

# Hoosier Botanicals™

GREEK OREGANO (*Origanum vulgare* subsp. *hirtum*)

## In the Kitchen...

Oregano has a hot, peppery taste and should usually be added to your recipes in the last 10 minutes of cooking. It enhances eggs and adds dimension to breads, marinated vegetables, stewed meats and shellfish. It can be substituted for marjoram but in greater quantities.

Oregano's name means "joy of the mountains". Teas are used to soothe coughing and the oils can be made into extracts by distilling with water.

**Herb Vegetable Soup** In a soup kettle or large heavy-bottomed sauce pan combine 2 chopped medium onions, 1 finely chopped green pepper, 1 cup of chopped celery, 3 tomatoes cut into chunks, 1 cup of sliced carrots, 1 quart of beef broth, 1 tsp salt and 1/8 tsp pepper. Bring to a boil then simmer 10–15 minutes. (Add ½ cup water if necessary.) Stir in 1 tsp chopped fresh basil, 1 tsp chopped fresh oregano and ½ tsp crushed fennel seed and cook about 10 minutes. Serve with hot garlic bread or toasted bread with herb butter.

**Salad** Toss thinly sliced red radishes with minced scallions, minced fresh oregano, lemon juice, and olive oil. Serve on a bed of shredded spinach.



**Part used:** Flower, leaves

**Condition:** Flower-fresh or leaves- fresh or dried

**Ethnic span:** Italian, Greek, Mexican, Spanish, Cuban, and Colombian

**Methods:** Snip off sprigs of leaves and flowers

**Storage:** Dried

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## In the Garden...

To grow oregano for cooking, start with a plant or a cutting of a plant. Sprigs can be snipped when the plant is only 6" high. Plant oregano in a raised bed and mulch with pine boughs to maximize winter survival. For best flavor oregano should be harvested before flowering. Harvesting makes the plant bushier. When it is hard to keep the plant picked cut the whole bush leaving the lowest set of leaves. It will start leafing out again within two weeks. Cut back drastically again in August. Oregano is susceptible to root rot and fungal diseases and can become infested with spider mites, aphids or leaf miners.



Mint family—  
Labiatae

Mediterranean origin

Perennial

Full sun

Well-drained average soil with pH 6.8

Space 18–24" apart

Grows to 30"

Flowers from summer to early autumn

White blossoms

Propagate by division or cuttings

[www.hort.purdue.edu/newcrop/6pac](http://www.hort.purdue.edu/newcrop/6pac)