

## Borage, Starflower

Family	Boraginaceae
Botanical	Borago officinalis
Parts Used	Flowers and leaves
USDA Hardiness	N/A
Light	Full Sun
Soil	Well drained
Duration	Annual



**Propagation** Soil pH requirements: 6.1 (mildly acidic) to 7.5 (neutral)  
From seed, direct sow outdoors in fall or spring.

**Water** Water regularly, do not overwater

**Growing** The plant can look scraggly after awhile, so I plant some new seeds every month or so to get the healthy, new plants growing and I just pull up or cut back the old plants when they start to look awful. Bees love this plant.  
Borage is used in companion planting. It is said to protect or nurse legumes, spinach, brassicas, and even strawberries. It is also said to be a good companion plant to tomatoes. If you have borage plants with many pink flowers, add compost, compost tea, or other organic feed. The flowers should be blue.

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**Medicinal Uses** Diaphoretic, expectorant, tonic, anti-inflammatory, galacogogue, diuretic, emollient.

**Benefits** Helps relieve cold symptoms and revives and renews the adrenal glands after a medical treatment with cortisone or steroids. Leaves and seeds stimulate the flow of milk in nursing mothers.

**Preparation** The leaves should be gathered when the plant is coming into flower in early summer. Pour a cup of boiling water onto 2 teaspoonfuls of the dried herb and infuse for 10-15 minutes. Sip throughout the day.  
It has a light cucumber scent. You feel happy after drinking a cup of borage tea :-)

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# Fines Herbes

## Culinary Uses

The smaller, younger leaves and flowers are best in fresh salads. They taste like cucumbers. Brew them as a tea. Steep a small handful of leaves in nearly boiling water for 30 seconds to 10 minutes, depending on how strong you prefer your tea. The grassy flavor is similar to a young, loose-leaf green tea.

## Salad with Borage Flowers

### Ingredients:

Mixed organic greens  
fresh strawberries, sliced  
chopped chives  
toasted nuts  
bacon-fried, drained, and chopped  
organic borage flowers (make sure no pesticides have ever touched them)



## Strawberry Vinaigrette\*

1 T strawberry puree  
1 T balsamic vinegar  
3 T extra virgin olive oil  
salt & pepper to taste  
If you like a sweeter dressing, add honey to taste.

## Historical Facts

According to Dioscorides and Pliny, Borage was the famous Nepenthe of Homer, which when drunk steeped in wine, brought absolute forgetfulness.

## Additional Tips

## Nutrition Facts

The herb parts contain essential fatty acid gamma-linolenic acid (GLA), Linolenic acid is omega-6 fatty acid that plays a vital role in restoration of joint health, immunity, and healthy skin and mucus membranes.

High levels of vitamin C (ascorbic acid), one of the powerful natural anti-oxidant help remove harmful free radicals from the body. Together with other anti-oxidants, it has immune booster, wound healing and anti-viral effects.

A rich source of vitamin A (140% of RDA) and carotenes. Together, they act as protective scavengers against oxygen-derived free radicals and reactive oxygen species (ROS) that play vital role in aging and various disease processes. Vitamin A is also known to have antioxidant properties and is essential for vision. It is also required for maintaining healthy mucus membranes and skin. Consumption of natural foods rich in vitamin A and carotenes are known to help the human body protect from lung and oral cavity cancers.

The herb holds a good amount of minerals like iron, calcium, potassium, manganese, copper, zinc, and magnesium. Potassium is an important component of cell and body fluids, which helps control heart rate and blood pressure. Manganese is used by the body as a co-factor for the antioxidant enzyme, superoxide dismutase. Iron is an important co-factor for cytochrome oxidase enzyme in the cellular metabolism. In addition, being a component of hemoglobin inside the red blood cells, it determines the oxygen-carrying capacity of the blood.

Further, the herb is one of the average sources of B-complex vitamins, particularly rich in niacin (vitamin B-3). Niacin helps lower LDL cholesterol levels in the body. In addition, it has riboflavin, thiamin, pyridoxine, and folates in adequate levels. These vitamins function as co-factors in the enzymatic metabolism inside the body.