

Wellness at GRASSROOT

A legendary armour, lemongrass helps to cure many ailments. Due to its fresh aroma, it is fast becoming popular in spas all over the world. Following is a track of its powers and how to incorporate lemongrass in your beauty and health regime.

By: Soumya Jain



According to a legend, ancient Malaysian tribes had great faith in lemongrass. Before going for a fight, they would coat themselves with lemongrass balm which would prevent a sword from entering their skin. While this wonderful property of lemongrass can't be tested now, we can definitely use it against other dangers. *Cymbopogon Citratus*, or lemongrass, is a genus of about 55 species of grasses, native to warm temperature and tropical region.

Lemongrass has a citrus flavour. It is a tall and perennial grass which can be dried, powdered, or used fresh. It grows to be 150 cms tall, with fine leaves and a small bulbous base. The stalk is too hard to be eaten the way it is. It is usually sliced and added to recipes, especially in Asian cooking. The world is fast realising its extraordinary properties.

COMPONENT CHECK

Lemongrass is rich in geraniol and citral. It has a pleasant lemony fragrance and has anti-microbial, anti-pyretic, anti-oxidant and anti-fungal properties. Also known as the Sweet Rush or Fever Grass in the Caribbean, lemongrass can be used as a remedy for cold and fever.

Lemongrass when cold pressed, releases oil from the juice sacs in its stalk. This oil has a lemony aroma. Lemongrass has various therapeutic benefits, however, the method of consumption of lemongrass defines the changes it can bring to your health and beauty.

LEMONGRASS HAS VARIOUS THERAPEUTIC BENEFITS.

SPRINKLE IT DAILY

Lemongrass oil is widely used in beauty and cosmetic industry. Dr. Ishi Khosla, Delhi based nutritionist enumerates its benefits, "It is good for skin and hair. It is an effective skin toner with astringent properties and makes a good deodorant. It is useful for curbing excessive perspiration and sweaty feet." It can also be used to treat ringworm, lice, athletes' foot, arthritis and scabies.

Lemongrass oil refreshes the body and is known to ease stress related problems. It is used to balance overactive oil glands, eliminate dandruff, and treat similar skin problems. As a vapouriser, lemongrass helps to ward off airborne bacteria and relieve conditions of cold and flu.

Aishwarya Ranjan, Nutritionist, summarises that both lemongrass oil and the leaves are used as analgesic, anti-depressant, carminative, and diuretic.

Lemongrass Tea

Aishwarya further explains that lemongrass tea aids digestion, alleviates bloating, and improves mood due to its lemony taste. It also helps in flushing out toxins, preservatives, chemicals, and fatty acids from the body.

It is considered beneficial to follow up lunch or dinner with a cup of lemongrass tea to keep you feeling light and fresh.

Daily recipe

Lemongrass can be chopped and used in your daily food. Dr. Khosla explains, "Seereh powder (ground lemon grass) plays perfect partner to coconut milk, particularly for seafood, fish and chicken. It can be used in marinates, stir fries, curries, salads and pickles."

FIT FOR SPA

The use of lemongrass is becoming increasingly popular in spas. Many spas



SPA TREATMENTS

Lemongrass and Ginger Salt Scrub

Salt scrubs assist in the removal of impurities, dull surface cells and rough textured skin. The treatment improves blood circulation, as well as the vitality and elasticity of the skin. It contains natural sea salt infused with 100 per cent pure essential oils of lemon grass and ginger. The massage is good for uplifting the spirits and warming the body.

Courtesy: Ananda in the Himalayas, India

Lemongrass and Apricot Body Exfoliation

This 45 minutes scrub incorporates the detoxifying benefits of lemongrass and cleansing properties of apricot to improve circulation and speed up the process of detoxification. The skin is purified and becomes soft and radiant.

Courtesy: i.sawan Residential Spa&Club, Grand Hyatt Erawan Bangkok

Organic Lilikoi Lemongrass treatment

This luxuriously hydrating escape is inspired by luscious lilikoi (passionfruit). Beginning with a coconut foot bath and a deluxe scalp massage with a deep conditioning avocado-coconut cream hair mask, your body is polished to perfection with Kauai salts infused with organic lilikoi and lemongrass. After a rinse in a lava rock shower, a luscious massage of rich mango butter relaxes muscles while coating the body in moisture.

Courtesy: Anara Spa, Grand Hyatt Kauai Resort and Spa, Hawaii.



Pic Courtesy: Anara Spa, Grand Hyatt Kauai Resort and Spa, Hawaii.



serve lemongrass tea as a welcome drink to soothe the client before she or he is taken for a treatment. Lemongrass is also used in aromatherapy due to its light and fresh smell.

