LORIE COSTIGAN

This coastal Maine gardener cultivates a heady scent with lavender.

LORIE COSTIGAN'S THUMB has been green since childhood, but it wasn't until she and her husband purchased the 26-acre Glendarragh Farm in Appleton, Maine, that her passion for gardening became her livelihood. "The place had always been a dairy farm," says Costigan. "It was important for us to keep the land agricultural." Lavender was an easy choice. "Its versatility and hardiness made it a strong draw," she says. What began as an experimental patch of 300 plants has grown to 6,500. Costigan cultivates both Dutch hybrid and English lavenders to transform them into fragrant liquid soaps, sachets, pillows and balms. The English varieties retain their deep, vibrant purple color better as they dry and make an excellent culinary herb. Dutch hybrids, meanwhile, are marked by a stronger scent and a bitter flavor. The distinction is an important one, says Costigan with a chuckle. "If someone made you a lavender martini with a Dutch hybrid instead of an English variety, you'd never have another lavender martini again!"
— **GINA DECAPRIO VERCESI**

▸ **The word** *lavender* derives from the Latin "lavare," which means "to wash." The plant was used in ancient Roman bathing rituals due to its antiseptic properties.

▸ **Ancient Egyptians** soaked swaths of linen in lavender oil, which they would then use to wrap bodies for mummification.

▸ **When harvested** for oil, lavender buds must be tightly closed to ensure that they retain the peak amount of oil and a potent aroma.

LAVENDER FIELDS FOREVER

Find the lush herb's ethereal scent in France, the U.K. and California.

1 One of the most frequently photographed lavender fields blankets the land in front of **Sénanque Abbey** in Provence, France.

2 To watch color-changing lavender and echinacea gin from Edinburgh distillery **Old Curiosity** work its magic, just add tonic.

3 Wander the lavender labyrinth at **Bees N Blooms,** an organic farm in Santa Rosa, California, that works to support pollinators.