



Horseradish
Armoracia rusticana
(Gaertn, Mey et Scherb.)



Family	Brassicaceae
Description	Perennial to 1.5 metre high on stout, tapering, fleshy taproot to 60cm long and 5cm thick; large basal leaves, 30-100cm long, coarse lanceolate with dentate margins and long petioles. Erect racemes 50 cm to 1 metre high bearing clusters of white flowers and, beneath, stem leaves with short petioles. Unlikely however to flower in NZ.
Cultivation	Sunny position, deep fertile moisture retentive soil. Propagated by crown or root cuttings taken in Autumn or Spring. Harvest in Autumn by digging up root as needed.
Harvesting and Storage	Keep it cool to keep it hot. Root contains highly volatile oils released by enzyme activity when root crushed.
Uses	<p>Root in fresh state is a stimulant, rubefacient and diuretic.</p> <p><i>Culinary:</i> Young leaves added to salads, dips, beetroot. Chopped leaves added to Dog food dispels worms. Horseradish sauce made by grating root.</p> <p><i>House-hold:</i> Companion plant for potatoes, Infuse root to make a spray against brown rot in Apple trees. Boil parts to make a deep natural yellow dye</p> <p><i>Cosmetic:</i> Root sliced and infused in milk fades age spots and improves skin clarity.</p> <p>Developed in 16th century by the Danes and German and later by Britain as culinary use. Medicinal use came at a later date.</p>
Medicinal	Antibiotic. Lung and urinary infections. Circulatory stimulant. Strong diuretic. Expels worms from children.
Constituents	Mustard oil glycosides and coumarins, and is one of the richest plant sources of peroxidase enzymes. The mustard oils are released from horseradish when crushed. One of its main uses medicinally

is for treatment of nasal congestion and sinusitis because of its decongestant effect. Vitamins B complex and C.

Dosage Infusion - grated root in hot water to ease flu symptoms or urinary tract infections. As a snuff to clear nasal passage. As a poultice for stiff muscles, rheumatic conditions.

Side effects On exposure to air the root changes colour and loses its volatile strength. Too much taken becomes emetic. Avoid using for long periods when pregnant or suffering kidney problems. May be vesicant to some skins ; large internal doses produce inflammation of the gastro-intestinal mucosae. Skin contact with fresh horseradish can cause irritation, blistering or allergic reaction.

Horse radish Sauce

4 Tablespoons of grated root

1 Teaspoon pounded sugar

1 Teaspoon salt

½ Teaspoon pepper

2 Teaspoon readymade mustard

Vinegar.

Mix together. Enjoy with fish, meat and vegetable dishes

References Braun and Cohen (2007) Herbs and Natural Supplements. An evidence based guide. Pp 426-428
Lesley Bremner. A Complete Book of Herbs
M Castleman. The Healing Herbs Bibliography
Carole Fisher and Gilian Painter Materia Medica of Western Herbs for the Southern Hemisphere
Mrs Grieve. A Modern Herbal

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