

## Oregano 'Hot and Spicy'

*Oreganum vulgare* 'Hot and Spicy'



<b>Height:</b>	Up to 60cm (2ft)
<b>Suitable for:</b>	Well drained soil in full sun. Tubs & containers
<b>Summary:</b>	Hot and Spicy Oregano is a potent cultivar of greek oregano with an intense aromatic flavour which is both peppery and strong. The foliage is dark green and slightly hairy with abundant white flowers in summer.

### More information:

Greek oregano has the best flavour of all the types of oregano and the cultivar 'Hot and Spicy' has a further improved, hotter peppery flavour. The intense aromatics in the leaves give a strong burn on the tongue when they are chewed. In common with lots of herbs, all oreganos need a hot dry sunny spot to give the best flavour and grown under these conditions are fully winter hardy. Grown both as a culinary and an ornamental herb, it needs to be used frequently to promote bushiness and new shoots. The foliage is an attractive dark green colour and the dense white flowerheads are much loved by bees.

The name oregano has Greek origins from oros ganos meaning 'joy of the mountain', where it grows prolifically in the wild. In Greece brides were crowned with garlands of oregano to promote happiness and the herb was planted by tombs to give peace. Oregano is indispensable in Greek cuisine, especially in salads and lemon/olive sauces to accompany grilled meat and sautéed vegetables. Its spicy robust flavour is also perfect in salsa, chilli and sprinkled onto pizza.

## Grilled Potato Salad

8 medium size red potatoes  
2 large red onions  
2 tbs chopped [oregano](#) 'hot and spicy'  
a little olive oil

### Dressing:

175 ml olive oil	50 ml balsamic vinegar
2 tbs french mustard	salt and pepper

Cut the potatoes into quarters and parboil or microwave until they are half cooked. Cut the onions in half and then lengthways into wedges. Drizzle the potatoes and onions with a little olive oil and cook under a medium grill until tender and browned.

Meanwhile to prepare the dressing, mix all the ingredients in a small bowl until combined. Cut the grilled potatoes and onions into bite sized pieces and place in a serving bowl, sprinkle over the oregano and add the dressing and mix gently.

Serve warm or at room temperature with a barbecue or grilled meat.

The Greeks used oils extracted from oregano as a scent after bathing and the Egyptians used it as a disinfectant and food preservative. In the Middle Ages it was used in nosegays and as a fragrant polish for wooden furniture and floors.

Oregano is a great herb for preserving by drying as the flavour intensifies. Pick bunches of leaves before the plant goes up to flower, this is when the flavour and aromatics are at their best. Hang them in a warm place away from direct light until they feel crispy dry. The leaves can be crumbled from the stems into jars for storage.