

Calendula, Pot Marigold

Family	Asteraceae
Botanical	Calendula officinalis
Parts Used	Flowers and petals
USDA Hardiness	N/A
Light	Full Sun
Soil	Well drained
Duration	Annual



Propagation	Easy to start from seed directly in the garden, and will tend to self seed for following years, acting as a perennial. Soil pH requirements: 6.1 (mildly acidic) to 7.5 (neutral)
Water	As needed, do not overwater
Growing	More of a spring bloomer in Virginia Beach -- doesn't hold up well to the heat. Mildew is a problem. Plant in well drained and sunny location.

Medicinal Uses	Lifts the spirits, antispasmodic, antiseptic, antifungal, healing and anti-inflammatory.
Benefits	Helps to heal cuts and scrapes, rashes, eases abdominal cramps and constipation.
Preparation	Collect whole flower tops or just the petals early summer and early fall. They should be dried with great care to ensure there is no discolouration. Infusion: Add 2 or 3 flowers to 1 cup of boiling water and infuse for 10 minutes. Drink 3 cups a day or 1 cup every 3 hours for acute complaints. Half dose for children over 5 years old. Tincture. Compresses and fomentations: 2 teaspoons tincture to 1 cup water. Dip cloth into water and wring out. Use cold water to soothe and draw heat. For sprains, congestive pain and hot joints. Use hot water to relax and encourage circulation. For spasm, stiffness and cold joints. Wrap around the affected part and cover.

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Culinary Uses

The petals, with their slight aromatic bitterness can be used in fish and meat soups, rice dishes, salads, and as a coloring for cheese and butter. The whole flower was used as a garnish in medieval times.

Banana Cake with Calendula

Ingredients:

$\frac{2}{3}$ cup sour cream

- $\frac{1}{4}$ cup dried OR $\frac{1}{2}$ cup fresh calendula petals
- 2 cups unbleached flour
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup whole-wheat flour
- $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon salt
- $\frac{3}{4}$ teaspoon baking soda
- Scant $\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon mace
- 12 tablespoons unsalted butter ($1\frac{1}{2}$ sticks), softened
- 1 cup sugar
- $\frac{2}{3}$ cup light brown sugar
- 3 extra-large eggs
- $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon vanilla extract
- 5 mashed overripe bananas (about $1\frac{3}{4}$ cups)

Directions:

In a small bowl, combine sour cream with calendula, stir well, and let stand for at least 30 minutes. Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Butter a 9 × 13-inch baking dish. In another bowl, sift together unbleached flour, whole-wheat flour, salt, baking soda and mace.

Put butter in a mixing bowl and beat until fluffy. Add sugars and beat until blended, scraping down sides of bowl as necessary. Add eggs and vanilla and beat until combined.

Combine sour cream and mashed bananas. Add about one-third of this mixture to mixing bowl and beat on low speed. Continue beating on low speed while adding about half of dry ingredients, then another third of sour cream-banana mixture, scraping sides of bowl as necessary. Add remaining dry ingredients, followed by the sour cream-banana mixture and beat until just blended.

Turn batter into prepared baking dish and smooth out surface. Bake in preheated oven for 40 to 45 minutes, until a toothpick comes out clean. The cake should be golden brown and sides should pull away slightly from the pan. Cool on a baking rack and frost when completely cool.

Maple Cream Cheese Frosting

Ingredients:

$\frac{1}{3}$ cup pure maple syrup

- $\frac{1}{4}$ cup dried or fresh calendula petals, minced (minced petals measure about 2 tablespoons)
- 8 ounces cream cheese, softened and cut into chunks
- 2 tablespoons unsalted butter, softened
- 1 cup confectioner's sugar
- $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon pure vanilla extract

Directions:

Heat maple syrup, then add calendula and let stand for at least 30 minutes; be sure syrup is completely cool before adding it to other ingredients.

Meanwhile, in a mixing bowl, beat cream cheese and butter on medium speed until fluffy. Add cool maple syrup and calendula and mix to combine; scrape down sides of bowl as needed. On low speed, add about half of the



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confectioner's sugar. Add remaining sugar and vanilla and beat until fluffy; then beat at least a minute or two on high speed.

Test frosting for consistency—it should be spreadable but soft. If too soft, beat in a bit more sugar.

Historical Facts

Romans and Greeks used the golden calendula in many rituals and ceremonies, sometimes wearing crowns or garlands made from the flowers. One of calendula's nicknames is "Mary's Gold," referring to the flower's use in early Catholic events in some countries. Calendula flowers are sacred flowers in India and have been used to decorate the statues of Hindu deities since early times. Aztecs and Mayans used the flowers in their ancient ceremonies, and the flowers are still used on home altars on the Day of the Dead in Mexico and Central America.

The ancient Romans named this plant Calendula because they noticed that it was blooming on the first day of every month (calends). It was a symbol of joy and happiness in their gardens, and because it provided them with a continuous supply of flowers and tender leaves, it was used regularly for cooking and in medicine.

Additional Tips

Calendula Officinalis: Herb of the Year 2008

Nutrition Facts

Calendula contains antioxidants in the form of flavonoids and carotenoids. The leaves contain lutein and beta-carotene, which are vitamin A carotenoids that work as antioxidants. Your body can also convert beta-carotene into the form of vitamin A it needs to maintain vision and healthy skin.