



The Lavenders

ONE NAME, MANY PLANTS TO KNOW



Aromatherapy: Defined

Aromatherapy

Aromatic Plant
Medicine

Therapeutic use of aromatic plants

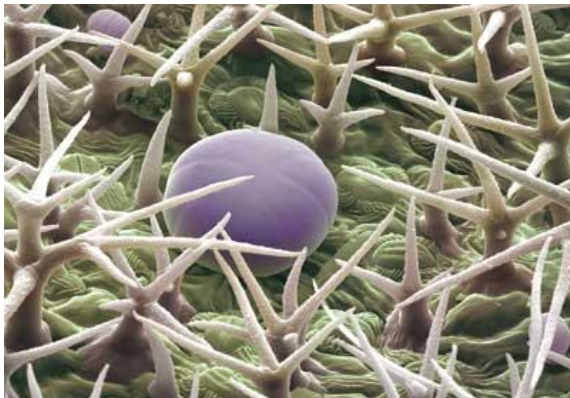
A sub-set of
herbalism

Essential Oils

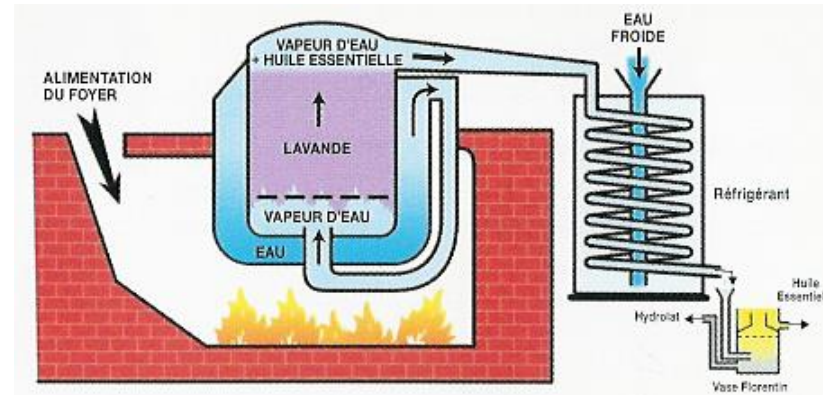
Hydrosols

The therapeutic application of genuine & authentic aromatic plant essences to holistically support the mind, spirit and the body's innate ability to heal itself.

Aromatherapy: Essential Oils



Essence



Distillation



Essential oil & Hydrosol

Lavandula: The Genus

From the Latin: lavare, to cleanse/wash: the body AND emotions!

- Washing and storing linens
- Roman/public baths
- Strewing herbs

“Started” modern aromatherapy as we know it: Rene Gattefosse

“Does it all”

- Relaxation balanced by restoration followed by a regulating effect, a great harmonizer.

Lavandula: The Genus

From the Lamiaceae botanical family

- aka the “mint” family
- Readily hybridizes
- *At least* 30 known species of Lavandula and a multitude of varieties and cultivars

Lavender, How do You Grow?

- Aromatic evergreen sub-shrub, compact, rounded form
- The essence is mainly stored in glandular trichomes on the sepals and petals
- Plants may live up to 10 – 15+ years
- Prefers lean soil, sun & good drainage

Notes on Cultivation vs Variety

Cultivar = “Cultivated variety”

- Cultivated variety by human intervention
- Sterile
- Must be propagated from cuttings, grafting or tissue cultures
- Example: *Lavandula angustifolia* 'Maillette'

Variety = Naturally occurring.

- Noted by “var” in the Latin name such as *Hyssopus officinalis* var. *decumbens*
- When a population of plants within a species differs in some significant way from other members of that species such as flower color.

Lavandula angustifolia

“True” Lavender, Compact and Floral

Lavandula angustifolia

- L. officinalis
- L. angustifolia/ narrow-leaved lavender
- L. vera
- True Lavender
- English lavender
- Female lavender
- Garden lavender
- Common lavender

How Many Names...?



- France, Bulgaria, England, USA, Kashmir and others
- Not native to England, it thrives in its climate; native to the Mediterranean (Spain, France, Italy, Croatia)
- Thought to originate from Greece

Lavender,
Lavender, Where
Do You Call Home?



- Compact, bushy shrub with linear gray-green leaves. In mid to late summer, long, unbranched stalks hold pale to deep purple flowers in dense spikes.
- May reach up to 3'
- Prefers calaeceous (lime/chalk), alkaline soils.
- May bloom twice a season.

