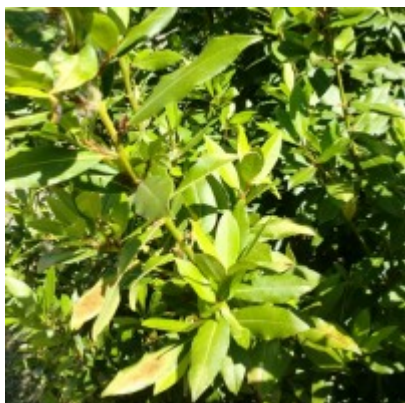


# Bay laurel

*Laurus nobilis*



The laurel is an evergreen tree that reaches up to 10 meters high.

Their flowers are pale yellow- green with about 1 cm in diameter and are supported in pairs next to the leaves. The leaves have 6-12 cm long and 2-4 cm wide, with a smooth edge, however, some have curl edge.

The fruit is a small bright and black berry with about 1cm and contains a seed.

More info: [https://www.amu.bio/\\_bay\\_laurel](https://www.amu.bio/_bay_laurel)

## Cultivation

The most common mode of propagation is by sowing (sowing the seeds once they are mature).

The tree should be protected in winter. They should be planted in their permanent positions in mild temperatures and humidity.

You can also do its propagation by cuttings: can cut up branches semi-lignified in July / August, it is recommended to wait 6 months before moving them from place.

It may also be cut to mature lateral branches, about 10cm, which have one node in November / December (high success rate).

You can also propagate this species by layering.

## History

Since ancient times the bay laurel is used as a symbol of nobility and immortality in different cultures.

In the Middle Ages it was considered a protective plant and inducing visions. The Sibyl of Delphi in Ancient Greece was sitting under a ceiling bay leaves munching them to just go into a trance state. In some areas of the city of Rome during the Black Death, it was recommended that citizens take refuge among the laurels to protect themselves.

Their symbolic value is peace and victory and, according to some legends, the laurel was the only tree that lightning did not reach.

Nike or Nice goddess, from the Greek word "victory" was always represented with a laurel wreath on hand to put on the head of heroes, fighters, writers and poets winners of literary competitions.

This tree also represented Aesculapius, the god of medicine that had him as protector and holder of medicinal properties.

Subsequent studies have demonstrated that camphor aroma of the essential oils contained in the leaves may be effective against fleas, cockroaches, and moths.

## **Utilization**

The laurel is mainly used for culinary and medicinal purposes (stomach tonic, carminative, regulating the menstrual cycle, rheumatism, etc.).

The leaves can be used green or dried, but should not be used more than a year after harvest, as they lose their flavor.

Laurel stimulates appetite and is one of the most used herbs in the world of culinary. The leaves exert a very positive effect similar to that of spearmint (*mentha spicata*), and rosemary (*Rosmarinus officinalis*), helping to digest heavy food, especially meat.

There are several theories of how to use the laurel in cooking. Some say it must extract the mid vein, other one say that it should use only the leaves when dried. The truth is that the very dry leaves lose much of its flavor.

It is important to add the laurel at the beginning of cooking and remove it only when you serve the dish, eating it can cause disturbances stomach or gut level, because the leaves can remain intact in the intestine by blocking it.

It is also advisable to keep the leaves out of the reach of children.

Also common is their ornamental use. Since ancient times that it is used to distinguish the



individual merits through the allocation of laurel wreaths to the winning athletes and the winners poets, as well as a bachelor's degree, which reflects the custom (baccalauréat - awarded the "laurel berry" , Bacca Laureat).