



Catnip
Nepeta cataria

Plant Height: 3 feet

Flower Height: 4 feet

Spread: 3 feet

Sunlight:

Hardiness Zone: 5b

Other Names: Catmint, True Catnip

Description:

Drive your cats wild by planting this perennial; it is covered with pale-pink flowers from early to late summer; it will bloom in waves all summer; does well as a container plant. Seeds aggressively.

Edible Qualities

Catnip is a perennial herb that is commonly grown for its edible qualities. It produces which are harvested from late spring to late summer. They have a minty taste and a pleasant fragrance.

They are most often used in the following ways:

- Cooking
- Drying
- Tea

Features & Attributes

Catnip has masses of beautiful spikes of lightly-scented shell pink flowers rising above the foliage from early to late summer, which are most effective when planted in groupings. Its attractive small fragrant pointy leaves remain grayish green in color throughout the season.



Catnip foliage
Photo courtesy of NetPS Plant Finder



Catnip foliage
Photo courtesy of NetPS Plant Finder



This is a dense herbaceous perennial herb with a mounded form. Its relatively fine texture sets it apart from other garden plants with less refined foliage. This plant will require occasional maintenance and upkeep, and is best cleaned up in early spring before it resumes active growth for the season. It is a good choice for attracting bees and butterflies to your yard, but is not particularly attractive to deer who tend to leave it alone in favor of tastier treats. Gardeners should be aware of the following characteristic(s) that may warrant special consideration;

- Self-Seeding

Aside from its primary use as an edible, Catnip is suitable for the following landscape applications;

- Mass Planting
- Border Edging
- General Garden Use
- Groundcover
- Herb Gardens
- Container Planting

Planting & Growing

Catnip will grow to be about 3 feet tall at maturity extending to 4 feet tall with the flowers, with a spread of 3 feet. Its foliage tends to remain dense right to the ground, not requiring facer plants in front. It grows at a fast rate, and under ideal conditions can be expected to live for approximately 10 years. As an herbaceous perennial, this plant will usually die back to the crown each winter, and will regrow from the base each spring. Be careful not to disturb the crown in late winter when it may not be readily seen!

This plant is typically grown in a designated herb garden. It does best in full sun to partial shade. It is very adaptable to both dry and moist growing conditions, but will not tolerate any standing water. It is not particular as to soil type or pH. It is highly tolerant of urban pollution and will even thrive in inner city environments. This species is not originally from North America. It can be propagated by division.

Catnip is a good choice for the edible garden, but it is also well-suited for use in outdoor pots and containers. Because of its height, it is often used as a 'thriller' in the 'spiller-thriller-filler' container combination; plant it near the center of the pot, surrounded by smaller plants and those that spill over the edges. It is even sizeable enough that it can be grown alone in a suitable container. Note that when growing plants in outdoor containers and baskets, they may require more frequent waterings than they would in the yard or garden.