Botany



Lavandula angustifolia

Harvesting: when in full bloom, sunny & still = greatest yield.

- Very hot, windy conditions increase EO evaporation & very cold weather prevents the development of ESTERS

Distillation dates back to 15th century France; wild harvested until the 1920s when cultivation began (i.e., propagation by cuttings)

- Steam distilled from the flowering tops

At least 200 metric tons of True Lavender are globally produced annually

- 8 to 30 kg EO/hectare



True Lavender: Vera, Munstead, Hidcote & Jean Davis

Wild vs. Cultivated & Low vs. High Altitude?

High Altitude

- *Lavande Sauvage*, Wild Lavender / Finest fragrance, called “petite” or “fine lavande” / Naturally occurring / Grown 1,200 to 1,600 meters

Low Altitude

- From seed or cultivated / Less “delicate” in fragrance / Grown 450 – 1,200 meters

Cultivated (cuttings or from seed)

- Low-medium altitude / Generally the “best” French lavender oil available also called “lavande fine” / The standard for lavender

Population (*Lavande population*, from seed)

- Fertile plant from wild seed / Grown minimum 800 meters

Clonal (cuttings)

- Sterile plants / Vegetative cuttings / Standardized: same height for cutting, same oil content per plant / Preferred method for growers



Terroir

A Sense of Place: Where Plants Call Home

Altitude

Soil type
(pH, mineral
content,
porosity)

Temperature

Humidity

Wind
exposure &
type
(coastal,
interior mtn.)

Lavandula angustifolia: Essential Oil

Keywords: Emotional blending, balancing

Therapeutic Actions: analgesic, antidepressant, anti-inflammatory, antiseptic, antispasmodic (esters), antiviral, hypotensive, nervine, sedative, vulnerary

- A great harmonizer. Builds bridges/enhances other essential oils. Secondary/supporting essential oil
- Duality: relaxing & cooling | restorative & mildly stimulating
- Great for TENSE and HOT conditions

Safety: safe to use with children, elderly

Great for culinary use

Lavandula angustifolia: Essential Oil

According to Mailhebiau, True Lavender is like Mother Teresa: *“Tireless, always even-tempered, with unfailing gentleness and devotion, Lavandula cares for and calms, listens to and remedies a thousand ills. She takes care of children, adults and elderly, animals, plants, the earth and sky. She looks after everyone with equal love and if there is anyone in the world whom she neglects, it is herself.”*



Lavandula latifolia

“Male” lavender: long and lean

Lavandula latifolia

Common Name: Spike lavender,
Latifolia (**Broadleaf** lavender), Male
lavender, Aspic (thought help against
the venom of the asp snake),
Portuguese lavender

Origin: Mediterranean (Spain, Portugal,
France, Italy & North Africa)



Lavandula latifolia

Botany/Growth

- Upright, bushy shrub or subshrub with slender, elliptic (spoon shaped) to oblong-lance-shaped gray-green leaves to 2.5" long.
- Long, branched stalks produce fragrant, mauve-blue flowers in narrow branching spikes, to 8" in mid to late summer
- *L. latifolia* can reach 3' high by 4' wide.

An Old Soul...

- Thought to be the "nard" mentioned in the bible (by some); The ancient Greeks called the lavender herb nardus, after the Syrian city of Naarda
- Distilled since the 14th century, at this time Spike was more widely used than True lavender
- One of the oldest species of lavender, along with *L. stoechas*

Lavandula latifolia: Essential Oil

Keywords: Stimulating, warming, physical

Therapeutic actions:

- Respiratory: bronchitis, sinusitis, catarrh, cold/flu (mucolytic, expectorant, anti-infectious)
- Nervous system: balancing/invigorating, indicated for lethargy
- Skin: wound healing, scar tissue formation, anti-inflammatory
- Musculoskeletal system: stiffness, sprains, nerve pain

Chemistry Notes:

- Camphor, 1,8 cineole (eucalyptol), linalool



Lavandin

The Offspring of “True” and “Male” Lavender

Lavandula x intermedia

Common Names

- Lavandin, L. x fragrans, L. intermedia, Dutch Lavender

Origin/Geography

- France, Spain

Botany

- Round shrub, branching stems with oblong/ lance-shaped/spoon shaped aromatic gray-green leaves that are 1.5" – 2.5" long.
- Leaves are covered in fine, silvery gray hairs.
- Bears spikes, 4-8" long of light blue to violet flowers In summer.



