.

HABITAT

It suits a Mediterranean climate. It grows in dry rocky places. It suits hardiness zones 5-9.

PRODUCTION

Cultivation

Plants can be grown from seed or by division.

Harvesting and Seed Production

Plants take 3 years to mature. The rhizomes are dug up, peeled, dried and powdered.

NOTES

There are about 300 Iris species.

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