

# Peru Balsam Resinoid Salvador

*Myroxylon pereirae* Klotzsch



**Balsamic**  
Vanilla like



Botanical family : Leguminaceae  
Method of culture : Wildcrafted controlled  
Part harvested : Gum

CAS TSCA : 8007-00-9  
INCI : Myroxylon balsamum pereirae balsam extract

## Specifications

Method for obtaining : Ethanolic extraction  
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Appearance : Dark brown to reddish brown viscous liquid  
Constituents : Benzyl benzoate and cinnamate, cinnamic acid

## Harvest period

J F M A M J J A S O N D



A native of El Salvador, this monumental tree stands 25 meters high and is predominantly found in the Cordillera del Balsamo, the mountain range in the northwest of the country. A member of the Leguminosae family, Balsam of Peru's botanical name is *Myroxylon pereirae*. In the wild, it grows at altitudes of 600 to 1,500 meters. Its common name comes from the colonial era, when the balsam was exported from Peru to Europe for its fragrance and medicinal qualities. When wounded, the tree's trunk and branches exude a thick, brown, fragrant resin via many secretory ducts, which heals its bark. The balsam is traditionally harvested in El Salvador from January to May in the dry season, and from May to September during the rainy season. The balsam collectors, called balsameros, climb to a height of more than 20 meters to incise the trunk, from where the precious fragrant liquid will run. To increase this exudation, the balsameros heat the incisions in the trunk using a torch. This acrobatic exercise is extremely perilous, especially during the rainy season. After a few weeks, the balsameros apply cloths to the incisions to absorb the balsam. The cloths saturated with resin are mixed with ground bark to be pressed and purified. The purified balsam then undergoes ethanol extraction to produce the resinoid. The extraction yield is excellent, at 84% purified balsam. Distillation of the balsam, which has a lower yield, produces the essential oil. Balsam of Peru is characterized by its balsamic and vanilla notes.

A Native American legend attributes wound-healing properties to the balsam. The story goes that the balsam flowed up from a battlefield where the blood of a Nahuatl princess had been spilled. Thus, the resin of this miraculous tree had the color of her noble blood and the power to heal wounds. In addition to its medicinal properties, it is also known for its rich aromatic qualities. The balsamic and vanilla notes of the balsam are a deliciously fragrant treat, while overtones of white flowers enrich the whole. Balsam of Peru brings a touch of sweetness to floral and oriental compositions.

Advised uses : Aromatherapy, Perfumery, Cosmetic, Alimentary



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Ed. 2019.10.16