

ROSEHIPS & petals

Rose petals are mostly used for their essential oil. Rose oil, or rose otto is steam distilled and is used in aromatherapy. Rose absolute is extracted with solvents and is used mainly for its fragrance. Rose otto comes from the damask rose and rose absolute comes from the cabbage rose. The essential oil has an uplifting effect, helpful in dispelling depression, stress, and nervous tension when inhaled.



WE USE

ROSES IN COOKING and therapeutically...

Rosehips and petals are both used in cooking and therapeutically. The variety of rose used depends on what it is used for.

Rosehips, the fruit of the rose plant, are valued for their high amount of vitamin C. They also contain vitamins E, B, and K, tannin, pectin, carotene, malic and citric

acid, lycopene, flavonoids, fatty and volatile oils, and proteins. The vitamin content varies depending on the species, growing conditions, time and manner of harvest, and care taken in drying and storage. Results from a study done

in 1942 found that the vitamin C content of rosehips was related to the latitude in which they were growing, the higher contents were found in higher latitudes.

Rosehips and petals are both used in many different ways in cooking and therapeutically. You can obtain the nutritional benefits from rosehips in jam, syrup, tea, vinaigrette, and also in supplements. When used regularly, rosehips are said to help build the body's defense against cold and flu, catarrh, sore throats, and chest infections. Following a course of antibiotic therapy, rosehip tea will help re-establish the beneficial bacteria in the digestive system. Rose hip powder used in studies involving individuals with osteoarthritis and rheumatoid arthritis was effective in reducing pain. Data from a 2005 study stated that the powder made from seeds and shells of rosehip subspecies (*Rosa canina*) suggested that the remedy can alleviate symptoms and reduce the consumption of 'rescue medication'.

Besides their use in aromatherapy, rose petals are made into rose water and rose petal vinegar. Rose vinegar can be used as a salad dressing (by adding olive oil and other herbs) and also as a sunburn soother. An infusion of dried roses, known as *mei gui hua*, is used for treating stomachache, diarrhea, hematemesis, hemoptysis, apoplexy, bruising, and hypermenorrhea in Chinese medicine. According to the American Botanical Council rose petals have sedative, antiseptic, antiparasitic, anti-inflammatory, laxative, cholesterol-lowering, and heart supportive properties.

Dried rose petal tea: Use 2 to 4 teaspoons of dried petals per cup of water. Pour boiling water over petals and steep for 10 to 15 minutes. This tea can be used internally or externally.

Rose Petal Tea

2 cups fresh fragrant rose petals
3 cups distilled water
Honey or sugar to taste

Waiting until after a light frost to pick rosehips makes them sweeter.

Clip and discard bitter white bases from the rose petals; rinse petals thoroughly and pat dry. Cover petals with water and bring just to a simmer; let simmer for approximately 5 minutes, or until the petals become discolored (darkened). Remove from heat and strain. Add honey or sugar to taste.

A study published in the Turkish Journal of Botany tested vitamin C levels from both frozen and dried rose hips infused at different temperatures and times. The highest vitamin C content from the frozen fruits was 86.5% at 60 degrees with an infusion period of 270 minutes for divided frozen fruits. The highest content of vitamin C from the dried fruit infusions was 85% at boiling point for 80 minutes. After 80 minutes of boiling rosehips, a large amount of vitamin C leached into the water, but around 85% of the vitamin C will still be in the water - only about 15% is the vitamin C is destroyed.

Rosehip Jam

Cover rosehips with fresh apple juice and let them soak overnight. The next day, the jam is ready to eat. Cinnamon and other spices can be added for more flavor.



Rosehip Tea

Rosehips produce a fruity and tangy tea. To make rosehip tea from fresh hips, place about 4 tablespoons of the hips into a warmed teapot. Pour 4 cups of boiling water over the hips and let steep, covered, for 10 minutes. Strain and sweeten if desired. Dried rosehips can also be used by simmering them for 5 minutes.

Rosehip Oil and the Skin

Rosehip oil has shown to be beneficial in skin care. A study was done using rosehip oil on two groups of people - individuals with surgical, traumatic and burn scars and the other suffering from premature aging of the skin. The results were said to be remarkable, that continuous application of rosehip oil effectively attenuated scars and wrinkles, halted advancement of premature aging and restored lost skin color and tone.

The researchers identified trans-retinoic acid as the component responsible for the effects. Trans-retinoic acid is a derivative of vitamin A and is marketed as Tretinoin. Tretinoin has shown to produce quick and beneficial changes to the skin, but can have negative effects such as an increase or decrease of skin pigment (color), redness, peeling, or feeling of warmth; sensitivity to sunlight, skin irritation, or stinging at the application site.

Rosehip oil produces the benefits of Tretinoin, but without secondary effects because the trans-retinoic acid is contained in a natural state as part of a complex of unsaturated fatty acids. The action is controlled and slowly released.

Since I have sensitive skin, I am very excited about rosehip oil's benefits on aging skin. Hopefully I can get some of the same results as Tretinoin with the rosehip oil. It was interesting to learn of all the different therapeutic uses for rosehips and petals, and also how they are used in cooking. While I was searching for recipes I found an interesting recipe for rose petal sandwiches. Violets or Clover blossoms can also be used instead of the Roses. I found the recipe at Botanical.com if anyone is interested! :) <http://botanical.com/botanical/mgmh/r/roses-18.html>

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