

ANOTHER HERB HERBERT FAVOURITE HERBS

FACT SHEET

Elderberry *Sambucus nigra*

There are 20 species of shrubs, trees and perennials belonging to this genus.

Elderberry has had a vast history of use with humans and has long been steeped in legends. Seeds have been found present in excavations of Stone Age sites. It is said that Sambucus may come from the Greek word sambuke, a musical instrument that was supposedly made from the wood.

DESCRIPTION

Sambucus nigra, is a large deciduous shrub with dull green pinnate leaves. Umbels of small, creamy white, scented flowers appear in early summer followed by the black fleshy berries.

Sambucus canadensis is a semi-evergreen, large shrub with bright green foliage.

PARTS USED

Flowers, berries

PROPERTIES

A pungent herb with anti-viral, astringent and anti-inflammatory actions.

USES OF THE HERB

Culinary

Flower heads are dipped in batter and fried. Berries can be made into jams and jellies or made into elderberry wine. Flowers can be made into a fizzy drink known as elderberry champagne

Medicinal

Used internally for fevers and rheumatic complaints. A tea made with elderflowers, peppermint and yarrow is useful in decreasing the intensity of colds and flus. An infusion of the flowers can help skin irritations.

Insect Repellent

Leaves and stems can be boiled with water to make an insecticidal spray. Hang bunches of crushed leaves and stems near windows and doors to deter flies and other flying insects.

CULTIVATION

Elderberry prefers to grow in a moist, rich soil in sun or part shade. Prune in late winter or early spring to keep in shape.

HARVEST

Pick flowers when fully open and use fresh or dry for use in infusions.

Pick berries when fully ripe, use fresh.



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Height 4.5-10m (15-30ft) x Spread 3.5-4.5cm(11-15ft)

