



**Botanical name:** *Ocimum* spp.

[*tenuiflorum-Krishna*, *sanctum-Rama*, *gratissimum-Vana*]

**Family:** Lamiaceae [includes bee balm, black horehound, bugleweed, catnip, hyssop, lavender, lemon balm, mints, rosemary, self-heal, thyme]

**Common name:** Holy basil

**More names:** *tulsi* [matchless one], *Vishnupriya* [one that pleases Lord Vishnu], queen of herbs, vaishnavi ("belonging to Vishnu"), vishnu vallabha ("beloved of vishnu"), haripriya ("beloved of vishnu"), vishnu tulsi, shri-tulsi ("fortunate tulsi"), rama-tulsi ("bright Tulsi"), shyama-tulsi ("dark tulsi"), krishna-tulsi ("dark tulsi), *manjari*, the incomparable one

**Parts of the plant used:** flowers, leaves, roots

**When to harvest:** Regular cutting [1-2x a week] assures bushiness, can cut down to 8 inches to the stalk 1-2x a season

**Herbal actions:**

anti-cancer, anti-bacterial, anti-oxidant, anti-diabetic, antilipidemic, anti-fertility, digestive stimulant, carminative, antispasmodic, expectorant, nervine, sedative, antidepressant, anti-inflammatory, antiseptic, circulatory stimulant, diaphoretic, febrifuge

**Active constituents:**

essential oil (Eugenol, carvacol, linalool, caryophyllene), and polyphenols (rosmarinic acid), triterpenes (ursolic acid) and flavonoids

**Energy:** Warming, Cooling

**Taste:** Sweet, Bitter, Pungent

**Meridian/Organ affected:** Lungs, heart, blood, liver, kidney

**Habitat + ecology:**

This perennial plant ancestor is native to Southeast Asia, most notably so called India. In India, the plant is grown throughout the country from Andaman and Nicobar islands to the Himalayas up to 1800 meters above sea level. They grow best in rich soil, with ample sun.

**Ethnobotany (People + the plant ancestor):**

- In the "Charaka Samhita" the consummate text on Ayurveda written around 1000 BC, Holy Basil is described as "the incomparable one" and is considered to be an incarnation of Tulasi or Vrindavani, a consort of Lord Vishnu.
- Tulsi is considered a symbol of fidelity and helpful in attaining spiritual enlightenment. They are used to support a healthy response to stress, maintain blood sugar levels within a normal range, promote longevity, nourish the mind and elevate the spirit.
- In Ayurveda, "the daily use of this herb is believed to help maintain the balance of chakras, and to bring out the goodness, virtue, and joy in humans"
- Holy Basil (*Ocimum sanctum*) demonstrates impressive adaptogenic activity. Helping the body adapt to stresses of various kinds, this plant has a normalizing, broad-spectrum action that maintains homeostasis.

**Plant magick:**

- Symbol of Hindu religious traditions

**Medicinal uses:**

- Comrade to worn out adrenals, chronic fatigue, low energy
- Balancing + soothing to the nerves



- Worshiped as the avatar of the goddess Lakshmi, associated with wealth + purity
- Open the heart to love and compassion
- Strengthening faith + clarity throughout the heart
- Allows us to be in tune with our inner self + inner truth
- Offers whole body spiritual cleansing
- Provides mental clarity + instills mental ease
- Affinity for the solar plexus through the crown chakra
- Attracts bees + butterflies
- Enhances physical, mental + spiritual endurance
- Improves the body's immunity by clearing infections + strengthening the body's response to illness
- Increases assimilation of oxygen, which allows for regular body functions + decreasing survival responses (fight, flight, freeze)
- Increases blood circulation
- Promotes stagnant digestion, treats stomach spasms, diarrhea, dysentery + kidney stones
- Supportive for respiratory conditions
- Supportive to skin imbalances, especially those experiencing irritation + inflammations [externally + internally]
- Supportive to headaches
- Treatment for a range of conditions including anxiety, cough, asthma, fever, arthritis, eye diseases, otalgia, indigestion, hiccups, vomiting, gastric, cardiac + genitourinary disorders, back pain, skin diseases, ringworm, insect, snake + scorpion bites + malaria
- Said to slow the aging process
- Helps prevent and treat cancer, heart disease, arthritis, diabetes + dementia
- In Ayurvedic medicine, tulsi an anti-fertility, balancing estrogen + effective for bringing on lactation

Form: smelling fresh, steam, spirit, dried flowers + leaves, spirit bath

**+contraindication:**

*\*avoid using copious amount in a short period of time, may cause digestive distress*

*\*\*pregnant or breastfeeding people may want to veer away from this ancestor to stay on the safe side as they can be overly stimulating to the adrenals + blood flow*

*\*\*\*people who will undergo surgery should also avoid taking holy basil consistently or frequently at least two weeks before their scheduled operation, as it may hinder proper blood clotting during or after the surgery and cause bleeding*

**Recipes + Comrades**

trauma aid: st john's wort, peach leaf, california poppy, rose, motherwort

mind boosting: rosemary, ginkgo, gotu kola, ashwagandha

immune boosting: black pepper, turmeric, elderberry, mints, evergreens

**Preparation:**

- tea, infusion, tincture, glycerite, elixir, honey-infusion, capsules

**Recommended dosage:**

- 1 dropperfuls 3x for acute conditions



Photos of the plant ancestor:

