

SWEET MARJORAM



Origanum majorana

[or-RI-ga-num maj-or-AN-uh]
(formerly *Majorana hortensis*)

Pharm: Herba Maioranae

Family: Labiatae

Names: Joy of the Mountains, Wintersweet, Knotted Marjoram, Majorane, Pot Marjoram, Mountain Mint; Majoran, Wurstkraut, Maigram, Mairan (German); marjolaine, Origan, Marjolaine (French); maggiorana, persa (Italian); Marzanjush (Arabic); Ma yueh lan hua (Chinese); Marjolein (Dutch); Avishan (Farsi); Meirami (Finnish); Majoran asovit (Hebrew); Mirzam josh (Hindi); Majoránna (Hungarian); Marjoram, Kryddmoeera (Icelandic); Mayorana (Japanese); Merian (Norwegian); Marzangoosh (Pahlawi); Majeranek, majeran ogrodowy (Polish); Manferona (Portuguese); Mayoran (Russian); Almáraco, Amaáraco, Mejorana (Spanish);

Mejram (Swedish); Mercanköshk, Kekik (Turkish)

Description: tender soft-stemmed perennial growing to 12 inches in a loose bush, producing oval leaves and tiny pink-lavender flowers imbued with a pungent, sweet, sagelike aroma. There are three other varieties of marjoram that it is often confused with: wild marjoram (*Origanum vulgare*), pot marjoram (*Origanum onites*) and showy marjoram (*Origanum pulchellum*), but none of these has the distinctive taste of sweet marjoram. A new hybrid of this herb, called hardy sweet marjoram was recently developed and promises to perform better in cold-winter climates.

Cultivation: Zone 8-10. Germination 1-2 weeks but is then susceptible to damping off disease if overwatered, easier as cutting. Put a layer of sterile sand over the soil medium before sowing to give support to plantlets and deter soil-line fungus. Space: 1 foot. Soil temperature: 70F. Soil: well drained, dry. pH: 7-8. Full sun. Transplant to the garden when the soil is warm so that it receives plenty of sunlight and air circulation. It's well-suited for container gardening since its root system likes confined space. Too cold-sensitive to be grown as a perennial in northern climates.

Marjoram is one of the western world's most important culinary herbs. Egypt produces 90% of the world's supply. France and Germany are the largest international markets for marjoram.

Harvest: Begin 4-6 weeks after transplant, then harvest sprigs of leaves and blossoms together. After the first frost in the fall. After the first frost in the fall, cut the plant down to 1 inch from the ground. Hang the harvested stems in a warm, dark, dry room for 5-7 days, then strip

the leaves from the stems and store in a tightly lidded opaque container. The most desirable time to harvest sweet marjoram is when the flavor is best, just after the flower buds form, and just before flowering. The plant is cut off about 8 inches above the soil and dried in a thin layer. The drug smells pleasantly spicy like camphor and tastes bitter and aromatic.

History: Marjoram was grown in Egypt over 3000 years ago. The ancient Greeks and Romans crowned newly married couples with this herb as a symbol of happiness. And sweet marjoram has grown so profusely in Sicily that it remains to this day on the coat of arms of the ancient city of Marjora from which it gets its name. In Crete marjoram was a badge of honor worn by the most distinguished leaders. Also used as a seasoning and a tea and as pain-relieving fomentations on their bodies. Used as a hair and eyebrow pomade. The Greeks believed that if a girl placed marjoram in her bed, Aphrodite would visit her dreams and reveal the identity of her future spouse.

Constituents: essential oil includes terpenes; cis- and trans-sabinene hydrate; flavonoids; linalool; terpineol, carvicol, linalyl acetate, ocimene, cadinene, geranyl acetate, citral, eugenol.

