

# Basil Essential oil India

*Ocimum basilicum L.*



**Herbaceous**  
Anisic



Botanical family : Lamiaceae  
Method of culture : Conventional  
Part harvested : Aerial parts

CAS TSCA : 8015-73-4  
INCI : Ocimum basilicum oil

## Specifications

Method for obtaining : Steam distillation  
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Appearance : Pale yellow to amber yellow liquid  
Constituents : Methyl-chavicol (72-77%), linalol (18-22%)

## Harvest period

J F M A M J J A S **O** N D



Basil is an aromatic annual plant well-known in Mediterranean cuisine. It has a spicy character and is in the same botanical family as aromatic plants with distinctive appeal, such as sage, savory, mint, and thyme. The oval, glossy leaves are of a pure, pretty green, are covered with glandular hairs, and, when crushed, give off a strong odor characteristic of the condiment. Small flowers, generally white but sometimes pink or purple, bloom on the tips of the upright stems. To extract the basil scent, the above-ground portions of the flowering plant are reaped and immediately distilled. The raw material must be fresh, for basil leaves lose their aroma when dry. The basil grown in India produces a methyl chavicol (or estragole) chemotype, like that from Vietnam. The essential oil has an anise-like, herbaceous fresh character with a slightly spicy facet.

Basil's origins are uncertain. It is native to Iran and India and apparently passed through the Middle East before reaching the Mediterranean basin. There is basil grown in Egypt, but the linalool chemotype is different than the basil cultivated in India. Respected for over 2,500 years for both its aroma and therapeutic properties, basil enjoys privileged status among plants. The name itself is prestigious: "basil" comes from the Greek basilikon, meaning "royal plant." In India, basil is sacred: tied to worship of Vishnu the protector, it is woven into garlands and necklaces presented as offerings. It is also planted around temples and shrines dedicated to this god. In the West, basil is represented in Christian legends: During the conversion of the Emperor Constantine, his mother – Saint Helena – found Christ's cross by following the smell of basil. A basil plant is also said to have saved the Virgin Mary by helping to hide her from Herod's soldiers. This sacredness is also reflected in the ancient ritual of picking basil. Before picking the plant, herbalists were to purify the right hand by sprinkling water on it from three different springs using a small oak branch, wear clean garments, and keep their distance from impure beings.

Advised uses : Aromatherapy, Perfumery, Cosmetic, Alimentary



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