

WORMWOOD, ROMAN



Artemisia pontica

[ar-te-MIZ-ee-uh PON-ti-kuh]

Family: Asteraceae

Names: Pontisk Bynke, Romersk Malurt (Danish); Pontischer Wermut, Pontischer Beifuss, Römischer Wermut (German); Romersk malurt (Norwegian); Armoise pontique, Petite absinthe (French); Bylica pontyjska (Polish); Duivenkruid (Dutch); Assenzio pontico (Italian)

Description: Native in southeast Europe and naturalized in eastern North America. The often lax perennial, woody at the base, is of all the wormwoods, the most delicate in structure and aroma. Leaves to 2 inches long are gray-green and pinnately dissected. Whitish-yellow flowers are rarely seen

Cultivation: Propagate from root divisions. Close clipping keeps it attractively erect and useful as a low edging in full sun.

Medicinal Uses: a medicinal plant against colds and as a bitter stomachic. A decoction of the leaves and flowers is used for colds, as a

tonic and as an anthelmintic; the leafy top is a bitter stomachic and induces perspiration. It is milder in its properties than common wormwood.

Culinary Uses: A flavoring in Vermouth used as an apertif, and as such, often prescribed as a medicinal in central Europe.

Recipes:

To Make Absinthe by Distillation. From "Dick's Encyclopedia of Practical Receipts & Processes or How They Did It in the 1870's", by Dick Brisbane, first published 1870

Put the following ingredients into a cask:

1 ½ pounds large absinthe (wormwood, artemisia absinthium)
2 pounds small absinthe (petit wormwood, roman wormwood, artemisia pontica)
2 ½ pounds long fennel
2 ½ pounds star anise (breaking the star only)
2 ½ pounds green anise seed
6 ounces coriander seed

1 pound hyssop

Moisten the whole with a little water, allowing it time to soften and swell; then add 12 gallons 95 percent alcohol, and steep for 2 or 3 days; next add 10 gallons water, and let the whole steep for 1 day more. The water will reduce the alcohol to about 23 gallons of proof spirit. Distill it, and it will produce nearly 15 gallons absinthe of 65 to 70 percent strength. Change the receiver as soon as the spirit, as it comes from the worm, begins to assume a reddish tinge. Color the distilled product, by steeping in it for 10 or 15 days:

½ pound mint leaves
¼ pound melissa leaves

½ pound small absinthe (petit wormwood,
roman wormwood, artemisia pontica)

2 ounces citron peel

½ pound bruised liquorice root

Strain and Filter

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