



The Herb Society of America

Promising Plants Profiles

Calamintha cretica

Genus: *Calamintha*

Specific Epithet: *cretica*

Common Name: Cretan calamint

Family: Lamiaceae

Flower Color: light pink-mauve to white

Form: prostrate, woody-based perennial

Hardiness Zone: 6-9

Height: 4-8"

Soil: well-drained soil

Sun: full sun

Uses: ornamental, culinary*, craft (potpourri), aromatic

Parts Used: leaves



"This is a groundcover plant with dense, gray-green foliage and very light pink-mauve flowers that individually bloom on each node of the stem in mid-summer. New growth tends to be greener and ages to a whitish-gray. This creeping plant will sprawl for several feet and reach a height of 8 inches. In the beginning of the year it is easily mistaken for another Cretan endemic, dittany of Crete (*Origanum dictamnus*), but soon distinguishes itself as being different by its unique scent of mint with a hint of oregano – and of course by its flowers.

Cretan calamint is an amazingly versatile herb in the kitchen. It can be used in any savory dish that lends itself well to either mint or oregano, from appetizers and soups, to salad vinaigrettes, and main dishes with pork and chicken.

Plant this beauty in any rock garden setting or border with well-drained soil and full sun. The fuzzy nature of the leaves also requires good air circulation and lower moisture levels, so Cretan calamint will probably not do well in humid southern conditions – just how well needs to be tested. It has successfully over-wintered in my Zone 6 garden with ease. Because of its creeping nature, plant it next to a wall where it can cascade and look its best. It is easily propagated by stem cuttings in the spring and fall."

– Scott Kresge, Promising Plants Presentation, 2005

* Not GRAS (Generally Recognized as Safe); species in this genus may have abortifacient effects.

Plant Source: Goodwin Creek Gardens, Williams, OR

Photo by Scott Kresge

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