

Common Name: **Chamomile**

Genus: *Chamaemelum*

Species: *nobile*

Family: Asteraceae

AKA: Manzanilla (Spanish), Maythen (Saxon), Camomile, Cammomill, Ground-apple (Greek)



### Historical Uses:

**Medical:** “Cammomill is good against the collicke and the stone; it provoketh urine, and is most singular in Clysters which are made against the foresaid diseases. Oile of Cammomill is exceedingly good against all manner of ache and paine, bruising, shrinking of sinews, hardnesse, and cold swellings.” (1)

“A decoction made of chamomile, and drank, taketh away all pains and stitches in the side. The flowers of Camomile beaten, and made up into balls with oil, drive away all sorts of agues, if the part grieved be anointed with that oil, taken from the flowers, from the crown of the head to the sole of the foot, and afterwards laid to sweat in his bed, and that he sweats well... It is profitable for all sorts of agues that come either from phlegm, or melancholy, or from an inflammation of the bowels, being applied when the humours causing them shall be concocted...”(2)



“The virtue of this herb is thus,’ claims *Banckes’s Herbal*, ‘if it be drunken with wine, it will break the stone. Also, it destroyeth the yellow evil. It helpeth the aching and disease of the liver. It is good for the aching of a man’s head and for the megrim [migraine].” (3)

### Contemporary Uses:

**Parts Used:** Flowers, essential oil, whole herb

**Medicinal:** “Tonic, stomachic, anodyne and antispasmodic.... Combined with ginger and alkalies, the cold infusion proves an excellent stomachic in cases of ordinary indigestion, such as flatulent colic, heartburn, loss of appetite, sluggish state of the intestinal canal, and also in gout and periodic headache, and is an appetizing tonic, especially for aged persons...” (4)

“Although physicians today claim that chamomile has no medicinal value, many a French housewife will administer chamomile tea for weak stomachs and nervous headaches, for run-down systems and pale complexions...” (5)

**Culinary:** “The whole herb is used chiefly for making herb beers...” (6)

**Economic:** “...But also for a lotion, for external application in toothache, earache, neuralgia, etc.” (7)

“Beauty shops of several lands use a chamomile rinse after shampoos, especially for blonde hair.” (8)



Close-up of the Chamomile flower

**Area of Origin:** Western Europe

**Physical description:**

“The true or Common Chamomile (*Anthemis nobilis*) is a low growing plant, creeping or trailing, its tufts of leaves and flowers a foot high. The root is perennial, jointed and fibrous; the stems, hairy and freely branching, are covered with leaves which are divided into thread-like segments, the fineness of which gives the whole plant a feathery appearance.” (9)

**Plant type:** Perennial.

**Form:** Low growing

**Height:** 4”-12”

**Flower color:** White

**Flowering period:** July-September

**Soil type/requirements:** Light, well-drained soil in full sun.

**Fruit:** The fruit is small and dry, and as it forms, the hill of the receptacle gets more and more conical.

**Hardiness zone:** USDA 4-8

**Sun requirements:** Full sun

**Propagation:** By seed sown in spring or autumn; by division in spring.

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### **Sources**

1. Gerard, p. 754-756
2. Culpepper, p. 32
3. Freeman, p.22
4. Grieve, p. 185-187
5. Bown, p. 164
6. Grieve, p. 185-187
7. Ibid
8. Bown, p. 164
9. Grieve, p. 185-187

### **Illustrations/Images:**

1. Gerard's Herbal      1633 ed.
2. PSUMG                2013
3. PSUMG                2013