Oregano

Oreganum vulgare



Height: Up to 40cm (16in)

Suitable for: Sunny position with well drained soil. Pots & tubs.

Summary: Oregano is sometimes referred to as Wild Marjoram. It is a bushy herb with aromatic oval green leaves and attractive purple - pink flowers.

More information:

This is an easy to grow herb tolerant of most conditions, except full shade and very wet soil. It has a place both in the herb garden and in the ornamental border with its attractive scented foliage and flowers.

The taste is warm and aromatic and it is an important addition to Italian, Greek and Mexican cuisine. It especially improves dishes containing garlic, chilli and tomatoes, and is used extensively in spaghetti bolognaise and other pasta dishes, pizza, moussaka and aubergine and all tomato dishes. It retains its flavour well when dried and is often used in this form particularly in the winter months.

Oregano or wild marjoram, as it is sometimes called, is the best of all the *Oreganums* to grow for drying. It retains a good strong flavour and colour and lasts well throughout the winter.

Oregano and tomatoes are a classic combination and a good tomato sauce is a useful standby to have either in the fridge or freezer to go with pasta, poultry and vegetable dishes.

Rich Tomato Sauce

Tomato sauce can be used as a base for pizzas or pasta dishes. It freezes well and can be made in bulk. In summer, if there is a glut, fresh peeled tomatoes can be substituted for the tinned ones.

- 2 tbs olive oil
- 1 large onion, finely chopped
- 1 clove garlic, crushed
- 2 x 400g tins of chopped tomatoes
- 4 tbs tomato puree
- 1 tsp sugar
- 2 tsp dried oregano (or 2 tbs fresh herb)
- bay leaf

Heat the oil and gently fry the onion and garlic until soft and golden. Add the rest of the ingredients and season to taste. Simmer on a low heat in the covered pan for 30 minutes then remove the lid and simmer a little longer until the sauce has thickened.