



### PARSLEY

Latin: *Petroselinum crispum*

Welsh: Persl

Now a popular culinary herb, Parsley has a long and varied history.

The Greeks differentiated between Marsh Celery or Smallage (*heleio selinon*) and Rock Celery or Parsley (*petros selinon*) and associated both plants with death and funeral rituals,

In Greek mythology, Parsley was dedicated to Persephone, Queen of the Underworld. The Romans also associated Parsley with funeral rituals and dedicated it to the memory of the dead at funeral feasts. But they also valued the culinary values of the herb, particularly as an ingredient of sauces. Medicinally, Parsley was eaten to give strength and agility. And it was added to ponds to revive ailing fish.

It was the Romans who introduced Parsley (flat-leaved and curly-leaved) into Britain. Parsley was an essential herb in the medieval kitchen garden, valued both for its culinary and medicinal uses.

An early use of the name parsley ('persely'), as opposed to earlier forms derived from the Latin (including the Old English *petersilie*), is found in William Langland's allegorical poem *Piers Plowman* (1376).

In a medicinal context, Parsley was traditionally used to treat many complaints including liver problems and jaundice. It was also chewed to remove lingering tastes in the mouth.

Parsley, which is rich in iron, was one of the ingredients (together with salt water and sage) in the first drinks given to the patient after bloodletting which was a common medical procedure for centuries.

