



Cistus

Also known as: Labdanum, ladanum, & gum rock rose

Botanical Name : Cistus ladaniferus

Family: Cistaceae

Country of Origin: Morocco-but also from Spain, Portugal, and Southern France.

Safety: No Known Safety for Use. Disposal in Earth, not Water

Blending Note: Base

Aroma Strength: Medium

Colour: Pale Yellow to Amber

Shelf Life: Approximately 4–6 years when stored in a cool, dark location.

Scent description and general uses: Cistus is a hardy evergreen shrub native to the Mediterranean region. Its leaves are naturally coated with aromatic labdanum resin, which protects the plant from the harsh, dry climate. The essential oil has a deep, warm, resinous, balsamic aroma with subtle leathery notes. Traditionally, it has been valued in skincare preparations and respiratory wellness and remains a favorite in aromatherapy for emotional grounding and mature skin care.

Blends With: Lavender, Chamomile, Helichrysum, Sandalwood, Myrrh, Cedarwood, Marjoram, Tangerine, Jasmine, Rose, Patchouli, Frankincense

Indepth Profile

Extraction: Steam distilled from the leaves and young twigs.

Chemistry: Primary Constituents: Monoterpenes, Sesquiterpenes and Esters (composition varies by growing region and distillation).

Many *Cistus* species are classified as **pyrophytes**, meaning they have adapted to fire as part of their natural life cycle. Their volatile aromatic oils make the plants highly flammable, while their seeds are remarkably fire-resistant. After a wildfire, the seeds germinate readily in the nutrient-rich soil with reduced competition, allowing new plants to establish quickly and continue the species' life cycle.

Approved Claims and benefits from Health Canada Recommendations:

Safety: No specific hazards are known when used as directed.



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Herbal Folk and Traditions:

History:

Cistus ladanifer (Rockrose) is a hardy evergreen shrub native to the Mediterranean region, particularly Spain, Portugal, Morocco, and southern France. For thousands of years, it has been valued for its fragrant resin, **labdanum**, which naturally coats the leaves and stems. Ancient Egyptians, Greeks, and Romans prized labdanum as a perfume ingredient, incense, ceremonial offering, and as an ingredient in skin ointments and preparations. The ancient Greeks referred to the resin as *Ladanas* or *Ladanon*, from which the essential oil derives its name. Along with frankincense, myrrh, cedarwood, and benzoin, cistus was regarded as one of the sacred aromatic resins of the ancient world. In biblical tradition, it is believed to have been included among the aromatic ingredients used in the holy anointing oils associated with the consecration of kings, symbolizing strength, determination, and divine purpose.

Traditionally, cistus was valued for supporting wound care, minor skin injuries, and respiratory wellness. Herbal practitioners appreciated its cleansing, protective, and astringent qualities, while its warm, balsamic aroma made it a treasured ingredient in perfumes, incense, and religious ceremonies. Today, Cistus essential oil continues to be highly regarded in aromatherapy for its rich, grounding fragrance and is commonly incorporated into skincare preparations, emotional wellness blends, and formulations designed to support healthy-looking skin.

Traditionally used in herbal medicine for the following issues:

Traditional Aromatherapy Properties:

Astringent, Cicatrizant (traditionally used to support scar tissue), Grounding, Calming, Balancing, Cleansing, Restorative



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Uses:

Emotional: Emotional trauma, grief, grounding, resilience, meditation

Circulation: Minor bleeding, bruising, varicose veins, poor circulation

Immune: General immune support, seasonal wellness, recovery following illness

Muscles and Joints: Minor inflammation, muscular discomfort

Nervous: Emotional shock, grief, stress, anxiety, meditation, grounding

Respiratory: Colds, coughs, congestion, sore throat, bronchitis

Skin: Cuts, wounds, scars, mature skin, wrinkles, cracked skin, eczema, minor burns, skin repair, broken capillaries

General Safety and usage information:

Do not take internally. Do not use undiluted (NEAT) on the skin. Check individual safety information for any and all combinations when blending or using blended products. Check essential oils and medications that individuals are currently using for contraindications. Keep out of reach of children. Use caution with all animals. Do not use topically on cats.

Essential oil and water do not mix. You must blend a dispersant with the essential oil before adding to water (including when using in baths). Keep away from flame.