

Angelica

(*Angelica archangelica*)



This is a majestic plant that deserves a prominent position at the back of a border or in a wild part of the garden. It loves woodland conditions, with plenty of moist shade. All parts of the aromatic plant have culinary or medicinal uses, but it is best known for its candied stems, used as a cake decoration. In their first year, plants produce leafy bushes, and then die down and disappear completely from sight in winter in their

second year they reach full size, and if prevented from flowering and seeding can survive for several years.

Most ornamental **angelicas** are tall biennials with huge, domed umbelliferous flowerheads followed by delicate seed pods. The ribbed, hollow stems are flushed pink and are traditionally candied for use in baking.. All parts of angelica are highly aromatic, and it has traditionally been used for medicinal as well as culinary purposes.

It's good for including in wildlife planting as the flowers are attractive to pollinators and the seeds are eaten by birds.

This sweet 'herb of the angels' is a member of the parsley family and was once thought to be a remedy against witchcraft, poison and plague. Its pale green, celery-like stalks stimulate production of digestive juices, improves the flow of bile into the digestive tract, and combats digestive spasms. Angelica is also used to flavour gin and sweet wines. Candied angelica is used to decorate cakes and desserts.

Crushed angelica root can be made into a tea, using one teaspoonful per cup. Allow the root to steep for 10 to 20 minutes.

To make candied angelica, cut the shoots into strips and remove untidy bits. Blanch strips and candy them using gradually increasing strengths of sugar syrup. When they are done, dry them and keep them, but don't throw away the syrup; it keeps for at least a year in the refrigerator and for a long time just in a jar.