

Savory Jo Francks, M.H.

The International Herb Association has named savory as herb of the year for 2015. The two common varieties of savory are summer savory, *Satureia hortensia*, and winter savory, *Satureia montana*.

Summer savory is an annual plant grown from seeds sown in the spring and flowering in mid-summer. The tips can be harvested frequently to ensure a continual supply throughout the season.

Winter savory is a low growing, shrubby perennial and can be used as a low growing hedge. The plant is propagated by cuttings, layering, division or seed.

The leaves of both plants are used in cooking. The name suggests that it is quite a fragrant plant and historically was planted near beehives. The leaves have a strong, slightly peppery taste resembling that of thyme. Anciently the Romans made a sauce of vinegar and summer savory, very much like the mint sauce of today. Beans and peas are greatly enhanced by this herb with which they have a particular affinity.



Medicinally the leaves are used as a carminative to alleviate flatulence. Additionally, it may also help with diarrhea, indigestion, colic, upset stomach and mild sore throats. Externally the leaves can be used to rub on a bee sting to alleviate the pain.

Savory has been used for centuries both as a culinary herb and for its medicinal properties. Culpepper tells us that, “the juice dropped into the eyes removes dimness of sight if it proceeds from thin humours distilled from the brain. The juice heated with oil of roses and dropped in the ears removes noise and singing and deafness.” It is rich in minerals and vitamins and the leaves contain many essential oils such as carvacrol and thymol. These oils are known to have antifungal and anti-bacterial properties. The tea made from the leaves is considered a powerful antiseptic and can help improve the functioning of the liver and the kidneys.

Consider planting a variety of savory in your garden this year. Harvest and dry the leaves for use throughout the year.

Jo Francks is a Master Herbalist graduate of The School of Natural Healing. She is also a Holistic Iridologist and Quantum Touch Practitioner.