

Medicinal aloe

Aloe vera

Aloe barbadenses

Family: Aloaceae

Plant Description: An evergreen succulent. Clusters of rosettes are formed by upright fleshy, gray-green, flexible leaves. Some may be solid green and others have light spotting. Teeth occur along leaf margin.

- * Reddish tone when in direct sunlight. This process occurs when extreme sunlight triggers a buildup of the chemical **rhodoxanthin** in the **chloroplast**, in place of **chlorophyll** which causes the change in color from green to red. Rhodoxanthin appears to absorb light which could otherwise cause molecular damage to the aloe.



See below for additional photos

Bloom Description: Flowers are yellow. It blooms in spring and early summer. Has a 3 - 5 foot tall, upright panicle.

Cultural information/Uses/Human Interaction: It is very hard to track the aloe vera species as it has been in cultivation for over two millennia, so its original native occurrence is not known. The name was changed to *A. barbadensis* and then back to *A. vera*. In 1768 both names were applied in two different publications, two weeks apart. There had been disagreement over the renaming of this species in latter publications, prompting the return to the original *A. vera* name.

Extensive medicinal use has been attributed to *A. Vera*. It is documented throughout the world and is related to many cultural figures. More cultural information is available for this genus on the [Aloe Genus Fact Sheet](#).

Distribution/Range: It is currently cultivated worldwide.

Habitat: Can survive in a variety of habitats and highly adaptable in Mediterranean and arid regions.

Requirements: Full sun is required along coast and light shade inland. Needs occasional summer watering, but handles drought and is hardy to 28° F.

Propagation: Can be propagated from off-shoots that grow at the base of the plant, and from

seeds when available.

Wildlife: Pollinated by bees, hummingbirds, ants.

Disease/Pathology: At risk from snout weevil, scale and rust, with stressed plants most susceptible.

Status: X

Resources:

Rodale's Encyclopedia of Herbs
International Plant Names Index
Royal Society of Chemistry



Yellow blooming bud Honey bee pollinator Yellow bloom stalk

