

# Essential Oil Index

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

## Bergamot



Bergamot (*Citrus bergamia*) is a small tree that grows to approximately 4 metres in height. Originating from Tropical Asia, the plant has smooth, oval leaves and bears small round fruit which turn orange when ripe. The oil (which has a top keynote) is obtained from the peel of the fruit by cold expression, and is delicate green in colour.

Some bergamot oils have had their bergaptene content removed, and are thus labelled 'bergaptene free' (bergaptene is the constituent responsible for increased photosensitivity).

Bergamot is a member of the Rutaceae family.

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

### Key constituents

Linalyl acetate; linalool; limonene; beta-pinene; bergaptene.

### Body systems affected

Digestive; nervous; immune; respiratory; urinary; skin.

### Main therapeutic properties

Antidepressant; antiseptic; antiviral; cicatrisant (promotes wound healing); deodorant; sedative

### Main therapeutic uses

Acne; anxiety; boils; bronchitis; cold sores; cystitis; depression; eczema; gall stones; greasy skin conditions; insect bites; leucorrhoea; nervous tension; psoriasis; scabies; sore throats; spots; stress related conditions; thrush; tonsillitis; urinary tract infections; vaginal pruritis (itching); wounds.

### Secondary therapeutic uses

Colds; colic; dyspepsia; fevers; flatulence; flu; infectious diseases; intestinal infections; intestinal worms; loss of appetite.

### Blends with

Cedarwood; chamomile (German); clary sage; coriander; cypress; geranium; jasmine; juniper; lavender; lemon; marjoram; neroli; rose; sage; tagettes; violet leaf; ylang ylang.

### Safety data

Non-toxic. Slightly irritating in high concentrations.

**Increases photosensitivity, therefore do not use on the skin before exposure to sunlight or sunbeds.**

[Patricia Davis in *Aromatherapy A-Z* comments that the photosensitising effects of bergamot can last for several days.]

### Additional comments

Bergamot is an uplifting oil with a light and refreshing fragrance. The oil takes its name from a town in Italy known as Bergamo, where it was originally cultivated. The oil has been a great part of Italian folk medicine for hundreds of years. Bergamot is also a classic ingredient in eau-de-cologne and Earl Grey Tea.