Properties: diaphoretic, carminative, expectorant, aromatic, digestive

Nutritional Profile: One teaspoon dried marjoram leaves has 2 calories. It provides 0.1 g protein, 0.04 g fat, 0.4 g carbohydrates, 12 mg calcium, 0.3 mg vitamin C and 48 IU vitamin A

Ritual: Gender--Hot; Planet--Mercury; Element--Air; Associated Deities: Venus or Aphrodite; Basic Powers: protection love. Add to all love charms. Place a bit of the herb in every room of the house for protection. Change every month. Give to a grieving person to draw happiness into their life.

Aromatherapy Uses:

DISTILLATION METHOD: steam distillation. Yield is very low, often less than 1% of the fresh material.

CHARACTERISTICS: The oil is yellowish, with a spicy, aromatic quality, reminiscent of lavender. The taste is sharp and spicy. The oleoresin is dark-green and viscous. Middle note.

BLENDS WITH: lavender, bergamot, mandarin, orange, nutmeg, rosewood, ylang ylang, rosemary, bergamot, chamomile, cypress, cedarwood, tea tree and eucalyptus

USES: The oil has been employed to treat flatulence, colic and rheumatism. It has also been applied externally as a liniment for sprains and bruises, used as a stimulant and tonic, and employed to alleviate tooth by placing a few drops on cotton placed on the tooth. Marjoram oil was used to promote perspiration in those suffering from measles, and was also regarded as a treatment for spasms.

Helps those who feel emotionally unstable or are prone to hysteria or irritability, especially due to outside stimulus. To ease loneliness, rejection and a "broken heart". Calms excessive sexual drives.

Promotes menstruation so should not be taken during pregnancy, good for period pains and leucorrhoea.

Eases respiratory difficulties and clears the chest by helping to loosen mucus in colds and bronchitis. Soothes the distressing spasms of tickly coughs.

The oil and oleoresin are used as fragrance components in soaps, detergents, cosmetics and perfumes. Employed in most major food categories, especially meats, seasonings and sauces, as well as soft drinks and alcoholic beverages.

BLENDS:

DIGESTIVE: 6 drops marjoram, 4 drops juniper, 2 drops anise

EMOTION: 4 drops marjoram, 2 drops frankincense, 2 drops rose

RESPIRATORY: 6 drops marjoram, 3 drops benzoin, 3 drops ginger

Menstrual Cramp Oil:

2 drops lavender, 2 drops marjoram, 2 drops chamomile, 3 drops geranium, 1 drop ginger, 1 oz carrier oil. Combine ingredients. Apply to abdomen, hips and lower back.

Culinary Uses: Works well with all kinds of meats, fish, soups, and egg and cheese dishes. One of the three essential herbs in Italian cooking. Use it with Italian Arborio rice and polenta. In England, marjoram is traditional with goose and chestnuts. It has an affinity with beans and should be added to bean, split pea or lentil soup. Also excellent with vegetables such as potatoes, carrots, turnips, cabbage, zucchini and corn. Stir into batter for corn bread or corn muffins. Add to vegetable or tomato juice, over eggplant and to tomato-based pasta sauces. The flavor becomes stronger when dried and it freezes well. The aromatic seeds are used to flavor candy, beverages, condiments and meat products.

Since the flavor is rather more delicate than either thyme and oregano, marjoram is usually added towards the end of cooking to ensure its perfume is not lost. Add a bit more fresh before serving to reinforce the flavor. It's successful in dishes which require very little actual cooking, such as omelettes or pasta or stir into a rice stuffing for baked green peppers. Use raw, torn over tomato salads or scattered over freshly grilled sardines or steak.

You can substitute marjoram for oregano and vice versa, but not in equal quantities. Always use the same form of the herb (fresh, dried, etc). When using oregano in place of marjoram, use a little less oregano; when using marjoram instead of oregano, use a little more marjoram or add some thyme. One and one-half teaspoons marjoram leaves equals the flavor of 1 teaspoon oregano leaves.

The thymol-free essential oil distilled from leaves and flowering shoots is used to flavor meat sauces, preserves, soups and sausages, and as an ingredient in perfumes, soaps and hairdressings.

