

How to take of indigo plants

It begins to plant seeds in late February putting 7-10 seeds in a pot keeping the soil wet.

After plants grow about 10 cm high they must be separated and moved in a bigger pot or to the soil.

At the end of June the leaves can be picked. During August should be watered every day. The plants they need a lot of water.

In late September, indigo begins to bloom and produces seeds. We continue to pick leaves until October.

The seeds are ready to be picked in Novembre when the flowers are dry.

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藍 /AI (Japanese Indigo / *Persicaria tinctoria*)

Persicaria Tinctoria is a species of *Persicaria* of the *Polygonaceae* family. It is an annual plant. It is called "Japanese Indigo, (" AI "in Japanese). It is a plant of Asian and Eastern European origin. The leaves have been used for dyeing since ancient times. It exists from the Zhou dynasty (c. 1045–771 B.C.), and was introduced to Japan in the sixth century.

It has been a fundamental plant for dyeing fabrics since the beginning of the Meiji period, but after the Meiji Reform (1868), the amount of *Indigofera Tinctoria* (Indian indigo), and chemical dye began, thus significantly reducing the use of *Persicaria Tinctoria*.



Ways of the extract the colore

Fresh indigo dye

Prepare 90g of indigo leaves and 3L of water. The proportion between water and leaves is 30g for each liter of water.

Blend the leaves adding a glass of water.

Filter the leaves by putting them in a filter bag and squeeze it so that the colors come out well.

Dip the wet silk fabric and let it rest for about 20 minutes.

After 20 minutes, remove it and squeeze it well.

After a rinse, remove the tools and rinse it with soap.

(only silk)

The extraction of pigments

Collect 1kg of the Indigo leaves.

Pour 10L of hot water (about 40 ° C) and leave for 3 days (72 hours) under the hot summer sun. After 72 hours, when the water becomes bright green, remove the leaves.

Add 8-10g of slaked lime and measure the PH.

Must be around PH11.

Blend the color for about one hour. Keep blending until the blue foam does run out.

Leave to rest for one night, and remove the upper water. So "the pesto" of color will be ready. The pesto must be dried to be preserved.

The use of pigments

Hydrosulphite vat

Prepare 15-20 g of powder and make dissolve with boiled water in the bowl.

Add 1/2 teaspoon of caustic soda and 1/2 of hydrosulphite and mix well. Wrap them and leave to rest for about 30 min.

Prepare 5L of water in the bucket and add a teaspoon of caustic soda. So the water reaches PH11.

Pour the color into the bucket and add a teaspoon of hydrosulphite. So the color will be ready.

(cotton)

"Handle with care and with the necessary tools. Caustic soda is extremely dangerous."