

Why are Herbal Flavorings Useful Besides Just Tasting Good?

Humans and animals are attracted to natural growing roots, leaves, berries, and plants that are medicinal. Phytotherapy, the treatment of disease with medicinal plants, is a separate but integral aspect of Modern Science. It constitutes a "Special Therapeutic Doctrine." (1) "Twenty-five percent of today's pharmaceutical drugs have botanical origins. Examples are: digoxin from foxglove, morphine from poppies, aspirin from willow bark, and tamoxifen from the Pacific yew tree." (2)

Rosemary Oil - (*Rosmarinus officinalis*) *Derived from rosemary leaves, which grow on a strongly aromatic evergreen shrub, many growing 6 feet high with narrow, dark-green, pine-like leaves.* Research shows that this popular herb, rosmarinic acid is a stimulant and mild analgesic. Most popular believed benefit is as memory aid. Grows as native plant in Greece, where students burn rosemary during final exam times to improve their memories. This herb has astringent, tonic, nervine, anti-inflammatory and carminative properties. As a stimulant, it is capable of affecting the adrenal glands and is regarded as being useful in the treatment of mild depression. It has antioxidative properties like those of preservatives BHA and BHT. Considered to be a mild digestion aid. Significant activity against the growth of food poisoning organisms. (3)

Garlic - (*Allium sativum*) *Garlic is a strong scented perennial herb that with long, flat and firm leaves that average .75" in width, flowering stems grow over 3 feet and host numerous white-tan bulbs (garlic cloves.)* Key constituents are volatile oils (alliin and alliinase, and allicin) key actions are antibiotic, antimutagenic and healing properties, expectorant, increases sweating, lowers blood pressure, reduces blood clotting, anti-diabetic, and expels worms. This herb can rid the body of intestinal parasites. Keeps the blood thin. Reduces fat and serum cholesterol level in blood. Has been used for a thousand years in treating coughs, colds, bronchitis, toothaches and earaches and as an anti-fungal. It is highly regarded for its detoxifying properties. (4) Originated West-Central Asia Desert. Animal nutrition studies prove that garlic stimulates an animal's immune system. It is an effective antibacterial, antiviral, anticandidal, antiparasitic, anthelmintic, smooth muscle relaxant (may be useful in relaxing gastric muscles in cases of diarrhea,) and antiprotozoal. (5)

Anise Seed - (*Pimpinella anisum*) *Anise is an annual plant that grows as high as 2 feet. It has feather-like leaves, yellow flowers and grey-green seeds.* Both anise and star anise oils, popular in Chinese and Japanese cultures are used as aromatic carminative, stimulant, mild spasmolytic, mild antibacterial and insecticide, and expectorant in cough mixtures and lozenges. Reduces bloating and indigestion, reduces pain. (6) Anise and star anise are used widely as flavoring ingredients in all major categories of foods. Anise seed oil is used in the production of licorice candy, but is not to be confused with licorice flavoring. Origins are Southern China, Vietnam, India and Japan. (7)

Cinnamon - (*Cinnamomum verum*) *Cinnamon is an evergreen tree that grows up to 25-60 feet high in tropical regions including the Philippines and the West Indies.* In addition to being a popular spice used to season foods, cinnamon is believed to prevent the growth of food poisoning organisms and preventing cellular damage, the cause of aging and human diseases. Serves as digestive aid and stimulant. (8) Cinnamon has been used for centuries as treatment for diarrhea, rheumatism, colds, abdominal and heart pains. (9)

Thyme - (*Thymus vulgaris*) *Thyme grows as an aromatic shrub up to 16 inches with aromatic woody stems, small leaves and pink flowers. Aside from being a popular herb for food preparation, thyme is an excellent antiseptic and tonic and is used as a respiratory remedy.* Thyme's invigorating qualities offset the sedative qualities of other herbs. Its antiseptic and tonic properties make it a useful tonic for the immune system in chronic, especially fungal infections. Chewing its leaves may relieve sore throats. (10) Thyme is a member of the mint family and is thought to have antioxidative properties. (11)

Juniper - (*Juniperus communis*) *Juniper* is a coniferous shrub that grows to 50 feet in height. *Juniper* has slender twigs with whorls of leaves that look like needles. *Juniper* has yellow and blue flowers and round blue-black fruit. *Juniper* is a tonic, diuretic, and is strongly antiseptic within the urinary tract. It is used to treat cystitis and helps relieve fluid retention. Helpful in treating arthritis, gout and rheumatic conditions. In digestion, juniper is warming and settling, easing colic and settling the stomach. (12)

Sources:

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10/08/01



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