

WORLD CARROT MUSEUM © 2010

Extract from *Herbal Simples Approved for Modern Uses of Cure* by William Thomas Fernie (1897)

Our garden Carrot, or Dauke, is a cultivated variety of the *Dalucus sylvestris*, or wild carrot, an umbelliferous plant, which groweth of itself in untoiled places, and is called "philtron", because it serveth for love matters. This wild Carrot may be found abundantly in our fields and on the sea shore; the term Carrot being Celtic, and signifying "red of colour," or perhaps derived from caro, flesh, because this is a fleshy vegetable. *Daucus* is from the Greek "daio", to burn, on account of the pungent and stimulating qualities. It is common also on our roadsides, being popularly known as "Bee's nest," because the stems of its flowering head, or umbel, form a concave semi-circle, or nest, which bees, when belated from the hive will use as a dormitory.

The small purple flower which grows in the middle of the umbel has been found beneficial for the cure of epilepsy. The juice of the Carrot contains "carotine" in red crystals; also pectin, albumen, and a particular volatile oil, on which the medicinal properties of the root depend. The seeds are warm and aromatic to the taste, whilst they are slightly diuretic. A tea made from the whole plant, and taken each night and morning, is excellent when the lithic acid, or gouty disposition prevails, with the deposit of a brick-dust sediment in the urine on its becoming cool.

The chief virtues of Carrots lie in the strong antiseptic qualities they possess, which prevent all putrescent changes within the body. In Suffolk they were given long since as a secret specific for preserving and restoring the wind of horses, but cows if fed long on them will make bloody urine. Wild Carrots are superior medicinally to those of the cultivated kind. Carrot sugar got from the inspissated juice of the roots may be used at table, and is good for the coughs of consumptive children.

The seeds of the wild Carrot were formerly esteemed as a specific remedy for jaundice; and in Savoy the peasants now give an infusion of the roots for the same purpose; whilst this infusion has served to prevent stone in the bladder throughout several years when the patient had been previously subject to frequent attacks.

Carrots boiled sufficiently, and mashed into a pulp, when applied directly to a putrid, indolent sore, will sweeten and heal it. The Carrot poultice was first used by Sulzer for mitigating the pain, and correcting the stench of foul ulcers. Raw scraped Carrot is an excellent plaster for chapped nipples. At Vichy, where derangements of the liver and of the biliary digestion are particularly treated,

Carrots in one or another form are served at every meal, whether in soup, or as a vegetable; and considerable efficacy of cure is attributed to them. In the time of Parkinson (1640) the leaves of the Carrot were thought to be so ornamental that ladies wore them as a head-dress instead of feathers.

A good British wine may be brewed from the roots of the Carrot; and very tolerable bread may be prepared for travellers from these roots when dried and powdered. Pectic acid can be extracted by the chemist from Carrots, which will solidify plain sugared water into a wholesome appetising jelly. One part of this pectic acid dissolved in a little hot water, and added to make three hundred parts of warm water, is soon converted into a mass of trembling jelly.

The yellow core of the Carrot is the part which is difficult of digestion with some persons, not the outer red layer. Before the French Revolution the sale of Carrots and oranges was prohibited in the Dutch markets, because of the unpopular aristocratic colour of these commodities. In one thousand parts of a Carrot there are ninety-five of sugar, and (according to some chemists) only three of starch.

In country districts raw Carrots are sometimes given to children for expelling worms, probably because the vegetable matter passes mechanically through the body unchanged, and scours it.

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