

60320 Burgundy Resin (Pine resin)

Spruce resin (*Picea abies*), sold as "Burgundian resin" or "Burgundian pitch resin", used to be called incense and was still used as a cheap substitute for incense until the last century.

In old herbal books, it is reported that the spruce resin was placed in an anthill for some time for refinement, where it underwent a transformation process due to the formic acid.

The Irminsul (Irminsäule), a kind of shamanistic world tree, was a tree sanctuary of the Germanic tribes. It was a spruce and was dedicated to the god Poseidon, as spruce was used to make ship masts. In the Middle Ages, because of its fragrance, it was smoked in purification and disinfection incenses as a remedy against epidemics. Spruce resin has a germicidal effect and can thus disinfect indoor air. It has a stronger scent than fir resin, but lacks the fresh, often lemony note of fir resin. It gives off a strong, green, woody scent when smoked.

Pine resin has a strengthening, restorative and restorative effect, thereby promoting the recovery from illness. The smoke of the spruce resin served as protection against disturbing influences and helps to find inner peace, which facilitates meditation. The light yellow resin was much used in medieval medicine for the preparation of healing ointments and also for medicinal incenses. It helps with rashes and rheumatism. The shoots burn with its own typical smell of pine.

In folk medicine, a tea made from spruce shoots was considered a good, blood-purifying remedy. The shoots preserved in honey or sugar were used as spruce honey for coughs, bronchitis and colds. The well-known burgundy resin (*Picea burgundica*), sold in pharmacies for medicinal incense as late as the 20th century, is a yellow, crumbly resin also obtained from the resin of spruce by a melting process. It has a strong, green, woody odor. Burgundy resin has a strengthening and restorative effect.

The spruce belongs to the pine genus. It is a coniferous tree with square, omnidirectional, pointed needles. The cones are pendulous. In Europe, especially important is the common spruce (Norway spruce, *Picea excelsa*), which grows up to 50 meters high. Free-standing spruces are branched almost to the ground. The wood of the spruce is used as construction and other timber. Other spruce species include the omorica spruce (*Picea omorika*) from the Balkans and the blue spruce (*Picea pungens glauca*) from eastern North America, which is popular as an ornamental tree.

Spruces can be found in mixed forests or pure coniferous forests up to 2,000 meters altitude almost all over Europe, in southern Europe only in mountainous areas. Spruce resin can also be easily collected by oneself. As with all sticky resins, it is advisable to freeze the resin, as it is very easy to cut and portion when frozen and brittle. Spruce resin and burgundy resin develop a lot of dense smoke. Therefore, they are best suited for outdoor smoking. They mix well for incense with fir, pine, cedar, galbanum, benzoin, lavender, rosemary and others.

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