Lavandula x intermedia 'Abrialii'

Lavandula x intermedia

Plant facts:

- Cross between *L. angustifolia* and *L. latifolia*
- Naturally occurring hybrid due to cross-pollination
- Cultivars mostly used in aromatherapy: **Super** (chemically closest to *L. angustifolia*), **Abrialis** (chemically closer to *L. latifolia*)
 - Grosso is the least likely to suffer from die-back disease (deperissement) but has considered “inferior” odor quality and not used in aromatherapy but in the fragrance industry
- Lavandins produce the highest yields of flowers and essential oils: 30-40kg of dried material for 1 kg of EO; essentially 2x the amount of EO as *L. angustifolia*



Lavandin: Grappenhall, Provence, **Grosso**, Dutch Mill, **Abrialis** & Seal

Lavandula x intermedia

Therapy vs.

- Lavandin's are considered less "bioactive" due to their derivation from clones (sterile)
- They are often cultivated for the perfume/fragrance/industrial industries (e.g., perfume, HH goods, soaps, detergents, cosmetics)

Natural but Capitalized

- Although this is a naturally occurring hybrid, cloning and cultivation/propagation started in the 1920's and has since dominated the commercial market

More Oil Yield Doesn't Mean "Better" or "Worse"

- Lavender has about 160 chemical constituents; Lavandin has 60.
- Lavandin's properties do not cover as broad a spectrum as does the properties of true Lavender.

Lavandula x intermedia: Essential Oil

Keywords: Aches & pains, physical, wound care, cleaning, fragrance

Therapeutic actions:

- Due to it being a hybrid, it is a marriage of the more “physical” *L. latifolia* and still has some alcohols and esters like *L. angustifolia*.
- Analgesic (aches/pains/joint pain), antibacterial, antidepressant, anti-inflammatory, antiseptic, antispasmodic, cell regenerative, antifungal, hypotensive, sedative, vulnerary (wound healing)
- Nervous system: nervous tension, insomnia, headache

A photograph of a lavender plant (Lavandula stoechas) in a terracotta pot. The plant has green, needle-like leaves and several upright, purple flower spikes. The background is slightly blurred, showing a stone wall and a concrete surface.

Lavandula stoechas

Grounding Maritime Energy to Clear Muck

Lavandula stoechas

Common names:

- Spanish lavender
- Arabian
- Maritime
- French lavender
- Topped/Crested lavender
- Cotton lavender

Botany

- Compact, perennial shrub with linear gray-green leaves to 1.5" long.
- Dense, oblong spikes to 1.25" long of dark purple flowers topped by purple bracts on unbranched stalks.
- Prefers the coastal, siliceous, acidic soils of warm and arid Portugal & Spain.
- Like *L. latifolia*, it is more "delicate" than *L. angustifolia* (e.g., not winter hardy)



Lavandula stoechas

Abundant on the islands of Hyères, which the Ancient Romans called the 'Stoechades' Islands, after this plant.

One of the oldest species of Lavender: thought to be the Lavender used in the Roman baths (debatable: vs. *latifolia*)

Supposedly, an ingredient in the "4 Thieves Vinegar" & used as a strewing herb (verfmifuge)



Lavandula stoechas

Keywords: acute infections, clearing

Therapeutic actions:

- Anti-infectious
- Musculoskeletal: Analgesic (aches and pains) Anticonvulsant/spasmodic & modulator of Ca²⁺ ion channels (muscle cramping, neurotransmission.)
- Respiratory: Expectorant, mucolytic (bronchitis)

Safety: Do not use with children, elderly, immuno-compromised due to high ketone content; used in acute situations

“Lavenders”

Other Plants to Know

Reminiscent of Lavender...

Lavender seems to have been a benchmark plant for botanists and plant enthusiasts.

Lavandulaceus = “like lavender”

Lavandulifolius “with leaves like lavender”.

Salvia lavandulaefolia

Common Names: Spanish Sage, Lavender Sage

Origin: Spain, France

Botany:

- 1 ft tall and wide, with a reclining habit and narrow, lanceolate, whitish-gray evergreen leaves that are less than 2 in long.
- Leaves grow opposite each other, in bunches, on the stem. Pale lavender flowers grow on short inflorescences, blooming in late spring/early summer.



Salvia lavandulaefolia

Keywords: Protective, supportive/strength, comforting

Therapeutic Actions:

- Analgesic, Antianxiety, Anti-bacterial, Anti-depressant, Antimicrobial, Anti-septic, Antispasmodic, Cephalic, Emmenagogue/ Estrogenic, Expectorant, Febrifuge, Mucolytic, Stimulant, Tonic.

Safety:

- High ketone content (camphor) = low dilution & short term use, not for use with children/pregnancy/elderly)

More about the plant...

- Much research is being done on its effects on memory, especially as it relates to Alzheimer's disease
- Salvia from the Latin = "to feel well, healthy", heal

Melaleuca ericifolia

Common Names:

- Rosalina, Lavender Tea Tree, Swamp Paperpark

Family:

- Myrtaceae

Origin:

- Australia

Plant part:

- Leaves, twigs/branches

Botany:

- Tall, dense shrub, sometimes a tree growing to a height of 9 m (30 ft) with pale white or brownish papery bark. Its leaves are arranged alternately, sometimes in whorls of three. The leaves are dark green, linear in shape, 5–18 mm (0.2–0.7 in) long and 0.5–1.7 mm (0.02–0.07 in) wide.

Melaleuca ericifolia

Keywords: Calming, Affinity for the respiratory tract, immune-enhancing, tonic.

Therapeutic Actions:

- Analgesic, anti-anxiety, antibacterial, antifungal, antihistamine, anti-infectious, anti-inflammatory, antimicrobial, antioxidant, antiviral, calming, CNS tonic, disinfectant, immune support, immuno-stimulant, mucolytic, tonic.

More about the plant...

- Less aggressive than *Melaleuca alternifolia*
- Soft, almost feminine energetic quality that is very nurturing and soothing.



The Chamomiles

Botanical family:
Asteraceae



Chameamelum nobile / *Anthemis nobilis*

- Roman chamomile / English chamomile
- Origin: Italy, France, Germany, USA
- Pain relief, anti-inflammatory, antimicrobial, antispasmodic, nervine, sedative, wound healing
- Keywords: Soothing, calming, spasms

Matricaria recutita

- German chamomile
- Origin: Eastern Europe, NA
- Pain relief, anti-allergenic, anti-inflammatory, antispasmodic, nervine, sedative, wound healing
- Keywords: Anti-inflammatory, stress, skin

Ericephalus punctulatas

- Cape chamomile
- Origin: South Africa
- Anti-anxiety, anti-inflammatory, antispasmodic, cicatrisant, cooling, regenerative, sedative.
- Keywords: Calming, cooling, soothing, stress relieving.

Tanacetum annum

- Moroccan chamomile / Blue Tansy
- Origin: Morocco
- Analgesic, Anti-allergenic, Anti-anxiety, Anti-asthmatic, Anti-histamine, Anti-inflammatory, Calming, Cicatrisant, Cooling, Nervine, Sedative
- Keywords: Anti-allergenic, Burns

Lavender Tea (Infusion)

Why tea?

- Aromatics are dispersant & promote movement-- carminative (i.e., combats gas), antispasmodic (cramping), antibacterial, antiseptic.
- Aromatics are often nervines: calming to the mind-body

Opt for the flowers of *Lavandula angustifolia*

Directions

- 2:1 ratio (2 cups water to 1 tablespoon lavender flowers—adjust accordingly)
- Bring water to a near boil then turn off heat
- Add the flowers and cover
- Steep for 5 minutes.
- *Alternatively, use the same amount of water and lavender for a cold infusion; steep, covered, 6-8 hours in the fridge or overnight.*

Lavender Sachet

Materials:

- 8 tablespoons lavender flowers
- 5-10 drops of your preferred essential oils
- Mixing bowl and spoon
- Muslin bag or sealable heat bag

Directions:

- Drop the EOs into the bowl and mix to combine
- Add the dried lavender flowers
- Mix well
- Place the infused lavender into the muslin bag and enjoy!

All-Purpose Salve

The Goods

- 0.4 oz Beeswax (by weight)
- 1.60 ounces Calendula infused oil (by volume)
- 5% dilution: 28 drops *Lavandula angustifolia*, 5 drops *Helichrysum italicum*, 5 drops *Eriocephalus punctulatas*

Makes approximately 2 ounces