



CHELSEA CLASSICAL STUDIO

Fine Art Materials

Oil of Spike Lavender Solvent

What is Spike Oil?

Oil of Spike Lavender is a solvent distilled from the *Lavandula spica* variety of lavender. It is a strong enough solvent to fully dissolve resins and mix well with oils to make mediums.

The Lavender plant, known for centuries as aspic, spica or spike, has been used for medicine, perfumes, soaps, aromatherapy and other holistic uses.

For artists, Oil of Spike Lavender Solvent is considered a less-toxic alternative to turpentine. Though referred to as Oil of Spike Lavender, it is not an oil but a solvent with a distinctive smell often preferred to Turpentine.

Spike Oil compared to Turpentine

The usage of Oil of Spike Lavender and Turpentine are nearly identical. Both are used as thinners for oil paints and mediums, and to make varnishes like damar.

Known since at least the Renaissance, Oil of Spike Lavender was commonly used by such artists as the Van Eycks. In the 20th Century it was largely abandoned in favor of the less expensive turpentine, which has since become the most common painting solvent for artists.

Evidence and data suggest strongly that Oil of Spike Lavender does not cause chronic health effects such as those associated with the inhalation of fumes from Turpentine or mineral spirits.

Turpentine's health risks

But turpentine causes problems for many people, and is a skin, eye, mucous membrane, and upper respiratory tract irritant. It may also cause skin sensitization and central nervous system, gastrointestinal, and urinary tract effects. Basically, you shouldn't drink it or inhale the fumes excessively.

Common substitutes for Turpentine

Often artists substitute odorless mineral spirits for turpentine on the assumption that since the smell is not so strong it might be safer to use. But even if odorless they do emit fumes and vapors that are as harmful as turpentine. Though marketed as less toxic, research has shown that mineral spirits actually causes chronic toxic encephalopathy (called Chronic Painters syndrome).

Most substitutes for turpentine such as mineral spirits, paint thinner , Turpenoid and Gamsol are all distilled petroleum (like the fossil fuel gasoline) and are not perfectly suited to mixing with oil, will not dissolve damar crystals and also leave residue behind when they evaporate. **Oil of Spike Lavender does not have these drawbacks so is nearly identical to turpentine in usage and performance without the excessive health side effects.**

Conclusion

As said earlier, evidence and data suggest strongly that Oil of Spike Lavender does not have the problems associated with Turpentine or Mineral Spirits. It is not a carcinogen or potential carcinogen. As with all solvents, there is a potential for allergic reactions, repeated contact may cause allergic dermatitis, and like all solvents it should be used with common sense to avoid breathing it in excessively.



Chelsea Classical Studio Lavender Spike Oil Essence

<http://www.jerrysartarama.com/discount-art-supplies/oil-color-paints-and-mediums/chelsea-classical-studio-mediums/lavender-spike-oil-essence.htm>