

✧ Renee's Garden ✧

Your Garden To Table Seed Company

HERB PLANT TRIO: PLANTING AND GROWING GUIDE

AS SOON AS PLANTS ARRIVE:

Your plants have spent 3-4 days in transit without light or water and may have yellow leaves or show evidence of wilting. We have found that 99% of these plants will survive and thrive as long as you follow the simple care instructions listed here.

Take your plants carefully out of the shipping box as soon as possible, taking care not to damage stems or leaves. If the soil is dry, water gently but thoroughly. Place the pots in bright but indirect light indoors. Expose them to outdoor conditions gradually so they have the chance to acclimate to increasing amounts of sunlight before being planted outside for the season. Place them outside in the shade, sheltered from the wind, if temperatures have reached 50- 55° F both day and night.

Remember: Even if your plants arrive on a glorious warm spring day, they will need to get used to being outdoors before being planted.

PLANTING IN THE GARDEN:

Plant your baby plants into the garden outdoors only when weather is settled and warmed up to 50- 55° F both night and day; colder temperatures and winds will harm them.

When you are ready to plant, choose a sunny location (at least 6 hours full sun) with good soil and excellent drainage. If the weather is hot, transplant your plants in the cool of the morning or late in the afternoon to minimize stress. Dig a hole large enough to generously accommodate the plant's root ball.

To remove the plant from its nursery pot, flip the pot over, tap the bottom and slip the plant out. Don't pull the plant out by its stem. If the roots are matted or tangled inside the pot, tease it out slowly and gently separate the roots from one another. Set the plant into its hole so that the top of the root ball is level with the surface of the surrounding soil. Then push soil back into the hole around the plant. Press firmly with your hands to eliminate air pockets and establish good soil

contact. A gentle but thorough watering will further settle the soil and get things off to good start.

PLANTING IN CONTAINERS:

Tuscan Blue Rosemary, Lemon Verbena and Grosso Lavender will reach about 2-3 tall feet in pots, so choose large containers about 16 inches in diameter and 16 inches tall.

Fill pots with fresh, top quality potting mix, water the mix thoroughly and use your hands to mix in the moisture so the potting soil is evenly moistened throughout. Remember plants in containers are totally dependent on you; they will need about one inch of water per week and fertilizing about every 6-8 weeks with a good all-purpose plant fertilizer.

GROWING AND USING YOUR HERBS

Tuscan Blue Rosemary (*Rosmarinus officinalis*)

Tender Perennial

Rosemary is a Mediterranean herb. It needs full sun, excellent drainage, and must have good air circulation to grow well. Water sparingly, enough to keep the plant from drying out. Feed lightly once a year in spring. Bees and other pollinators love to visit Tuscan Blue's deep blue flowers

In mild winter areas where the ground doesn't freeze, Rosemary can be planted right in the garden. It will reach 3 to 5 feet tall, depending on conditions. Once well-established, trim as needed for shaping or culinary use. When planted directly in the garden, Plants are reliably hardy in zones 7-10.

In cold winter areas with ground freezing frosts, grow rosemary in a pot outdoors in a sunny spot throughout summer, then brought inside before the first hard freeze. When bringing indoors, cut back by about a third before bringing indoors and do not replot. Choose a cool, airy spot that receives as just as much

light as possible. Cool temperatures are best: about 60° F on a bright enclosed porch is ideal. Be sure to locate away from the hot, blowing air of heating ducts. Keep the soil on the dry side and do not fertilize. After several seasons, repot into a larger container in spring. Rosemary will grow several feet tall in cold climates.

Using Tuscan Blue: leaves have a strong but subtle pungency with a piney-mint taste that is unbeatable with chicken, pork, lamb, tomatoes, potatoes, corn and cheeses. Add fresh sprigs to vinegar or olive oil for dressings make Rosemary herb butter or use the straight branches as skewers on the barbecue. We love to stuff chicken with handfuls of fresh rosemary and crushed garlic cloves and then barbecue over hot coals. When you grow your own plants, you can afford to be lavish!

Hybrid Lavender “Grosso” (*Lavendula x intermedia*: hybrid of *L. angustifolia* and *L. latifolia*)
Perennial, Reliably Hardy Zones 5-9.

Lavender can be planted directly in the garden or in a large pot. There are three critical requirements, which you must follow if the plants are to be successful: full sun, excellent drainage, and good air circulation.

Plants will reach 2 to 2 ½ feet tall at maturity with a vigorous, many branching habit and intensely perfumed, branching violet flower spikes in late spring to early summer. Even after bloom is finished, the plants are a silvery mound of intensely fragrant leaves. Bees and other pollinators will flock to your blooming lavender.

Keep well watered, but not at all soggy as plants simply will not tolerate having their roots in wet soil. Lavenders like alkaline soil conditions, so if your soil is very acidic, add horticultural lime before planting. Because lavender plants have strong essential oils, they are rarely bothered by common plant pests, nor do deer munch them.

Every season, be sure to cut the long flower stems down to the foliage during or after bloom to keep the plant in a neat, rounded shape.

In The Kitchen: Grosso is perfect for baking (see our [lavender shortbread recipe](#)), making lavender syrup or

jelly, or to toss a few handfuls on the smoker when barbecuing lamb or pork.

Using Lavender: Flower spikes have the strongest scent just after the little florets begin to open. Cut long stems in bunches and dry out of the sun. Spread on a screen or a cotton sheet so air circulates easily. Drying takes 3-5 days in warm weather.

Use fresh or dried flower spikes in bouquets. Dry spikes and rub off florets, then bag up in sachets to tuck into your linen closet and perfume towels and sheets. Sweet Lavender’s aromatic perfume is a classic herbal remedy to peaceful, restful sleep.

Lemon Verbena (*Aloysia triphylla*) Tender Perennial
The 3 inch narrow leaves of Lemon Verbena grow in lance-like whorls tipped with tiny pale lavender flowers. Lemon Verbena has the sweetest lemon scent that you can imagine! Just brush the leaves to release their heavenly scent. Depending on climate, plants grow 3-5 feet tall; if grown in a container plants reach about 3 feet tall.

Cut sprigs or whole branches of these aromatic leaves; fresh or air-dried lemon verbena leaves keep their sweet, delicate and delicious citrus fragrance almost indefinitely.

Use: You will love them either fresh or simply air dried to use liberally in making the elixir of enticingly lemon-scented herbal tea to serve either hot or iced. Put a few leaves in your sugar canister to transfer their delicate aroma and use the sugar in cookies, muffins and cakes. Tuck a few fresh leaves into fresh fruit salads. (Especially lovely with honeydew melon!), Use lemon verbena leaves in making your own herbal potpourri.

In mild winter areas: Where the ground does not freeze hard, plants will go dormant, and die back to the ground in the winter. In spring, prune off dead branches and plants will regrow abundantly the next spring. Feed annually once well established.

In cold winter areas: Grow this tender perennial as an annual, or plant in a large pot to be brought indoors in advance of your first frost date and pruned back by 1/3 to overwinter indoors.