Recipes:

Sweet marjoram Blueberry Tartlets

Sweet marjoram pastry:

2 cups all-purpose flour

1/2 tsp salt

dash freshly ground black pepper

1 Tbsp minced fresh sweet marjoram

1/2 cup salted butter

5 Tbsp ice water

Blueberry Filling:

3 Tbsp fresh lemon juice

1 Tbsp sugar

1 Tbsp Grand Marnier

1 cup fresh blueberries, washed, drained and picked over

grated lemon zest

8 tiny sprigs of fresh marjoram

Preheat oven to 350F

To make pastry, combine flour, salt, pepper and marjoram. Cut in butter until mixture resembles coarse meal. Stir in ice water, 1 tablespoon at a time, until dough can be formed into a ball. Wrap in plastic wrap and chill for 1 hour. On a lightly floured board, roll out dough to 1/4 inch thick. If you're using 2-2 1/2 inch tartlet pans, place 8 of them on top of the pastry. Using a sharp knife, cut the pastry slightly larger than each pan. Press the pastry into the pans and, using your thumb, cut off the excess.

Or, for a single large tart, cut the pastry slightly larger than the pan and make a pretty edge with the tines of a fork. Prick the pastry with a fork, line with aluminum foil, and fill with dried beans or pie weights. Bake for 10-15 minutes until golden. Transfer to a rack, remove the foil and beans. Let tartlet shells cool.

Meanwhile, in a small saucepan, combine lemon juice, sugar, and Grand Marnier. Bring to a boil and stir until sugar dissolves. Add blueberries and cook over medium heat for 5 minutes. Set aside to cool. Fill each tartlet shell with blueberry mixture or pour it all into the single large tart shell. Refrigerate. When ready to serve, reheat in a 350F oven for 5 minute. Sprinkle tartlets with

grated lemon zest and garnish with small sprigs of marjoram. (Kitchen Herbs)

Marjoram Herbed Brown Rice with Shallots

4 shallots, finely chopped
2 cloves garlic, peeled and chopped
4 Tbsp vegetable oil
1 cup brown rice
2½ cups cold water
½ cup raisins
3-4 Tbsp finely chopped marjoram
freshly ground black pepper

In a large saucepan, sauté shallots and garlic in oil for 2-3 minutes. Add rice and sauté; for an additional 2 minutes. Add water, raisins, marjoram and pepper and bring to a boil. Reduce heat to low, cover and simmer for 45 minutes, until rice is done. Do not stir rice while cooking. Stir well before serving. Nuts, shrimp or chicken may be added in the last 5 minutes of cooking. (Summer Herbal Delights)

Summer Squash Stuffed with Porcini

½ oz dried porcini mushrooms
1 egg, lightly beaten
1 cup soft bread crumbs

1 garlic clove, minced
3 small zucchini, about 1¼ lbs

¼ cup freshly grated parmesan cheese
1 Tbsp chopped marjoram
salt and freshly ground pepper
olive oil

Soak the porcini in about ½ cup boiling water for 15 or 20 minutes. Trim them and rinse them very carefully to rid them of sand. Chop them medium fine. Strain the soaking liquor through rinsed fine-weave cheesecloth into a clean bowl. Soak the bread crumbs in the porcini liquor for 10 minutes, then squeeze them dry. Wash and trim the zucchini. Cut them in half lengthwise and steam for 5 minutes. Remove them to cool. Scoop out the pulp, leaving walls about ¼ inch thick, and chop it. Combine the zucchini pulp with the porcini, bread crumbs, egg, marjoram, garlic, and cheese. Season with salt and pepper.

