

# Fines Herbes

## Rue, Ruta

Family	Rutaceae
Botanical	Ruta graveolens
Parts Used	Flowers and leaves
USDA Hardiness	6B- 11
Light	Full Sun
Soil	Well drained
Duration	Perennial



Propagation	Soil pH requirements: 6.6 (neutral) to 8.5 (alkaline). Start from seed.
Water	As needed, do not overwater
Growing	The leaves are food for Black Swallowtails and Giant Swallowtail caterpillars. Rue and mint don't grow well together, Rue is often the plant to come off worse from the pairing. Rue herb does well in a variety of soil but does best in well drained soil. In fact, it will do well in the rocky, dry soil that many other plants have a difficult time surviving. It needs full sun to grow well. It is drought tolerant and rarely, if ever needs to be watered. Care should be taken when handling rue plants. The sap of the rue plant is often irritating and can burn or leave rashes on people's skin. Rue can be harvested and used in the house as an insect repellent. Simply cut some of the leaves and dry them, then put the dried leaves in cloth bags. These sachets can be placed where ever you need to repel bugs.

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Medicinal Uses	Anit-spasmodic, emmenagogue, anti-tusive, abortifacient, anthelmintic, anti-microbial, bitter, rubefacient and stimulant
Benefits	Regulates menstrual periods, a powerful abortifacient, relaxs smooth muscles especially in the digestive system, stops spasmodic coughs. Also increases peripheral circulation and lowers elevated blood pressure.
Preparation	Herbs should be collected before the flowers open in the summer and dried in the shade. Chewing the fresh leaves relieves tension headaches, eases palpitations and other anxiety problems. Infusion: Pour 1 cup boiling water on 1-2 teaspoons dried herb and infuse for 10-15 minutes. Drink 3 times a day.

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## Culinary Uses

Use it to make a traditional dessert sweet mung bean soup and it tastes great. Rue clears intestinal worms and is a safe pesticide for humans and animals. The leaves have a bitter taste but very small amounts can be added to cream cheese, egg and fish dishes. Mix with damson plums and wine for a delicious meat sauce. It goes well with acidic flavours and can be added to pickles. To reduce the bitterness, put a little into a boiling sauce for no more than one minute, then remove. In Italy, rue is used to counteract the 'heaviness' of sauces based on tomato and olive oil. Rue is often a component in the berbere spice mix from Ethiopia. Ethiopian cuisine also utilizes rue berries in many sauces and stews.

Rue is used to flavor coffee in Ethiopia. You simply cut small sprigs of rue leaves from your garden; wash it and steep a sprig in a hot cup of coffee and drink. It gives the coffee a very nice refreshing lemony flavor. It is also used to flavor Ethiopian yogurt, milk, and cheese. Here again it is very simple, you just stick a sprig or two of rue in your yogurt, milk, or cheese and leave it in and over time it gives a very nice flavor. Rue is used along with many other herbs and spices to prepare an important spice known as "berbere" made of red hot Ethiopian peppers. For these Ethiopians use the dried rue berries. The dried berries can also be added to roasted coffee bean and grounded together to flavor the coffee. Ethiopians call rue "tena Adam". The direct translation is Health for Adam. It means that this herb gives health to humanity. It seems the opposite of what the West says about this forgotten herb.



## Historical Facts

Early physicians considered rue an excellent protection against plagues and pestilence, and used it to ward off poisons and fleas. A Modern Herbal refers to the plant's 'disagreeable odour and flavour', but in truth, the bitterness of the leaves is only evident in large doses. In smaller amounts, it imparts a pleasant, musky flavor to cream cheeses and light meats. Rue was once believed to improve the eyesight and creativity, and no less personages than Michelangelo and Leonardo Da Vinci regularly ate the small, trefoil leaves to increase their own. The legend of rue lives on in playing cards, where the symbol for the suit of clubs is said to be modeled on a leaf of rue.

## Additional Tips

Rue deters Japanese beetles. prevents attacks of fleas and other noxious insects. A pillow of dried rue l

## Nutrition Facts

Essential oil, flavonoids, hyperine, rutin, hypericin, tannin, pectin, choline