

# Carrier Oils



This month in our continuing series of carrier oils, we take a look at

## Carrot

*With thanks to Purple Flame Aromatherapy, St John's Spinney, Gun Hill, New Arley, CV7 8IT.*

The carrot was first introduced to Britain during the reign of Queen Elizabeth I by Flemish refugees. The root crop that we are familiar with today was developed from the *Daucus carota*, and has an edible fleshy orange root.

Oil is extracted from the carrot by maceration: the root is chopped into small pieces and left to steep in sunflower oil for about 3 weeks. The material is then filtered to produce an oil that is rich orange in colour, and capable of staining the skin and clothing. For this very reason, carrot extract was one of the major active ingredients used in 'tanning pills' - a product now banned in the UK due to its potentially toxic side-effects.

Carrot oil is particularly popular in 'anti-ageing' beauty products as it is rich in vitamin A and beta-carotene, both of which are reputed to keep the skin supple and prevent damage from free radicals. However, carrot oil (unless extracted from the white-rooted, wild version of the plant, known as Queen Anne's Lace) is not generally recommended as a massage oil.

### Oil Name:

Carrot

### Origin:

Asia?

### Family:

Apiaceae

### Made From:

Root

### Latin Name:

*Daucus carota*

#### Main therapeutic uses said to be:

Carrot oil is used in many cosmetic products (particularly those which claim to be 'anti-ageing') as it is a rich source of beta-carotene and vitamin A. The oil is also reputed to help the skin's natural healing process by assisting in the formation of scar tissue. Carrot extracts can be found in a number of sun creams and after-sun lotions. May soothe skin conditions such as eczema and psoriasis.

#### Main constituents:

Beta-carotene, and vitamins A, B, C, D, E, and F.

#### Other comments:

- ✿ Use is not recommended during pregnancy
- ✿ The oil was traditionally used as a remedy for flatulence and stomach acidity

- ✿ Carrot oil is an approved food colouring
- ✿ It is the carotenes that produce the roots' rich orange colour
- ✿ The carotenes can be extracted with the use of a solvent.