Preheat the oven to 375F. Lightly oil the zucchini cases. Fill them with the stuffing. Place them in a lightly oiled baking dish and bake for about 25 minutes, until the tops are light golden brown. Serve hot or at room temperature. (Herbs in the Kitchen)

Corn Soup with Fresh Marjoram

12 oz frozen whole corn kernels, defrosted
4½ cups chicken stock
1 oz fresh marjoram finely chopped
salt
freshly ground black pepper
marjoram sprigs for garnish

Puree the corn in a food processor with a little of the chicken stock, then force the mixture through a sieve. Combine the corn puree with the remaining chicken stock in a saucepan, cover, and simmer for 5 minutes. Stir in the marjoram, season to taste with salt and pepper, and simmer for 5 minutes longer. Garnish with marjoram sprigs and serve in soup bowls. (The Encyclopedia of Herbs, Spices & Flavorings)

Cheese and Marjoram Scones

1 cup whole wheat flour
1 cup self-rising flour
pinch salt
scant 3 Tbsp butter
¼ tsp dry mustard
2 tsp dried marjoram
½-2/3 cup finely grated sharp cheddar cheese
1 tsp sunflower oil
½ cup milk, or as required to make soft dough
1/3 cup pecans or walnuts, chopped

Gently sift the two kinds of flour into a bowl and add the salt. Cut the butter into small pieces, and rub these into the flour until it resembles fine breadcrumbs. Add the mustard, marjoram and grated cheese, and mix in sufficient milk to make a soft dough. Knead the dough lightly. Preheat the oven to 425F. Roll out the dough on a floured surface to about ¾ in thickness and cut it out with a 2 in square cutter. Grease some cookie sheets with the paper from the butter (or use a little sunflower oil), and place the scones on the sheets. Brush the scones with a little milk and sprinkle the

chopped nuts over the top. Bake for 12 minutes. Serve warm. (The Encyclopedia of Herbs and Spices)

Barley and Mushroom with Marjoram

2 oz butter
2 garlic cloves, peeled and chopped
1 onion, peeled and chopped
2 sticks celery, chopped
12 oz mixed mushrooms, chopped
7 oz pearl barley, rinsed
2 Tbsp marjoram, chopped
salt and pepper
½ pint hot vegetable or chicken stock

Preheat the oven to 325F. Melt the butter in an ovenproof saucepan, then gently fry the garlic, onion and celery for about 10 minutes. Add the mushrooms and cook for about 3 minutes. Add the barley and stir well, to ensure it is all coated with butter. Then add 1 tablespoon of the marjoram and salt and pepper. Pour in the hot stock, bring to the boil, then cover with a lid and place in the oven for 35-40 minutes, until the liquid is absorbed. Remove from the oven, add the remaining tablespoon of marjoram, season to taste and fluff up with a fork. Serve warm. (Feasting on Herbs)

Veal Carpaccio with Marjoram

¾ lb boneless veal loin, cut from the center, thinly sliced
¼ cup chopped fresh marjoram
MARINADE:
½ cup olive oil
2 Tbsp lemon juice
salt to taste
2 Tbsp olive oil
1 tomato, peeled, seeded and diced
1 zucchini, thinly sliced
2 Tbsp chopped fresh marjoram
salt and pepper
½ cup chopped fresh chives

Pound the veal slices until they are just 1/8 inch thick, and place them in a single layer on a platter. In a small bowl, combine the marinade ingredients. Pour over the veal slices, then sprinkle with the marjoram. Cover with plastic wrap and allow to marinate at least 1

hour before serving. While the meat is marinating, heat the oil in a small skillet over medium heat. Add the tomato and cook for 5 minutes, then add the zucchini and marjoram, and cook for an additional 3 minutes; the vegetables should be barely cooked. Season with salt and pepper and cool. To serve, divide the veal among 4 plates, and place a few pieces of tomato and zucchini on top. Sprinkle with the chopped chives. (Cooking with Herbs)

Eggplant Dip with Marjoram and Balsamic Vinegar

2½ lbs peeled eggplant, cut into ¾ inch cubes
1½ Tbsp kosher or coarse salt
1/3 cup canola oil
4 cups chopped yellow onions
6 garlic cloves, minced
2 Tbsp fresh marjoram leaves
3 Tbsp balsamic vinegar
2 Tbsp water
½ tsp ground black pepper

