Amethyst Basil

Ocimum basilicum 'Amethyst'

Height: 24 inches

Spread: 14 inches

Spacing: 12 inches

Sunlight:

Hardiness Zone: (annual)

Description:

A culinary variety that produces flavorful, deep purple leaves on a lush plant; will produce white flowers in summer but is primarily grown for foliage; pinch flower stems to promote leaf growth; great for mixed containers, herb gardens, and beds



Amethyst Basil flowers
Photo courtesy of NetPS Plant Finder



Amethyst Basil foliage
Photo courtesy of NetPS Plant Finder

Edible Qualities

Amethyst Basil is an annual herb that is commonly grown for its edible qualities, although it does have ornamental merits as well. The fragrant oval deep purple leaves with hints of black can be harvested at any time in the season. The leaves have a pleasant taste and a pleasant fragrance.

The leaves are most often used in the following ways:

- Fresh Eating
- Eating When Cooked/Prepared
- Cooking
- Drying
- Seasoning

Planting & Growing

Amethyst Basil will grow to be about 20 inches tall at maturity, with a spread of 14 inches. When grown in masses or used as a bedding plant, individual plants should be spaced approximately 12 inches apart. This fast-growing annual will normally live for one full growing season, needing replacement the following year. However, this species tends to self-seed and may thereby endure for years in the garden if allowed.

This plant can be integrated into a landscape or flower garden by creative gardeners, but is usually grown in a designated herb garden. It should only be grown in full sunlight. It prefers to grow in average to moist conditions, and shouldn't be allowed to dry out. It may require supplemental watering during periods of drought or extended heat. This plant should not require much in the way of fertilizing once established, although it may appreciate a shot of general-purpose fertilizer from time to time early in the growing season. It is not particular as to soil type or pH. It is somewhat tolerant of urban pollution. This is a selected variety of a species not originally from North America. It can be propagated by cuttings; however, as a cultivated variety, be aware that it may be subject to certain restrictions or prohibitions on propagation.

Amethyst Basil is a good choice for the edible garden, but it is also well-suited for use in outdoor pots and containers. With its upright habit of growth, it is best suited for use 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. Note that when growing plants in outdoor containers and baskets, they may require more frequent waterings than they would in the yard or garden.