



STAY HEALTHY  BE NATURAL

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INFORMAZIONI AGGIUNTIVE • ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

## Laurel

Laurel or laurel (*Laurus nobilis*), is an evergreen tree or shrub with oval and shiny leaves, to which the greatest health benefits are attributed. It belongs to the family of Lauraceous, plants native to Asia Minor but widespread in the Mediterranean since ancient times. It is a perennial aromatic plant, which can also become very high if it finds the soil and conditions suitable for its development, and much appreciated and used not only in the kitchen or as a natural remedy but also on an ornamental level to make gardens, hedges and flower beds.

Laurel leaves can be harvested and used all year round, but are particularly rich in beneficial principles and aromatic essences during winter and early spring. Berries, on the other hand, similar when ripe to small dark olives, are harvested between October and November. Laurel is a rustic species characteristic of Mediterranean areas but also suitable for cooler climates.

In Italy laurel can be grown in almost any vegetable garden or garden. On the other hand, it grows spontaneously especially in the woods and hilly areas of the central-southern areas but also along the coasts, for example in Sicily.

### 100 grams of laurel contribute to our organism:

**Carbohydrates: 74.97 g / Fiber: 26.3 g / Total lipids (fat): 8.36 g / Saturated fats: 2.28 g / Proteins: 7.61 g / Monounsaturated fatty acids: 1.64 g Cholesterol: 0 mg / Polyunsaturated fatty acids: 2.29 g / Calcium: 834 mg / Potassium: 529 mg / Phosphorus: 113 mg / Iron: 43 mg / Sodium: 23 mg Zinc: 3.7 mg / Vitamin C: 46.5 mg / Vitamin A, Retinol equivalent activities: 309 WEE / Thiamine (B1): 0.009 mg / Riboflavin (B2): 0.421 mg Niacin (B3): 2,005 mg / Pyridoxine (B6): 1.74 mg / Folates, total: 180 mcg 100 grams of laurel bring 313 kcal.**

In fact, we do not eat this aromatic herb but we use it only to flavor the foods and then we remove it, moreover 100 grams of laurel are really many. We can therefore say that the caloric intake of laurel within the dishes is almost nil.

The properties of laurel are due to its rich content of essential oils, present in berries and leaves. Its beneficial action against the cure of diseases has been known since the times of Greeks and romans. Among the components present in the laurel leaves we find eugenol and lemon, which are accompanied by other active volatile substances considered beneficial due to their antiseptic, antioxidant, digestive and anticancer properties.



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Fresh laurel leaves are an important source of Vitamin C / Vitamin C or ascorbic acid, it is one of the most powerful natural antioxidants capable of counteracting the action of free radicals. Vitamin C also has anti-viral effects, stimulates the immune system and promotes wound healing. Laurel leaves, when fresh, are then a good source of folic acid and also contain vitamins A

essential for maintaining the health of vision, skin and mucous membranes. In laurel we also find B vitamins, such as Niacin and Riboflavin. B vitamins regulate metabolism, contribute to the synthesis of enzymes and the functioning of the nervous system. Not to be underestimated is the mineral salt content of laurel leaves. Inside them we find **potassium, copper, calcium, manganese, iron, selenium, zinc and magnesium. Potassium** is important to keep blood pressure and heart rate under control. Iron is necessary for the production of red blood cells. In herbal medicine and natural medicine, astringent, diuretic and appetite stimulant properties are recognized to laurel.

Lauric acid contained in laurel leaves has natural repellent properties against insects and parasites. The components present in laurel leaves are used for the production of medicines for the treatment of arthritis, muscle aches, bronchitis and flu symptoms. It is a useful remedy even in case of sciatica attacks and to eliminate bronchial phlegm (in fact it has expectorant skills) and is beneficial in the states of tiredness and nervousness.

Finally, the use of laurel leaf extracts proved beneficial in the treatment of common headaches and migraines, while, in the Middle Ages, laurel leaves were considered a natural remedy suitable for regularizing the menstrual cycle. The laurel infusion can also be used to disinfect the oral cavity and gargle in case of inflammation or bad breath problems.

### To sum up, the laurel contains:

**Antiseptic / Antioxidant / Digestive / Anticancer / Astringent/diuretic / Appetite-stimulating / Relaxing expectorant and Insect repellent properties**

So, the laurel that we commonly use is neither poisonous nor toxic, regardless of whether the leaves are fresh or dry. However, there is a toxic species that is obviously not used for food purposes, it is the Lauraceae, laurel that contains hydrogen cyanide inside. Also be careful not to confuse the laurel plant with that of Oleander, the latter is highly toxic and is recognized because if you peel off a leaf you see the characteristic light-colored latex that it contains inside. If you are not sure about the plant in front of you avoid harvesting it (and this advice always applies, not only in the case of laurel).

Like the leaves, laurel berries are edible and contain many properties of the plant. They can be used by preparing for example a decoction by boiling 1 liter of water and then pouring inside a teaspoon of berries to be left in infusion for 10-15 minutes. As the most classic leaf-based laurel infusion, this decoction can be drunk a couple of times a day in case of digestive problems, tiredness, flu, colds or cough. From the beaten berries and let macerate you also get laurel oil.