Put the eggplant cubes in a large strainer or colander and toss them with the salt. Let sit and drain for an hour. Rinse, drain, and dry the eggplant cubes with a towel. Heat the oven to 350F. In a large, deep, ovenproof, lidded skillet, heat the oil over medium-high heat. Add the eggplant and cook, stirring, 6-7 minutes or until soft. Add the onions, garlic and marjoram. Cook stirring, for 5 minutes or until onions soften. Add the vinegar, water, and black pepper. Cover and bake in the oven for 1 hour, adding a bit more water after 30 minutes if the mixture seems too dry. Remove from the oven and let cool completely. Serve cold as a dip or as a side dish to a meal, either heated or at room temperature. (The Herbal Palate Cookbook)

Marjoram-Brie Torta

3 oz Neufchatel cheese, at room temperature
2 Tbsp unsalted butter, at room temperature
3 oz crumbled Gorgonzola cheese (¾ cup)
3 oz finely shredded sharp Cheddar cheese (¾ cup)
1 large clove garlic, pressed or very finely minced
3 Tbsp minced green onion, including tops

2 Tbsp minced parsley
1 Tbsp minced marjoram
One 8-oz wheel Brie cheese, chilled
Marjoram sprigs and flowers, for garnish

In a mixing bowl, beat Neufchatel with fork or wooden spoon until soft. Stir in butter until mixture is smooth. Then stir in Gorgonzola and Cheddar cheeses, garlic, onion, parsley, and minced marjoram. Beat to blend well. Using a sharp knife, split Brie wheel in half horizontally. Place bottom half, cut side up, on large round serving plate. Spread with cheese mixture, pressing down firmly. Top with second half, cut side down. Cover tightly with plastic wrap and refrigerate at least 3 hours or up to overnight. To serve, bring to room temperature and garnish with marjoram sprigs and flowers (Cooking from the Gourmet's Garden)

Pork Tenderloin Medallions with Fresh Marjoram

3/4-1 lb pork tenderloin, butterflied and lightly pounded
salt and freshly ground pepper to taste
3-4 cloves garlic, minced
1 medium-size sweet red bell pepper, roasted, peeled, and cut into strips 3-4 inches long by 3/8 in wide
1 tsp whole fennel seeds
1 Tbsp chopped fresh marjoram
6 tender sprigs fresh marjoram, each about 6 inches long
2 generous Tbsp pine nuts, toasted
1 Tbsp olive oil
paprika to taste
4 Tbsp sweet red vermouth

Sprinkle meat with salt and pepper, and rub with minced garlic. Arrange the roasted pepper strips vertically to cover the meat, and sprinkle with fennel seeds and chopped marjoram. Lay the fresh marjoram sprigs vertically, then tightly roll up the meat from end to end; place seam-side in a baking dish. Rub the olive oil into the meat; sprinkle it generously with sweet paprika, and rub it into the meat. Sprinkle with more salt and pepper if desired.

Place in a preheated 450F oven for approximately 6-8 minutes. Remove from oven and reduce temperature to 300F. Drizzle 2 tablespoons sweet vermouth over meat and return immediately to oven. Cook approximately 30 minutes, basting with the remaining vermouth the last 5 minutes. Do not overcook; the red peppers may stain the meat somewhat pink, so do not mistake this for uncooked pork. (The Herb Garden Cookbook)

Sweet Potato Casserole

2 cups sliced sweet potatoes
1 medium onion, finely sliced
1 cup canned peas
1/4 cup liquid from peas
1/2 tsp crumbled dried marjoram
1 Tbsp margarine

Combine all ingredients and mix well. Bake at 350F until vegetables are tender, about 40 minutes. (Minnie Muenscher's Herb Cookbook)

Pasta with Radicchio, Mushrooms and Herbs

3/4 lb farfalle or penne
1/4 cup virgin or extra virgin olive oil
1/2 lb radicchio, thinly sliced
2 garlic cloves, minced
1/2 lb fresh oyster mushrooms, thinly sliced
1/2 cup freshly grated Parmesan cheese
2 Tbsp minced fresh Italian parsley leaves
1 Tbsp minced fresh chives
2 tsp minced fresh thyme leaves
2 tsp minced fresh marjoram leaves
salt and freshly ground black pepper to taste

