

# Horseradish

## *Armoracia rusticana*

by Karen Unruh

I am sure you know about horseradish as an accompaniment to dishes such as roast beef (for the English) and fish (for the Scandinavian) where the root is grated and mixed with such ingredients as vinegar, mayonnaise, or cream. And you know that it is hot to the taste and warms the mouth and throat. As well as being a culinary herb, horseradish is also a medicinal herb with wonderful qualities to stimulate circulation and thus raise our vital force – a real help to the elderly needing a warming effect. This stimulating effect aids digestion – perhaps why it became the condiment for a roast beef dinner – by stimulating the liver and pancreas to supply more enzymes to complete the digestive task.

As well, horseradish is antiseptic and thus a herb we could be using now during cold season. It helps to clear sinus congestion, adds vitamin C and acts as an antiseptic and an antibiotic.

When looking through my herbal books, I was alerted to horseradish being used not only to clear sinus congestion but to help eliminate tinnitus and to help boost circulation around the ear, which may be one of the causes of hearing loss – always of interest to me personally.

I have horseradish growing in my garden. It is a perennial plant with large green oblong leaves, a height of 60-90 cm, lovely small white flowers in summer and long roots – up to 60 cm., some tapering deep and others horizontal under the soil surface. As with all herbs, the root has most benefits when harvested in fall or winter when the energy of the plant pulls into the root to prepare the plant for the next year of growth. I did harvest a root this past summer as I was moving another plant beside the horseradish and found this marvelous root just under the surface. I have just again found a second root and made a second harvest. The winter root is much hotter than the summer root, although the summer root is hot enough for me. I have it grated in vinegar, in the refrigerator, waiting for me to use during the cold and flu season.

### **Horseradish Sauce for Sinus Congestion, Digestive Aid and Increasing Circulation**

1. Finely grate a washed root, by hand to feel the immediate effects as your eyes and nose water, or in a food processor.
2. Add apple cider vinegar and honey to taste. Store in a glass jar with a non-metal lid where it will keep in the refrigerator for 6 months.
3. Eat 1 to 2 teaspoons daily. Use on grains or vegetables or spread on crackers.



Horseradish Roots



Horseradish in Bloom