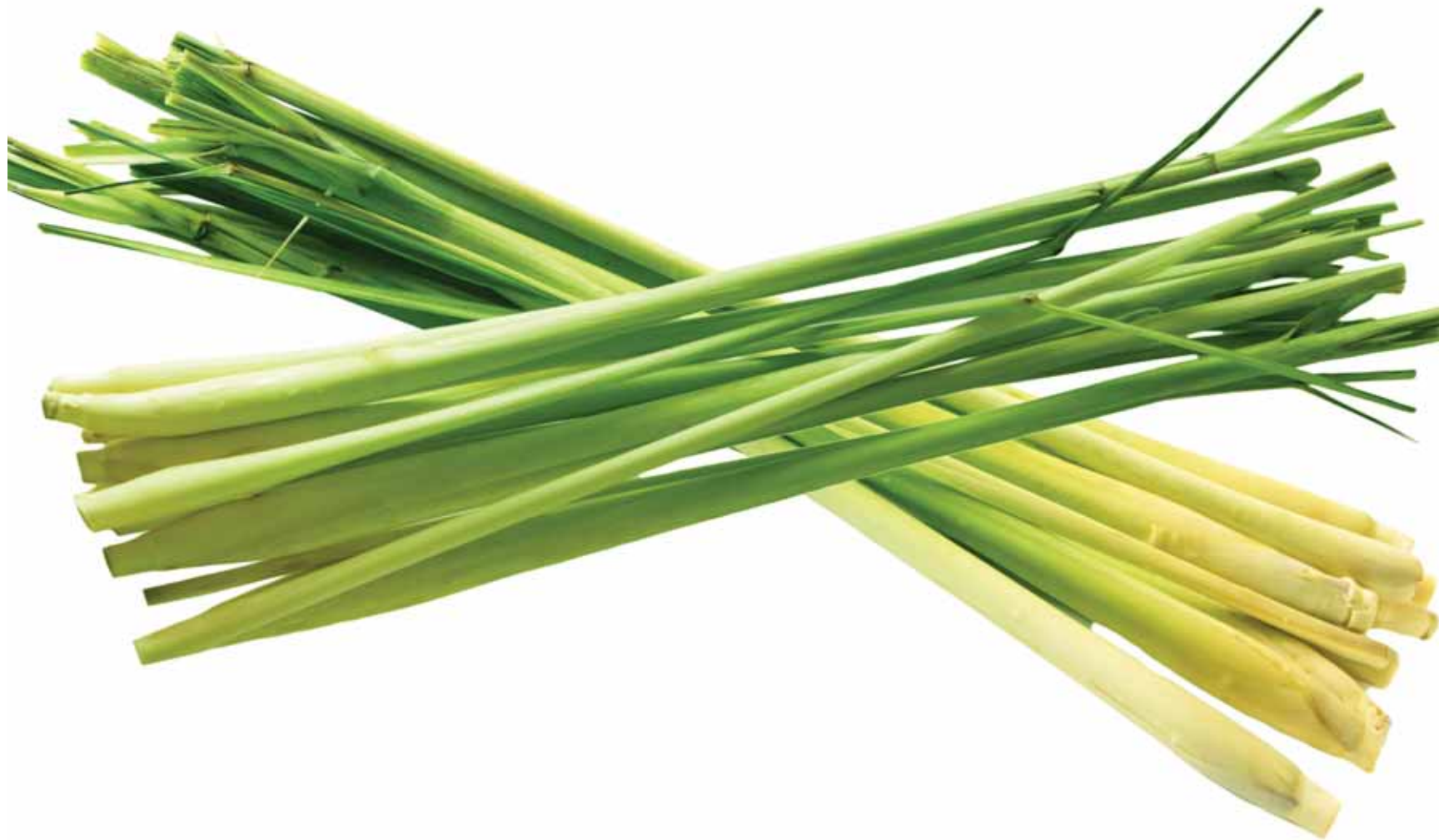
Spas use lemongrass in their jet-lag therapies since it makes the muscles supple and the scent is much welcome to a weary traveller.

Lemongrass is one of the main components of traditional Thai herbal compress, where a mixture of dried herbs are tied up in terrycloth and used to massage the body. Herbs heated with steam can work wonders for the body providing a sense of well-being.

A WORD OF CAUTION

Aishwarya, however, is quick to add that always follow a nutritionist's advice before

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BEAUTY BYTE

- Good for skin and hair.
- Effective skin toner with astringent properties.
- Makes a good deodorant.
- Used to treat ringworm, lice, athlete's foot, scabies, and so on.
- Eases stress related problems.
- Flushes out toxins, preservatives, fatty acids and chemicals from the body.
- Aids digestion

using lemongrass as oil or tea, since lemongrass can cause some allergies too. It is advisable to consult a doctor, who is a specialist in alternative medicine. So start using lemongrass as your shield against skin diseases, hair problems, and digestion woes while basking in its lemony and fresh smell.

KITCHEN SECRETS

Lemongrass Tea

Ingredients:

- 1 tsp. lemongrass
- 1 cup boiling water

Method

The standard way to make an infusion, unless otherwise specified, is to pour a cup of boiling water over the material (dried powder or fresh leaves) to be infused, let it stand for 5 minutes, strain it, and drink it. Sweeten with honey if needed. A dash of lemon may also enhance the taste.

Lemongrass Marinade

Ingredients:

- 3 fresh lemongrass stalks, chopped
- 2 tbsp. finely chopped green onion (include white)
- 1 tbsp. minced garlic
- 1 tsp. dried hot pepper flakes
- 1 tbsp. soy sauce
- 1 tbsp. sugar
- 4 1/2 tsp. fish sauce
- 1 1/2 tsp. kosher salt

Method

Mix together and marinate 2-4 pounds of chicken. Marinate 4 hours or overnight. Grill or broil until done. You can also use a cut up chicken and roast it in a roasting pan. 🌿