

All About CALENDULA

CALENDULA refers to multiple different species of edible flower in the Asteraceae family. Calendula is known by many other names including pot marigold, common marigold, or Scotch marigolds. This plant is often confused with the French or African marigolds which are actually members of the Tagetes family and are inedible. Depending on the variety, calendula comes in shades of yellow, orange, white and pink. The most common varieties are golden, hence their association with summer sunshine. If the flowers are harvested, the plant blooms from May until first frost.

Health Benefits

TOPICAL: Calendula petals hold anti-inflammatory, antifungal, and antiseptic properties. Calendula oil is utilized to heal bruises, skin irritations, bed sores, and burns. It is a common ingredient in soaps, toners, hair products, sun creams, and lip balms.

INTERNAL: Ingesting calendula in a tea or tincture has traditionally been used as a remedy for fevers and abdominal pains. Its estrogenic action helps to balance hormones and may relieve menstrual and menopausal symptoms.

Storing Calendula

To dry calendula flowers, harvest opened flowers and arrange them in a single layer on drying racks. Store the racks in a warm, dry, dark place with good air circulation. This may take up to 2 weeks depending on the location. Once the flowers are dry, pull the edible petals away from the green septals and center cone. Transfer them to a dark container with a lid.

Never use plastic, tin, or aluminum to store herbs and spices.

Culinary Uses

To prepare calendula for eating, the petals are plucked from the medicinal-tasting green flower base. The petals be eaten raw, dried, or cooked.

Fresh calendula petals are sweetly citrus but earthy. Once dried, the petals are highly floral and perfumed with undertones of vanilla.



In many recipes, calendula can be used as an inexpensive replacement for saffron.

Try calendula petals in salads, salsas, frittatas, syrups, teas, and vinaigrettes.

Fun Facts

Calendula are a cousin to daisies and sunflowers.

In ancient Rome, calendula was associated with joy, and was shared between friends to cultivate in their gardens to spread happiness.

Calendula was once used as a source of dye for fabrics. By using different mordants (a substance used to set dyes on fabrics), a variety of yellows, oranges and browns could be obtained.