

English Mace

Achillea ageratum (syn decolorans)



- Height:** 30 - 45cm (12 - 18in)
- Suitable for:** Well drained soil in a sunny position.
- Summary:** English mace is a hardy perennial herb with finely divided fern-like foliage, which is vividly green and aromatic. Strong stems carry many small creamy white flowers in the summer.

More information:

Mace is a relatively unknown perennial herb that deserves more popularity. Not to be confused with the spice called mace, which is the outer husk of the nutmeg, English Mace is a member of the Achillea family. It spreads gradually to make a fine clump of bright green divided foliage and flowers from mid to late summer. The flower stems are tall and strong, making it ideal for a windy position, and each carry masses of creamy white daisy flowers. The flowers are very long lived and the plant can bloom well into the autumn.

The flowers can be cut for arrangements in the house and also dry well as complete stems for winter. The aromatic leaves can be used when young to flavour soups and stews and can also be chopped onto potato salads. The leaves should be used sparingly so that the flavour does not overpower.

Potato and spicy Sausage Salad

Excellent with grilled meats, BBQs and cold meat and any other well flavoured dish, or on its own as a light lunch.

- 500 g salad potatoes
- 100 g spicy sausage - pepperoni, chorizo or similar
- 3 spring onions
- 2 heaped tbs each mayonnaise and natural yoghurt
- Ground black pepper
- ½ tsp ground coriander
- 2 tbs chopped [English mace](#) leaves

Method:

- Cook the potatoes until just tender and when cool dice into bite sized pieces.
- Add the sausage in similar sized chunks.
- Thinly slice the spring onion discarding the coarser parts of the green tops and add to the potatoes and sausage.
- In a small bowl mix together the rest of the ingredients to make dressing, reserving a little mace.
- Spoon the dressing over the salad ingredients and mix gently.
- Serve sprinkled with the remaining mace.

English mace has, in the past, had many medicinal uses. It is a native of Italy and Spain and was introduced to England in the 1570s. It was used medicinally in much the same way as the more wellknown Costmary. Quoted in many herbals as being frequently used to make 'sweete washing water', its uses have now gradually become obsolete.