



# Buchu Plant

**Botanical Name:** *Agathosma betulina*

Buchu (South Africa's 'miracle herb') is a small, green, woody plant found in western South Africa. In several reports of the late 19th century, buchu was described as "about the size of a hedgehog." The leaves have an incredibly pungent aroma that is similar to peppermint that increases as the leaves are dried. Buchu has a long history as a medicinal herb in the Cape region of South Africa and was used by the indigenous Khoisan for centuries who believed it to be an elixir of youth. It is part of the Cape Floral Kingdom and is a protected plant. The kind of Buchu that is mostly used for medicinal purposes is *Agathosma betulina*. The medicinal properties of the Buchu plant reside in its leaves.

Buchu is part of the Rutaceae family, which is the same family as citrus fruits. Buchu was first exported to Britain in the 18th century. In Europe, it was called "nobles' tea" because only the wealthy could afford it. Do you know? There were eight bales of Buchu on board the Titanic.

*Agathosma betulina* is a low shrub ( $\pm 1.5\text{m}$ ) with white or pink flowers. The leaves have oil glands underneath that release a strong aroma. In the food industry Buchu oil is often used to impart a blackcurrant flavor to foods. The Khoisan used to chew Buchu leaves, but nowadays Buchu is usually taken as a tea, and Buchu tea bags have been commercially available for some time.

In traditional medicine the purported benefits of Buchu are many and it was used to treat ailments ranging from arthritis to flatulence to urinary infections. Traditional use is however often not supported by scientific studies, but in the case of Buchu this is rapidly changing.

According to Cape Kingdom Nutraceuticals, Buchu is recognized as South Africa's "miracle herb" with potent natural anti-inflammatory properties. Buchu also has anti-infective, antifungal and antibacterial properties, enabling it to act as a natural antibiotic with no side effects. Buchu contains naturally occurring antioxidants and bioflavonoids such as Quercetin, Rutin, Hesperidin, Diosimin, Diosphenol and Vitamins A, B and E.

We recommend that you consult with a qualified healthcare practitioner before using herbal products, particularly if you are pregnant, nursing, or on any medications. This information has not been evaluated by the Food and Drug Administration. This product is not intended to diagnose, treat, cure, or prevent any disease. For educational purposes only.

This ingredient is sourced from South Africa.



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