

Lavender



The lavender you usually think of is probably the English lavender, *Lavendula angustiflora*. You may also see this sold as Munstead lavender. This plant is just not suited to this climate and you will find growing it unsuccessful and very frustrating. But there are other varieties that you can enjoy here.

There are many varieties of lavender—some related to each other and some not so. It is another example of plants with similar flavors and scents that are not related.

Provence Lavender

We recommend Provence as the most suited to this climate. It is a lavadin, meaning that it is a hybrid. It will take full sun and low water but it will burn in a strong, very cold winter wind so shield from the north. It makes fragrant foliage and blue flowers. It is grown for fragrance only and is not suitable for eating. Remove spent blooms to encourage reblooming. Prune it in the spring. This a hardy, vigorous plant that will grow 3 feet tall and 3 feet wide and it will crowd out anything in its way so give it plenty of room. Grow from cuttings.



Spanish Lavender

Spanish Lavender (*Otto Quast*) can also be very successful here and based upon the ethereal color of its leaves and flowers is worth a little trouble. It is perennial but not thrilled with direct sun in our area. It will be happier in partial shade and will need more water than Provence. It can be used as culinary lavender with a flavor between rosemary and true lavender. The color will vary from very purple to light pink. It has thick, pineapple shaped flowers.



Spanish Lavender



Spanish Lavender Flower

Fern Leaf Lavender aka Egyptian Lavender; *Lavandula multifida*

This is a small lavender growing to about 2 feet in height but it lays down a bit up to 3 feet wide. It's nice in borders and as a member of a large pot garden. It is not as cold hardy as other lavenders and you will likely need to either protect it in the winter or grow it as an annual. If you place it well in the garden in a location where it gets natural protection from buildings and other plants, it will make it through most winters here. The leaves are deeply divided, soft, fuzzy and fern like and its aroma is lovely. You can add this one to a floral arrangement as greenery or bring it inside for its aroma. Unlike some of the other lavenders, butterflies seem to like this one and deer and rabbits not so much! Since it is somewhat fragile here, you will want to give it a little afternoon shade. It prefers an alkaline soil but is somewhat tolerant since it is usually grown in beds or pots in improved soils. Don't over water it!

