

Rosemary

Rosemary officinalis, maybe not the most exciting plant on the planet, but maybe one of the most useful and versatile out there. Water is expensive and the sun is hot, burning down all day with little shade for relief. What does a gardener do combat these elements? The answer is to plant rosemary...many kinds, many uses!

There are two main types of *Rosemary officinalis*, upright and creeping. It's drought-tolerant, will take full sun, and the deer don't touch it! It has beautiful flowers for months at a time, which attracts bees. You can cook with it, chopping tender leaves to add aroma and flavor to many dishes as well as using sprigs in brines or as a garnish. The foliage is ever so fragrant, and it's evergreen too!

And best of all you can find a variety to suit all kinds of needs. If you have a sunny area on the backside of a garage, the answer could be, *Rosemary officinalis* 'Huntington Carpet' which grows to 2 feet and will cover a bank. This lovely variety fearlessly answered all the challenges and thrived!

In another area, you may need to cover a small retaining wall, with the same full sun. If you want something low growing to highlight the plants behind it. The perfect answer was 'Prostratus' a low growing variety with pale lavender/blue flowers that can be used to make a green curtain.

In yet another area, you wanted a tall hedge. This answer, 'Tuscan Blue' an upright variety like which grows to 6 feet and can be used to create informal hedges. This one is a standard culinary variety with dark violet/blue flowers that are some of the showiest around.

You will need to prune your rosemary occasionally.

Rosemary is a hard-working, unsung hero in the garden. I encourage you, go out there and explore what's available at the nurseries, whether it's one plant to use in an herb garden or multiple plants for form and function, there is a *Rosemary officinalis* for you.