PLANT FACT SHEET

Origanum vulgare L.

GENUS *Origanum* **FAMILY** Lamiaceae

COMMON NAMES Oregano, Delight of the mountain, Wild marjoram

EDIBLE PARTS AND USES

Edible parts: Leaves, Flowers, Herb, Spice, Vegetable, Flowers - tea

The leaves and flowers are used to flavour food. They are used in soups, stews, casseroles, sauces, and tomato and egg dishes. They are also cooked as a vegetable. The leaves can be dried.
The leaves and seeds are pickled.
The leaves are dried and brewed into a herbal tea.
The flowering tops are sometimes put into beer and ale as a flavour and preservative.

DESCRIPTION

A creeping plant. It is a leafy bush with creeping roots. It grows to about 1 m high. It has small dark green leaves and red-brown stems. The leaves are 1-3 cm long by 0.5-1.5 cm wide. They are broadly oval. It has purple or pink flowers. They occur in 4 sided spikes. It has a smell like thyme. There are many named cultivated varieties.

HABITAT

It is a temperate plant. It can be grown from seed, cuttings or division of established plants. In China it grows between 500 and 3600 m altitude. In the Indian Himalayas it grows between 3,300-4,000 m above sea level. It suits hardiness zones 5-9. Tasmania Herbarium. In Hobart Botanical gardens. In Sichuan and Yunnan.

PRODUCTION

Cultivation

Plants are grown from seed. They can also be grown from tip cuttings or rooted stems.

NOTES

There are 20 Origanum species. It has anticancer properties.

PICTURES

Credit: Food Plants International (Bruce French)

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