

Clary Sage Oil: The Gentler Sage Oil

A close relative of the common garden sage, the clary sage is a perennial herb that grows from May to September. When converted into an essential oil, clary sage provides outstanding benefits for your eyes, nervous system, digestion, and kidneys. Although it doesn't come cheap, it's still worth using due to its many positive health effects.

What Is Clary Sage Oil?

Clary sage oil is extracted from the clary sage herb (*Salvia sclarea*), which in the past was found in Southern France, Italy, and Syria, but today is cultivated worldwide – mostly within European regions, including Central Europe, as well as England, Morocco, Russia, and the United States.

Clary sage gets its name from the Latin word “*clarus*,” which means “clear.” It is referred to as “clear eyes” during the Middle Ages.

Clary sage oil is often used to improve vision and address related conditions, such as tired or strained eyes. The clary sage seeds are known among Germans as “muscatel sage,” due to their use as a flavor enhancer for muscatel wine.

Uses of Clary Sage Oil

Clary oil essential oil is added to soaps, detergents, creams, lotions, and perfumes. In fact, it is the main component of Eau de Cologne.

Apart from treating eye health-related problems, clary sage oil is also used to calm the nervous system, especially during times of stress, depression, and insomnia. If you're new to aromatherapy, I suggest trying out clary sage oil to experience its anxiety-fighting effects.

Clary sage oil also can help address menstrual issues (cramps and hot flashes), promote relaxation during childbirth, and ease menopause symptoms.¹

Other functions of clary sage oil include:^{2 3 4}

- **Aphrodisiac** – This is another well-known use of clary sage oil. It boosts libido and may improve sexual performance. It can even help treat psychological problems related to loss of [libido](#) and impotence.
- **Painkiller** – Clary sage essential oil can help relieve headaches, back pain, muscle stiffness, and cramps.
- **Antiseptic** – Oil of clary sage can be used to cleanse wounds and may help protect the body during surgery and against other infections.
- **Blood pressure regulator** – It can help reduce blood pressure by relaxing the arteries, and may decrease your risk of heart problems.
- **Hair treatment** – Clary sage is believed to stimulate hair growth. The essential oil can also limit the sebum produced in scalp and treat dandruff.
- **Skin health promoter** – Clary sage oil regulates oil production and reduces inflammation that contributes to dermatitis.

- **Ingredient in herbal products** – It is found in many herbal personal care products like facial cleansers.
- **Ingredient in liqueur and food products** – Clary sage oil is added to muscatel wine and wine essences. It is also used a natural additive in food products like frozen dairy desserts, baked goods, condiments, and non-alcoholic beverages.

Composition of Clary Sage Oil

Clary sage oil is produced in several countries and may have therefore varying chemical compositions. However, it is known to have high concentrations of esters (about 72 percent), such as linalyl acetate, which has antispasmodic and sedative properties.

Oil of clary sage also contains alcohols (about 14 percent) and sesquiterpenes (up to three percent).⁵ The diterpene sclareol and sesquiterpene caryophyllene, compounds that have antimicrobial activities, are also found in the essential oil.

Benefits of Clary Sage Oil

Regular sage oil (*Salvia officinalis*) and clary sage oil possess similar therapeutic properties, but the former is often associated with adverse reactions.

Aromatherapists prefer clary sage oil, and consider it safer.

Clary sage essential oil can help fight bacteria that may thrive in your digestive system, urinary tract, and excretory system. It exhibits moderate antibacterial activity against various strains of bacteria like the *Listeria monocytogenes*, *Staphylococcus aureus*, *Klebsiella*, and *Proteus mirabilis* species,⁶ and potent antifungal activity against strains of *Candida*,⁷ *Aspergillus*, *Penicillium*, and *Fusarium* species.⁸

This essential oil can be particularly helpful for women because of its hormone-like components. In Europe, clary sage oil is employed to ease menopausal discomfort, menstrual pain, and regulate menstrual cycles. Due to its esters, it can help relax muscular spasms and pains that may arise from stress and nervous tension.⁹

The oil from the clary sage plant can also provide the following benefits to your health:

- Helps treat symptoms of chronic fatigue syndrome
- Regulates blood pressure
- Relaxes the bronchial tubes of asthma sufferers
- Helps treat respiratory ailments like colds, bronchitis, and sore throat
- Supports healthy digestion
- Addresses acne and oil skin
- Reduces [inflammation](#) and certain types of dermatitis
- Improves memory and stimulates mental activity

How to Make Clary Sage Oil

To produce the essential oil, clary sage herbs undergo steam distillation, and this process yields a colorless or pale yellowish-green oil, with a sweet, nutty, and balsamic aroma. The composition of the oil may differ depending on what species of *Salvia* is used for the extraction.

How Does Clary Sage Oil Work?

Clary sage oil can be used topically and inhaled. It can also be ingested, as the US Food and Drug Administration classifies it as generally safe for human consumption (GRAS) and approves it as an additive for foods.¹⁰ Below are some specific ways to enjoy clary sage oil benefits:

- **To soothe eye problems**, soak a clean cloth in a mixture of warm water and a few drops of clary sage oil. Afterward, press over both eyes for 10 minutes.
- **Relieve anxiety and emotional tension** by inhaling clary sage oil. Add a few drops to diffusers and burners.
- **Use the oil as a massage oil and rub on painful areas.** This can also be used on women suffering from menstrual pains.
- **Add a few drops to your bath water** to address pain and stress.
- **Apply topically as a moisturizer** to regulate the production of sebum on your skin.

Is Clary Sage Oil Safe?

As with other essential oils, clary sage oil should be diluted with a carrier oil like coconut oil and olive oil. Always make sure that you only use therapeutic grade essential oils, and consult a physician or an experienced aromatherapist before using the product internally.

In spite of clary sage's benefits, it should never be used if you're [consuming alcohol](#) or taking any narcotics. People with low blood pressure should also avoid using this herbal oil because of its hypotensive effects.

With its powerful sedative properties, clary sage oil can enhance the intoxicating and narcotic effects of alcohol and drugs.

Due to its estrogenic nature, clary sage essential oil may have a negative impact on people who need to regulate their estrogen levels. It is important for people with estrogen-induced conditions to avoid using it, and seek the advice of a healthcare professional.¹¹

While clary sage may have a beneficial effect for childbirth, it should be avoided by women during pregnancy because it stimulates menstrual flow. Infants and young children should also be kept away from essential oils due to their highly sensitive skin.

Clary Sage Oil Side Effects

To test if you have any sensitizations to oil of clary sage, I suggest applying a drop of it on a small portion of your skin and observe for any adverse reactions for 24 hours. You may also do a skin patch test.

If you're fit for use, control use of the oil, as large quantities can cause headaches and drowsiness. Some people experience euphoria upon use, which hinder their concentration. In some individuals, the effects of clary sage oil are comparable to those of cannabis. According to them, they end up feeling drugged when used in aromatherapy massage.

Never use clary sage oil directly on your eyes. Avoid ingesting or applying undiluted oils on your skin without the supervision of a qualified aromatherapist. Apart from consulting a knowledgeable professional, do your research prior to using clary sage oil as well as other essential oils.