

herbnews

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WINTER 2019 *Medicinal Mushrooms*



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Cover image: Atlas des Champignons Comestibles et Veneneux, L. Dufour, 1821.

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President's letter

Greetings!

As I type this up, racing to meet the editor's deadline, I'm looking out to rain and gloom, an air of melancholy, yet the fire is burning away behind me and there's a supply of chopped wood to keep me warm through this winter we are being enveloped by.



With this season, we are able to harvest the roots of the herbs and vegetables we have nurtured over the summer. I've got marshmallow (*Althea officinalis*) ready to dig, and the comfrey (*Symphytum spp.*) has grown amazingly well, as has echinacea (*Echinacea purpurea*). My yacon plants (*Smallanthus sonchifolius*), from the Asteraceae family, are still growing vigorously, so I will leave them for later in winter. Yacon is such a versatile vegetable and can be used in both savoury and sweet dishes, or eaten raw. A great vehicle for so many flavours!

So winter is welcomed; let us find ways to enjoy this seasonal change.

You will be very pleased to see that we have information about the upcoming conference and AGM, to be hosted at Silverstream Retreat in the Hutt Valley, included in Herb News. The Hutt Valley Herb Society Committee has been busy preparing what looks like a wonderful way to celebrate the herbs we love. Look out for the registration information, which will be emailed to you in the near future. And above all, pencil the dates into your diary now: 15–18 November 2019. I am very much looking forward to seeing you there.

Warmest wishes

Karina

NOTICEBOARD



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Don't forget:

Deadline for the next issue:

20 August 2019

Do you have any **herb stories, news or recipes** you'd like to share? We welcome your submissions. Note: These must be **completely original** (your own work) to avoid copyright issues. Any photos must be your own too (or from someone who has given you permission to use them). Send your submissions to the editor: jane@plainjanemedia.co.nz

Gotu Kola (*Centella asiatica*) – The Arthritis Herb?

I heard about this plant years ago and had been searching for it to no avail. About 10 years I obtained a cutting from my Sri Lankan neighbour, who used it a lot. I was very excited to at last find it and gave it pride of place in my glasshouse not wanting to lose it. Big mistake – it very soon took over and suffocated my tomato plants, as its roots form an underground mesh that is very hard to get rid of. Over the past few years I have noticed at our local garden centre it is sold as gotu kola– the arthritis herb. It is anti-inflammatory but also has a lot of other properties. The herb has long been used as a tonic and is known in India as a rejuvenator. It helps concentration and memory and can be taken as a tonic for indigestion. The herb also has antirheumatic, sedative and mild diuretic actions. It is used in the West for skin problems and wounds. The fresh aerial parts are used and in India the leaves are eaten in salad as a tonic herb. To me, they taste rather bitter. The herb can be made into an infusion or tinctured for its anti-inflammatory properties. In the clinic where I work, I often use it mixed with other anti-inflammatory herbs in a tincture for arthritis.

In conclusion, I would say it is one of many herbs that can help with arthritis. Nutrition and lifestyle factors are also important. Anti-inflammatory foods like pineapple, celery, turmeric and ginger will also help. Just be careful you grow it in a pot, unless you want a garden full.

Maree Murphy, Medical Herbalist, Heavenly Herbs (www.heavenlyherbs.co.nz)

HFNZ 17th Biennial Conference 2019

By Diane Weatherhead, Hutt Valley Herb Society

The Hutt Valley Herb Society is looking forward to hosting you at the Herb Federation of New Zealand's 17th Biennial Conference in Upper Hutt over the weekend of 15–17 November 2019.



Our theme is **Herbs Today – bringing wellbeing to our modern lifestyle.**

We are living in a fast-paced society and our conference is to address how we can incorporate herbs into our busy, everyday lives, that growing and using herbs from our own environment can be easily achieved, and how understanding herbal wisdom will be of benefit to our health and wellbeing.

We are pleased to announce our key speakers:

- **Sandra Clair from Artemis.** