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Common Thyme

Thymus vulgaris

The Common Thyme is a perennial, low-growing spice, herbal and medicinal plant that grows not more than 40 cm. Its leaves bring out a strong aromatic fragrance when ground. From May until October it produces light-purple coloured blossoms. Thyme is used as a spice in the Mediterranean kitchen and as a medicinal herb to help with coughs and sneezes as well as stomach trouble. Historically, it is mentioned by Plinius in the antique, and later also by Hildegard of Bingen. Active agents: A Thyme tea is recommended with colds - just douse either three teaspoonsful of fresh, or one teaspoonful of dried leaves with 250 ml of hot (but not boiling) water, let the brew simmer for about 10 minutes, strain the tea and take it in wi

Natural location: Originally, the Common Thyme comes from the western European Mediterranean region.

Cultivation: Seeding directly outdoors can be done between mid April and end of June. Seed propagation indoors is possible throughout the year. The Common Thyme is a light germinator and only needs to be slightly pressed onto moist potting compost or herbal earth. Usually it takes two to three weeks until germination. From beginning of May, the small seedlings can be planted out, preferably in soil mixed with about 40% of sand.

Place: Thyme prefers a dry, warm and sunny place for cultivation.

Care: The Common Thyme develops deep reaching tap roots, and needs a rather tall pot for tub cultivation. Fertilizing with fluid organic fertilizer is only necessary in matured plants. The Common Thyme usually endures longer dry periods without a problem. However, the plant should be watered plentiful during very hot and sunny days. The leaves develop the strongest aroma close to blossoming and contain the most essential oil when harvested during midday. The herb can easily be stored through drying or freezing.

During the winter: The plant needs some frost-protection on the root area during winter. The Common Thyme will sprout anew from the lignified parts in next year. It is recommended pruning the whole plant back rather strongly in spring until the lignified parts. This will facilitate budding of the new fine shoots.