ARROWSA

Vegetable and Cultural Garden

Medicinal and Wellness Properties of Indigenous Plants and Herbs of South Africa
**Basil**

*Ocimum basilicum*

We use the fragrant herb basil in our pasta and tomato dishes. The perennial basil grows all year round in Durban, South Africa and is loved by the bees.

Basil includes antioxidants, vitamins and minerals and is also an anti-inflammatory.

**Bay Leaf Tree**

*Laurus nobilis*

We associate bay leaves with stews and curries therefore with cross-cultural cooking.

Bay leaves are rich in Vitamin A, C and include iron, potassium, calcium and magnesium. The leaves aid digestion by calming the digestive system and making tea from them is not only aromatic but also calming.
**Iboza (Incense Bush)**

*Tetradenia riparia*

Iboza is a shrub that is indigenous to South Africa and important in the culture of the AmaZulu. It grows beautiful, long mauve flowers that have a strong scent that is very attractive to bees.

Iboza leaves are used to treat respiratory and stomach problems as well as malaria and the perfume is smelt to cure headaches.

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**Lemon Tree**

*Citrus limon*

We associate lemons with food from Europe and therefore we planted a tree to represent the descendants from there in our community.

The health benefits of lemons are that they are high in Vitamin C and assist digestion.
Marigolds

*Calendula officinalis*

We planted the bright yellow and orange marigolds in our garden as they represent those of us who are of the Hindu faith, especially as they are used for weddings – representing the sun and brightness. They also protect the vegetables from nunus (insects) and diseases, as well as adding colour to our garden.

Marigold flowers may be used in ointments and teas and have both anti-inflammatory and anti-fungal properties.

Nasturtiums (kappertjies)

*Tropaeolum majus*

We planted nasturtiums amongst our vegetables to attract the aphids and to brighten the garden. The nasturtium leaves and flowers are eaten by some of our communities in salads or with tomato and cheese on sandwiches.

The medicinal properties of the nasturtium leaves include Vitamin C and iron and help the body fight infection such as urinary tract infection, sinusitis and bronchitis.
**Suurvye (Sour Figs)**

*Carpobrotus edulis*

The Suurvye/Ghaukum is a succulent found along the coast of South Africa and is often planted to bind the soil, as ground cover or as a fire barrier. We included it to represent the Khoisan people and their descendants.

The fig is eaten when ripe or pickled or made into a jam. The leaf tip of the Suurvye is antiseptic and can be eaten to relieve sore-throat or mouth infections. The sap from the leaves can also be used to relieve sunburn or any type of itching whether caused by nappy rash or blue bottle stings. The leaf sap can also be mixed with water to treat stomach complaints.

**Spekboom**

*Portulacaria Afra*

Spekboom is a succulent plant that helps to remove carbon dioxide from the atmosphere by acting like a carbon sponge, improving the quality of air we breathe. We chose this indigenous bush because our Phone Call to the World project is focused on the voices of the Indigenous people and this plant addresses many issues of climate change.

Spekboom is edible and high in nutrients, especially Vitamin C, and a perfect addition to a salad. It is a firm favourite in the animal kingdom. Filled with moisture, it can even treat exhaustion and dehydration.
Umdoni Tree (Waterberry)

*Syzgium cordatum*

We planted the Umdoni tree to represent the AmaZulu people. The tree is found near water – streams, rivers or marshy areas.

The bark is used by Indigenous people to treat a number of ailments, from headaches and wounds to stomach problems.