Bring a large pot of salted water to a boil over high heat. Add the pasta and cook according to package instructions until al dente. Meanwhile, heat the oil in a large nonstick skillet over medium heat. Add the radicchio and garlic and cook for 1 minute, then add the mushrooms and cook until tender and wilted, another 2-3 minutes, stirring frequently. Drain the pasta and put it in a large bowl. Add the radicchio mixture, Parmesan cheese, and herbs. Toss thoroughly. Season with salt and pepper. Serve immediately. (Recipes from an American Herb Garden)

Pizza with Sun Dried Tomatoes, Goat Cheese and Marjoram Flowers

1 Tbsp active dry yeast
pinch of sugar
¼ cup warm water
2 cups unbleached white flour
¼ cup rye flour
2/3 cup warm water
1 Tbsp olive oil
½ tsp salt
1 large clove garlic, very finely minced
1½ Tbsp olive oil
salt
¾ cup oil-packed, sun-dried tomatoes, cut into 1/4 inch slivers
1 medium onion, quartered lengthwise and sliced thinly
5 ½ oz goat cheese, crumbled
1 Tbsp finely chopped Italian parsley
2 Tbsp marjoram blossoms
olive oil for burnishing

To make the dough, dissolve the yeast and sugar in the ¼ cup warm water. Mix the flours in a bowl and make a well in the center. When the yeast is foamy, add it to the well. Let the sponge rise about 5 minutes. Gradually stir in the 2/3 cup water, adding 1 tablespoon olive oil and ½ teaspoon salt after half the water has been added. Stir well with a wooden spoon; the dough will be a bit sticky though very lively. Turn the dough onto a floured surface and knead for 10 minutes, adding a little more flour if necessary. Transfer the dough to a lightly oiled bowl, cover with a damp tea towel, and let rise for 1 to 1 2/3 hours, until doubled in bulk. Punch the dough down and let it rest for 15 minutes before forming into pizza shapes. Prepare the pizza toppings; mix the minced garlic and olive oil. Preheat a baker's tile or pizza stone for 20-30 minutes in an oven set at 500F.

Divide the pizza dough into two equal parts. Form one piece of dough into a 9- or 10-inch round on a pizza paddle that has been lightly dusted with flour or cornmeal to keep the pizza from sticking. Brush the top of the dough with half of the garlic in olive oil. Sprinkle lightly with salt. Spread half of the

sun-dried tomatoes over the dough, and cover them with half of the onions. Slide the pizza onto the baking stone and bake for about 5 minutes, until the crust is puffed around the edge and just starting to turn golden. Remove the pizza, using the paddle, and evenly spread half of the crumbled goat cheese over it. Return the pizza to the oven for about 3 minutes more, until the cheese begins to melt and the bottom crust is done. Remove the pizza to a cutting board, sprinkle it with half of the herbs or flowers. Brush the edges lightly with olive oil. Repeat for the other pizza. (Flowers in the Kitchen)

Spicy Stuffed Flower Turkey

Turkey giblets (not the liver)
1 carrot
1 onion
sprig parsley
salt and pepper
1 10lb turkey
Stuffing
¼ cup butter
2 onions, finely chopped
2 dessert apples, peeled, cored and chopped
1½ cups fresh brown and white breadcrumbs, mixed
1 Tbsp fresh or dried marjoram leaves
1 Tbsp fresh or dried marjoram flowers
10 fresh or dried nasturtium leaves, chopped
4 Tbsp fresh or dried nasturtium flowers
2 Tbsp sultanas
fresh or dried flower petals or nasturtiums to garnish

First, make the stock. Put the giblets in a pan with the carrot, onion and parsley. Cover with water, season and bring to the boil. Cover the pan and simmer gently for about 1 hour, to make a good rich stock. Set aside.

