

September 2021

Monk's pepper - *Vitex agnus castus*

Monk's pepper of the verbenaceae family is a perennial, upright growing shrub with tetragonal, finely haired branches. It has palmately divided, aromatic leaves with narrow leaf segments. The flowers grow in dense panicles, flowering time is from July to September. The possible colours of the flowers are purple, pink or white, depending on the variety. The flowers themselves are faintly scented and attract - as an important nutritional source - many bees and insects in late summer. The fruits are 2 -3 mm in size and spherical. The shrub reaches a height of up to 400 cm.

The chaste tree, as Monk's pepper is also called colloquially, is a medicinal plant, the ingredients are mainly iridoid glycosides, flavonoids, essential oils and diterpenes.

Originally native to the Mediterranean, today it can also be found - partly protected against harsh climate - in our latitudes. This very decorative plant prefers nutrient-rich soils in its habitat. While tolerating full exposure to sunshine sufficient watersupply during dry conditions is important. Its magnificent leaf colouration is an adornment in autumn. Also its combatible with pruning.

