

# Lemon Verbena Herb Profile

## Also known as

Aloysia citriodora, Aloysia triphylla, Vervain, Lemon Beebrush, Verbena, and Louisa Herb.

## Introduction

Lemon verbena, sometimes called vervain, is generally acknowledged to be the most strongly scented and intense of the lemon scented plants. The scent has moved writers to poetry and prose in an effort to describe its essence, which is both crisp and relaxing at the same time. Because of its scent, lemon verbena is used in making perfumes and toilet water, as well as a flavoring in baking, jelly and preserving. The flavor of lemon verbena has been likened to a cross between licorice and camphor, and it is widely used as an herbal flavoring to replace oregano, particularly in fish and poultry dishes. Lemon verbena was introduced to England in 1700s, and found a comfortable home there, where the deciduous bushes sometimes grow to fifteen feet in height. The plant has an incredibly strong minty-citrus scent that is quite powerful when harvested fresh, however the dried Lemon Verbena is less overpowering and more subtle. It is native to Chile and Peru, but grows quite contentedly in other places. It is used medicinally, as are many other plants with mint or camphor content.

## Constituents

oil of verbena, contains -citral, -citral, methyl heptenone, carvone, l-limonene, dipentene, linalool, -terpineol, borneol, nerol, geraniol, and other constituents. All of these are present in less concentration in the leaves and flowering tops most often used for tea.

## Parts Used

Leaves and flowering tops are used in tea infusions, either fresh or dried

## Typical Preparations

Tea infusions either hot or cold, and seldom found in food and capsules.

## Summary

Tea made of lemon verbena has been used to soothe colon and stomach spasms, lower fevers and calm itching. It has a relaxing effect, and can help ease muscle tensions. As a culinary flavoring, lemon verbena has been used as everything from ice cream flavoring to pepper substitute. The licorice and camphor content do make the volatile oils from the plant stronger than most other lemon-scented herbs, so it's advised to use it sparingly as a flavoring.

# Precautions

None found

**Botanical: Lippia citriodora**

**Family: N.O. Verbenaceae**

---**Synonyms**---Aloysia citriodora. Verveine citronelle or odorante. Herb Louisa. Lemonscented Verbena. Verbena triphylla. Lippia triphylla.

---**Parts Used**---Leaves, flowering tops.

---**Habitat**---Chile and Peru. Cultivated in European gardens.

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---**Description**---This deciduous shrub was introduced into England in 1784, reaching a height of 15 feet in the Isle of Wight and in sheltered localities. The leaves are very fragrant, lanceolate, arranged in threes, 3 to 4 inches long, with smooth margins, pale green in colour, having parallel veins at right-angles to the mid-rib and flat bristles along the edges. The many small flowers are pale purple, blooming during August in slim, terminal panicles. The leaves, which have been suggested to replace tea, will retain their odour for years and are used in perfumery. They should be gathered at flowering time.

All the species of Lippia abound in volatile oil.

---**Constituents**---The odour is due to an essential oil obtainable by distillation. It has not been analysed in detail.

---**Medicinal Action and Uses**---Febrifuge, sedative. The uses of Lemon Verbena are similar to those of mint, orange flowers, or melissa, as a stomachic and antispasmodic in dyspepsia, indigestion and flatulence, stimulating skin and stomach.

---**Dosage**---The decoction may be taken in several daily doses of three tablepoonsful.

---**Other Species**---

*Lippia Scaberrima*, or Beukessboss of South Africa, yields an essential oil with an odour like lavender, named Lippianol. It has a peculiar crystalline appearance, with the qualities of a monohydric alcohol.

From *L. mexicana* or possibly *Cedronella mexicana*, an essential oil resembling that of fennel was separated, and also a substance like camphor, called Lippioil.

The essence of Lemon-Grass, or *Andropogon Schoenanthus*, should not be confused with that of Lemon-Scented Verbena.