

Common Name: **Anise**

Genus: *Pimpinella*

Species: *anisum*

Family: Apiaceae

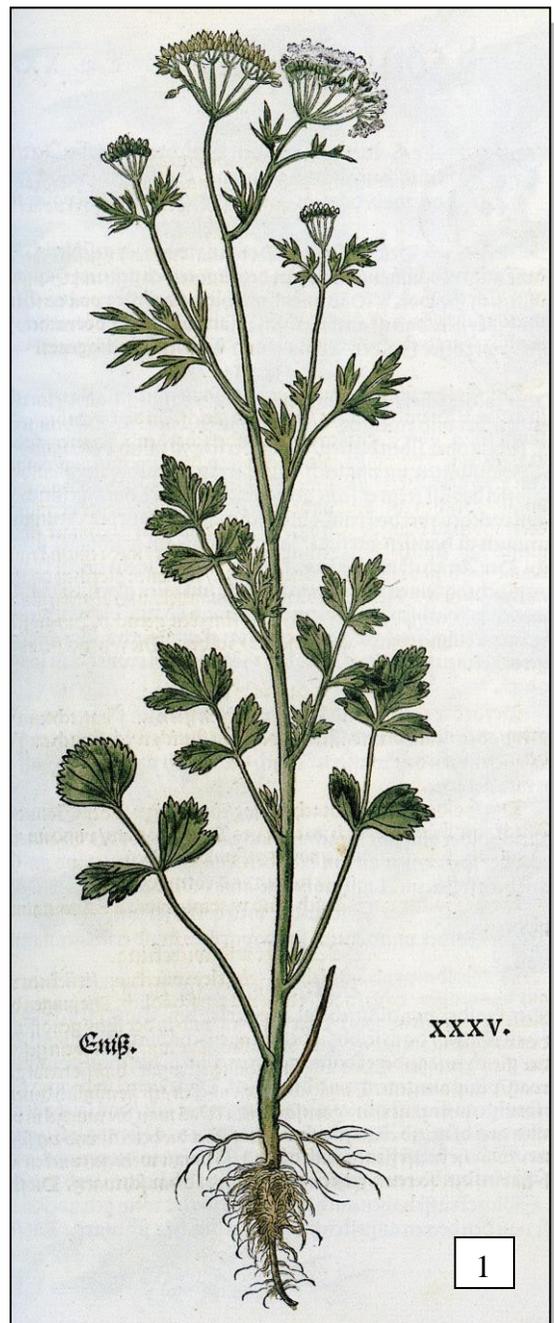
AKA: Anis



Historical Uses:

Medical: “It is diuretic and helpful in cases of jaundice; anise relieves the thirst of those with dropsy (diabetics), is an antidote to poison, reduces the swellings of welts and bruises, carries away flatulence and headache, cures earache when mixed with rose oil, stimulates the viscera, increases lactation and sexual activity, opens ducts of the liver, spleen, kidneys, and womb, cleansing them, controls leucorrhea and menorrhoea, soothes painful areas and inflammations, eases fevers of long standing, causes a healthful sweating, and promotes the menses.” (1)

“The feed wafteth and consumeth winde, and is good against belchings and upbraidings of the stomacke, allayeth gripings of the belly, provoketh urine gently, maketh abundance of milke, and stirreth up bodily lust: it stayeth the laske, and also the white flux in women. Being chewed it makes the breath sweet, and is good for them tjjhat are short winded, and quenchem thirst, and therefore it is fit for such as have the dropsie: it helpeth the yeoxing or hicket, both when it is drunken or eaten dry: the smell thereof doth also prevaile very much. The fame being dried by the fire and taken with honey clenseth the brest very much from flegmaticke superfluities: and if it be eaten with bitter almonds it doth helpe the old cough. It is to be given to young children and



infants to eat which are like to have the falling sicknes, or to such as have it by patrimonie or succession. It taketh away the Squinancie or Quincie (that is, a felling in the throat) being gargled with honey, vinegar, and a little Hyssop gently boiled together.” (2)

Culinary: “Anise seed was a highly prized and rather expensive flavoring for food in the Middle Ages. In *The Goodman of Paris* it is sprinkled on meat jellies along with bay leaves and cinnamon; it also appears in a complicated recipe for preserves of nuts, honey, and raisins, with fennel, coriander, and caraway. ” (3)

Lore: “It was once used to pay taxes, although some say that dill was the plant actually collected; the Romans regarded it as a spice. “ (4) Warm and dry in the third degree and averts the evil eye. (5)

Other: The seeds were used to flavor candy, baked goods, and liquor. The oil is used in soap, cosmetics and perfume but was also used to kill insects and as bait for vermin. (6)

Contemporary Uses:

Parts Used: Leaves, Seeds, Oil

Medicinal: “[Used] internally for dry coughs, whooping cough, bronchitis, tracheitis, bronchial asthma, indigestion, gas, colic, and insufficient lactation. [Used] externally for lice, scabies, and as a chest rub for bronchial complaints.” (7)

Culinary/Drink: It is used in liquors such as anisette and absinthe. Latin countries use anise to flavor breads and cookies. It is listed in the U.S. Pharmacopoeia as a flavoring for medicines.(8)

Fresh leaves are used in salads, vegetables and soups. The seeds are used to flavor candy (especially aniseed balls), dried figs, cakes, bread, and curries.(9)

Economic Uses: “Seeds and oil form the basis of anise-flavored drinks, such as *pastis*, *ouzo*, *raki*, and *arak*, which turn milky when diluted with water, and liquors, such as *anisette*. Oil is also used in perfumery, tobacco, and pharmaceutical products.” (10)

Area of Origin: Egypt, Greece, Crete and Asia Minor

Physical Description: Aromatic, downy plant, kidney shaped to ovate pinnate leaves to 5 cm long, divided into linear segments, with bright green feather-like secondary leaflets, flowers arranged in dainty umbels.

Plant type: annual

Height: 18 inches

Flower color: white

Flowering period: Summer

Fruit & Seed: ribbed seeds about 5 mm long

Soil type/requirements: Rich, well-drained, sandy soil

Soil pH: 6.0-8.0, average 7.2

Sun requirements: Sun

Water requirements: moist but not constantly wet

Hardiness zone: seedlings can withstand minor frost

Propagation: Sown by seed when ripe, prick out seedlings into deep containers to allow development of tap roots.

Sources

1. Anderson, pg. 234
2. Gerard, pg. 1035
3. Freeman, pg. 3
4. Anderson, pg. 234
5. Ibid
6. Ibid
7. Bown, pg. 317
8. Freeman, pg. 3
9. Bown, pg. 317
10. Ibid

Illustrations/Images:

1. Fuch's Herbal 1543