

Roman Chamomile (English or Garden Ch.)

Chamaemelum nobile



Height:	5 – 15 cm plus flowering height of 5cm
Suitable for:	Sunny well drained spot. Containers, gravel and rock gardens, cracks in paving.
Summary:	This is a flowering chamomile which is perfect for a sunny well drained area. It forms a dense mat of aromatic, creeping foliage with single white daisy flowers in summer. Roman chamomile is excellent planted between patio paving stones and makes a great chamomile lawn, needing little regular maintenance — just a trim 2 or 3 times a year.

More information:

The Latin name for Chamomile translates to 'apple of the ground' which truly describes its aromatic scent. The fragrance is freely released when the plant is brushed against or trodden underfoot.

Roman chamomile has abundant, aromatic leaves with the fragrance of apples, most especially when the foliage is crushed. This variety also has sweetly scented flowers on wiry stems throughout the summer, these are white with a bright yellow centre and resemble daisy flowers.

As with all chamomile, good soil preparation is important before planting, weeds and large stones should be carefully removed. Individual plants should be positioned 10 – 15cm apart for quick coverage. After an initial watering the plants should not be overwatered, except in very hot weather, as prolonged periods of wet soil can cause the creeping stems to rot.

This herb looks lovely trailing out of containers and can also be planted in cracks in the paving where there is not too much 'traffic' to crush the lovely flowers. It is a perfect companion for the popular creeping thymes. It can also be planted in the corners of chamomile lawns away from areas of main use where it will give attractive splashes of colour each summer.

The flowers make this an ideal variety for 'companion planting' as they attract lots of beneficial pollinators to the garden.

It requires a trim 2 or 3 times a year to promote compact, bushy growth and prevent it becoming leggy. Most important is a trim as soon as flowering has finished.

The sweetly scented flower heads are the part of the herb used to make a delicately flavoured herb tea. This is the most important of all herb teas, made famous in Beatrix Potter's 'Tale of Peter Rabbit', and is both calming and stress removing. The flower heads can be harvested and dried, and will retain their flavour for up to a year in a sealed container stored in the dark.

Traditional recipes call for 25g of flower heads to be steeped in boiling water for 3 or 4 minutes in a covered jug — to prevent the escape of the aromatic steam. The resulting tea can be sweetened to taste with honey or sugar if desired.

The chamomile leaves are used in the brewing of herb beers where they give both an aromatic and slightly bitter quality. The essential oils are extensively used in the cosmetic and aromatherapy industries and also incorporated into many remedies for skin complaints.