

## Giant Italian Parsley

*Petroselinum hortense 'Giant Italian'*



<b>Height:</b>	38 – 50 cm
<b>Spread:</b>	38 – 50 cm
<b>Suitable for:</b>	Rich moist soil with good drainage in sun or light shade. Pots and containers.
<b>Summary:</b>	This is a taller and more vigorous parsley than the French variety. It has similar flat and strongly flavoured dark green leaves and grows to be a large and prolific plant. It is an attractive herb which can be grown as an edge to the herb garden or potager. Ideal for growing in a container as well as the herb garden.

### More information:

Italian parsley is a great all-round herb. It is easy to grow, either in pots, the border or vegetable garden. Its foliage is bright green and deeply divided into leaflets, and is indispensable in any number of cooked and salad recipes. When cooked it can withstand heat far better than the curly parsley and therefore retains its flavour better.

Parsley likes a good deep rich soil, for summer the plants will need plenty of moisture and a little shade from very hot sun. It is hardy and will grow on throughout the winter in a sheltered spot with a sunny position. Keen cooks will plant a second crop in early autumn in a sheltered sunny spot for supplies throughout the winter, or pot some plants into a large container to keep in an unheated greenhouse.

Parsley grows as a biennial this means that in the summer of the second year it will send up flower stalks and stop producing leaves. So, for a continuous supply, it is best to plant fresh each spring each year.

This is a very vigorous parsley with plenty of tall foliage for picking, any surplus can be chopped and stored in bags with all of the air squeezed out, and then frozen until required.

Nutritionally it contains plenty of vitamins A and C, and some of the B vitamins, along with iron and calcium. It has a high chlorophyll content which works as a natural breath freshener.

It has numerous medical uses but recent medical opinion suggests that parsley should be avoided during pregnancy. It has astringent properties, which make it useful when used as an ingredient in cosmetic cleansers for oily skin problems.

Coarsely chopped Italian parsley makes a versatile side salad to serve with grilled chicken or fish, or to stir through pasta - just mix equal quantities of parsley and finely chopped red onion with a lemony french dressing.

The fresh, sweet flavour of Italian parsley make it an excellent addition to lots of salads. In this celery and parsley salad recipe the flavours and textures make a wonderful combination.

## Celery and Parsley Salad

Serves 3 – 4 as a side salad

- 1 head of celery
- 3 handfuls of [wild rocket](#) leaves (about 50 - 60 g)
- 6 heaped tbs [Giant Italian parsley leaves](#)

For the dressing:

- 3 tbs lemon juice
- 3 tbs olive oil
- 1 tsp freshly ground black pepper
- ½ tsp salt

To garnish:

- Pare a block of parmesan cheese with a cheese slicer (a potato peeler works just as well!) to make about 30 g of curly shavings of cheese

Remove the outer 2 or 3 sticks from the celery as these tend to be a bit stringy. You can add them to soups and stews.

Break the remaining celery stalks apart and reserve the leaves. Slice them thinly on the diagonal.

Add them to your salad bowl along with the rocket, parsley leaves and the chopped celery leaves. If the parsley and rocket are very large then tear the leaves into smaller pieces.

Combine the dressing ingredients in a small bowl with a fork or shake in a small jar.

Just before serving drizzle the dressing over the salad and top with the parmesan shavings.