

DID YOU Know...



OREGANO

Origanum spp.

- Meaning “joy of the mountain” in Greek
- Was referred to as the “the prince of herbs” and was first used by the ancient Greek physician Hippocrates.
- Oregano is one of over 200 genera in the Lamiaceae (mint family).
- While Oregano and Marjoram are two prominent culinary members of the genus, there are others that are prized for their ornamental flowers, landscape value, medicinal, cosmetic and craft use.
- Za’atar, commonly used in Middle Eastern cooking, is either just one herb or a blend of herbs which varies depending on the region of origin. *O. maru* or *O. syriacum* is the plant referred to as za’atar which has a spicy fragrance and flavor. This plant is also known as Syrian oregano, bible hyssop and Lebanese oregano.
- Oregano was used in brewing beer, to disguise any unpleasant flavors before the use of hops was discovered.
- The amount of the chemical carvacrol (a creosote-scented phenol) in an *Origanum* spp. determines the characteristic or more of a creosote fragrance. This phenol also has anti-bacterial and anti-fungal properties.
- Throughout history, especially in folklore, the name marjoram is used interchangeably to describe both *Origanum majorana* (sweet marjoram) and *Origanum vulgare* (wild marjoram/oregano).
- The *origanums* are associated with love, protection, purification, healing, happiness and steeped in religious tradition and myth.
- In addition to culinary uses, *origanums* have historically been used for hygiene, fragrance and cleaning

To learn more about oregano and marjoram, see [Origanum and Marjoram: An Herb Society of America Guide to the Genus *Origanum*](#) and the Oregano & Marjoram [Profile](#)