

Lamb's Ear

(*Stachys byzantine*)



Season: Spring – Hardy Perennial

Sun Exposure: Full Sun

Size: 2 ft tall and 2 ft wide

Blooms: Produces spikes of tall flowers that come in shades of pink/purple or white, in the late spring or early summer.

Maintenance Category: Low, very easy to grow in well-drained soil, but dies off during the hot summer months. The plant comes back when cooler temperatures return. Lamb's Ears spreading nature makes them good candidates for frequent (2–4 years) division and transplant very easily.

Highlights: It has fuzzy, silvery soft green leaves. Its soft, silvery color is a striking addition to any garden. Lamb's Ears are favored for their foliage, rather than their flowers—though some gardeners find the flower spikes charming—but one can cut off the flowers to encourage more foliage. Bees love the fragrant flowers.

How to Use: Predominately used as an ornamental, large Lamb's Ear leaves were used during the Civil War for bandages and could still be used today as a natural bandage for its antibacterial and absorbent properties. Culinary: In Brazil, the leaves are battered and deep-fried and called *Peixinho-da-horta*, or “little garden fish,” as they are said to have a fish-like flavor. Harvest young and tender leaves (before they get bitter) for salads and teas.