

Essential Oil Index

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

Clary Sage



Clary sage (*Salvia sclarea*) is an evergreen, perennial herb that grows up to 80cm in height, with soft downy leaves and deep blue or violet flowers. A native to southern Europe and now cultivated worldwide (especially in the Mediterranean region, Russia, USA, England and central Europe) this herb has a warming quality and is an excellent general tonic.

The oil, which has a middle keynote, is extracted from the herb by steam distillation. As well as strengthening the kidneys and stomach, clary sage is a powerful relaxant and particularly useful in the treatment of hysteria, paranoia and panic attacks.

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

Key constituents

Alpha pinene, alpha-terpineol, beta-pinene, borneol, camphene, caryophyllene oxide, cineol, cis-ocimene, geranyl acetate, germacrene D, limonene, linalool, linalyl acetate (up to 75%), myrcene, nerol, neryl acetate, phellandrene, sclareol, trans-ocimene.

Body systems affected

Digestive, nervous, respiratory, urinary, glandular, structural, skin.

Main therapeutic properties

Analgesic, anti-spasmodic, diuretic, hypotensive, nervine, sedative, stimulant (urine), tonic (uterine), emmenagogue.

Secondary therapeutic properties

Anti-phlogistic, antiseptic, aphrodisiac, astringent, bactericidal, carminative, cicatrisant, deodorant, stomachic.

Main therapeutic uses

Convulsions, cramp, debility, depression, epilepsy, frigidity, glandular problems, high blood pressure, impotence, menopausal problems, menstrual problems, migraine, muscular aches and pains, nervous tension, stress, vertigo.

Secondary therapeutic uses

Acne, amenorrhoea, asthma, boils, colic, dandruff, dry skin conditions, dysmenorrhoea, dyspepsia, endometriosis, flatulence, fungal skin infections, haemorrhoids, inflamed skin conditions, leucorrhoea, loss of hair, oily skin conditions, varicose veins, venous aneurysm, whooping cough, wrinkles.

Blends with

Bergamot, cardamon, coriander, frankincense, geranium, jasmine, juniper berry, lavender, pine, rose, sandalwood.

Safety data

Avoid during pregnancy. Possible narcotic effect with alcohol. Non-toxic, non-irritant, non-sensitising. Can impair concentration so avoid when driving.