

Nasturtium

Family	Tropaeolaceae
Botanical	Tropaeolum spp.
Parts Used	Aerial parts
USDA Hardiness	Tropical
Light	Full Sun to Partial Shade
Soil	Poor
Duration	Annual



Propagation	Soil pH requirements: 6.1 (mildly acidic) to 7.5 (neutral). From Seed.
Water	As needed, do not overwater
Growing	It is vigorous and easily grown and does well in sun. It thrives in poor soil and dry conditions, whereas in rich soil it tends to produce much leafy growth and few flowers. Nasturtiums are fairly carefree, but it's important to keep them watered during dry periods. They do well in containers and windowboxes. Let the soil get dry between waterings, but don't let it dry out.

Medicinal Uses	Anti-microbial, antibiotic
Benefits	Remedy for bacterial infections and common cold and flu.
Preparation	The leaves and flowers should be collected between mid-summer and mid-fall. Infusion: pour a cup of boiling water on 1-2 teaspoons of the fresh leaves and infuse for 10-15 minutes. Drink 3 times a day. Also used externally as a poultice or compress for infection.

Fines Herbes

Culinary Uses The flower and leaves are edible and makes an ornamental salad ingredient; it has a slightly peppery taste reminiscent of watercress, and is also used in stir fry.

Nasturtium Blossom Salad

Ingredients:

3 cups ruby lettuce
1 cup arugula, loosely packed
1 ounce or 8 nasturtium blossoms

Vinaigrette:

1 garlic clove, pressed
½ teaspoon Dijon mustard
¾ teaspoon salt
2 grindings of black pepper
¼ teaspoon sugar
4 tablespoons white wine vinegar (or a fruit vinegar if available)
1 tablespoon fresh dill, minced
1 tablespoon fresh parsley, minced
1 tablespoon fresh basil, minced
10 tablespoons olive oil

Directions:

1. In salad bowl, put ruby lettuce on bottom, then arugula and finally nasturtium blossoms, carefully arranged to set off the color of the flowers.
 2. With whisk, whip together all ingredients for vinaigrette. There should be about 6 ounces.
 3. Dress salad with half the vinaigrette.
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Historical Facts Sixteenth Century: Nasturtium is discovered in Peru. According to Jesuit missionaries, the Incas used nasturtiums as a salad vegetable and as a medicinal herb.

Additional Tips

Nutrition Facts Nasturtium has high levels of vitamin C and antibacterial properties.