

Know 10 Mediterranean Herbs and Spices



About Community in Bloom

Community in Bloom (CIB) is a programme that was launched by the National Parks Board (NParks) in 2005. It aims to nurture a gardening culture among Singaporeans by encouraging and facilitating community gardening efforts. It is also an opportunity to build community bonds and strengthen social resilience in our City in Nature.



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In support of:



For more information, visit our website at www.nparks.gov.sg/cib or email us at CommunityInBloom@nparks.gov.sg

For more gardening resources and tips, visit go.gov.sg/gardening-resources

To learn more about our City in Nature, scan the QR code or visit www.nparks.gov.sg/about-us/city-in-nature



This brochure features 10 Mediterranean herbs and spices that can be grown in Singapore. We hope that this brochure will encourage you to try growing these edibles at home or in your community/allotment garden!

In their native habitats, many Mediterranean herbs thrive in sunny areas where the soil is dry, well-drained, alkaline and lean in nutrients. In Singapore's climate, these herbs and spices can do well when grown in a location that has at least four hours of direct sunlight.

Tips for growing Mediterranean herbs and spices successfully



1. Give your plants sufficient space

Grow these herbs and spices in individual pots or in your community garden, and space them out to:

- Allow for air circulation between plants
- Maximise their exposure to sunlight
- Help to reduce the incidence of fungal and bacterial diseases that can affect these herbs and spices

2. Select the right growing media

Soil mix suitable for growing edibles such as herbs and spices is commercially available at plant nurseries. You may choose to buy from plant nurseries or make your own soil mix by experimenting with different materials.

Recommended ratio for soil mix:

2 parts

Peat moss or loamy soil



2 parts

Gritty materials (e.g. Lightweight Expanded Clay Aggregates (LECA), pumice)

3. Water the plants wisely

It is important to water your herbs and spices thoroughly. If you are growing these plants in pots, watering them until excess water drains from the base of the pot means that they have received adequate water.

Depending on the environmental conditions of your growing area, you may water these plants on alternate days. Sunnier and windier locations would require more frequent watering.

4. Adding the right nutrients

In general, herbs and spices require fertilising once a month. However, please note that the amount of fertiliser to use can vary depending on the type of fertiliser and the plant. Water the plant after fertilising to wash away excess fertiliser and help the plant absorb the nutrients better.

The main principle is to apply small amounts of fertiliser frequently. Use less or diluted fertiliser to avoid fertiliser burn if you are unsure of the amount to apply. The alternative is to use slow-release fertiliser.

Coriander

Scientific Name
Coriandrum sativum



Plant Characteristics
Also known as Cilantro, Coriander is a herbaceous shrub that can grow up to 0.6 m tall. The whole plant gives off a bitter, pungent aroma.

Cultivation and Plant Care
This plant grows well in moist, well-drained soil. It thrives in a semi-shade environment and requires moderate watering. It can be propagated by seed.

Uses
The fruits, leaves, stems, seeds and roots are edible. The seeds are used as a spice while the aromatic leaves are used as a herb to flavour a variety of dishes or as a garnish.

Dill

Scientific Name
Anethum graveolens



Plant Characteristics
Dill is a herbaceous shrub that can grow up to 1.5 m tall. The whole plant gives off a bitter, pungent and liquorice scent when crushed.

Cultivation and Plant Care
This plant grows well in moist, well-drained soil. It thrives in full sun and requires frequent watering. It can be propagated by seed.

Uses
The leaves and seeds are edible. The seeds are used as a spice while the aromatic leaves are used as a herb to flavour seafood dishes and creamy sauces.

English Lavender

Scientific Name
Lavandula angustifolia



Plant Characteristics
Lavender can grow up to half a metre tall. The flower has a sweet, citrus-like flavour.

Cultivation and Plant Care
This plant grows well in well-drained soil under full sun, and requires minimal watering. It can be propagated by seed, stem cuttings or division.

Uses
The leaves and flowers are used in salads, stews, bread and sauces. Lavender is also used in potpourri and perfumes.

Garlic Chives

Scientific Name
Allium tuberosum



Plant Characteristics
This plant has a grass-like growth habit. Its flowers produce a fragrance similar to that of violets.

Cultivation and Plant Care
This plant grows well in well-drained, loamy soil. It requires moderate watering and can be grown under full sun and semi-shade conditions. It can be propagated by seed or by dividing the root ball.

Uses
The leaves can be consumed raw in salads or added to stir-fried dishes or soups.

Lemon Balm

Scientific Name
Melissa officinalis



Plant Characteristics
Lemon balm is a herbaceous shrub that can grow up to 1 m tall. The leaves give off a lemony scent when crushed.

Cultivation and Plant Care
This plant grows well in moist, well-drained soil under full sun to semi-shade conditions, and requires moderate watering. It can be propagated by seed, stem cuttings or division.

Uses
The aromatic leaves are edible, and are commonly used as a herb to flavour salads, soups, vinegars, liqueurs and teas.

Oregano

Scientific Name
Origanum vulgare



Plant Characteristics
Oregano is a herbaceous shrub that can grow up to 1 m tall.

Cultivation and Plant Care
This plant grows well in well-drained soil. It thrives in full sun and requires moderate watering. It can be propagated by stem cuttings or division.

Uses
The fresh leaves can be used as a topping for salads while the dried leaves can be used for seasoning soups, stews and meat.

Rosemary

Scientific Name
Salvia rosmarinus



Plant Characteristics
Rosemary can have either soft stems (when young) or hard, woody stems (when older), and can grow up to 2 m tall. The leaves give off a pungent and astringent aroma.

Cultivation and Plant Care
This plant grows well in moist, well-drained soil. It thrives in full sun and requires little watering. It can be propagated by stem or root cuttings.

Uses
The aromatic leaves are edible and commonly used as a herb to flavour vegetable and meat dishes.

Sage

Scientific Name
Salvia officinalis



Plant Characteristics
Sage is a herbaceous shrub that can grow up to 0.4 to 0.7 m tall. The leaves give off a nice aroma with a unique bitter and pungent taste.

Cultivation and Plant Care
The plant grows well in well-drained, acidic to slightly alkaline clay loam soil under full sun, and requires moderate watering. It can be propagated by stem cuttings or division.

Uses
The dried leaves are used as a herb to flavour stuffing, sausages and cheeses.

Sweet Majoram

Scientific Name
Origanum majorana



Plant Characteristics
Sweet Majoram can grow up to 0.6 m tall.

Cultivation and Plant Care
This plant grows well in well-drained, sandy soil under full sun or semi-shade. It requires moderate watering. It can be propagated by seed.

Uses
The fresh or dried leaves are used as culinary herbs. The flowers and leaves are also used to make essential oils.

Thyme

Scientific Name
Thymus vulgaris



Plant Characteristics
Thyme is a perennial with creeping or erect stems that can grow up to 0.5 m tall.

Cultivation and Plant Care
This plant grows well in well-drained soil under full sun, and requires little watering. It can be grown by seed or stem cuttings.

Uses
The leaves are used to flavour dishes with eggs, beans and tomatoes.