Heat the oven to 325F. Heat 1 tablespoon butter in a frying pan, put in the chopped onions and sauté over medium heat for about 2 minutes, until soft but not brown. Add the chopped apple and cook for a further 1-2 minutes. Stir in the breadcrumbs, marjoram leaves and flowers, nasturtium leaves and flowers and the sultanas. Stir well to coat the mixture with butter, adding a little more butter

if necessary. Season to taste and stuff the turkey with this mixture. Weigh the stuffed turkey. Rub the turkey all over with butter, season and cover with buttered foil. Pour in the prepared stock to a depth of about 1 in, then put in the turkey. Roast in the oven, allowing 20 minutes per lb. Turn the turkey over several times during cooking, so that it has periods of cooking breast-down; this will keep it very succulent and the breast and legs will cook evenly. Add more stock to the pan as necessary. Serve the turkey on a large oval platter, surrounded by roast potatoes and garnished with dried or fresh petals or nasturtiums. Make a rich gravy from the pan juices and hand it round separately, in a sauceboat. (Cooking with Flowers)

Asparagus with Blue Cheese Vinaigrette

1 lb fresh asparagus
2 Tbsp bleu cheese
¼ cup olive oil
2 tsp fresh lemon juice
salt and pepper
1 Tbsp fresh sweet marjoram, chopped, or 1 tsp dried and crumbled.

Trim tough ends of asparagus. Cook spears in a skillet in 1 inch of boiling water until tender, 8-14 minutes depending on how thick asparagus is. Do not overcook. Drain well. Divide spears between 4 salad plates. Mash bleu cheese in a small bowl. Add olive oil, lemon juice, salt, pepper and sweet marjoram. Spoon dressing over asparagus. Serve warm or at room temperature. (The Best of Thyme)

Energetics: spicy, warm

Meridians/Organs affected: lung, stomach

Medicinal: Has digestive, antispasmodic, carminative, diaphoretic and diuretic properties. Marjoram tea aids digestion, increases sweating and encourages menstruation. In tests, it inhibits viruses such as herpes 1 and is an antioxidant that helps preserve foods containing it. As a steam inhalant, marjoram clears the sinuses and helps

relieve laryngitis. Particularly helpful for gastritis and a weak tea is good for colic in children. The plant is also sometimes made into an herb pillow for rheumatic pains.

Dosage: as an infusion steep 2 tsp fresh herb in 1 cup water and take ½ to 1 cup a day, as needed. As a Juice take 1 Tbsp three times a day. As a lotion: put the fresh herb in olive oil and let stand in the sun for 2-3 weeks.

Cosmetic: Provides a scent in body-care products and cosmetic waters.

Mixed Herbal Foot Mix for Aching Feet

5 Tbsp dried marjoram
7 Tbsp dried peppermint
3 Tbsp dried thyme
5 Tbsp dried camomile
4 Tbsp dried rosemary

Mix all the herbs together and place in an airtight jar. When your feet ache badly, take 3 tablespoons of this herbal mixture and pour it into four pints of boiling water. Cover and simmer over a low heat for 5 minutes. Strain, and pour the infusion into a foot-bath. When the liquid has cooled sufficiently, immerse your feet in it. Pat dry and apply a suitable soothing treatment such as marigold oil.

SHAMPOO: Remove the stems when in bloom in mid-summer and use fresh, with an equal amount of rosemary or dry in an airy room to use in winter. To use fresh, place a small handful of each in a large jug and pour over 1 litre of boiling water. Let stand for several minutes, strain and add a small cupful of beer, working it well into the hair. Use an herbal rinse afterwards.

A handful of the leaves and flowers, with one of sage or rosemary infused in 1 pint of boiling water and allowed to cool will, if massaged into the scalp daily will prevent loss of hair.

Other: used in perfumery for scenting soaps, lotions and creams and in the drinks industry as an ingredient for herbal liquors. Marjoram dyes wool purple and linen red-brown but the color is not long-lasting.

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Resources:

Companion Plants, 7247 No Coolville Ridge Rd., Athens, OH 45701; 740-592-4643;
www.companionplants.com plants, seed

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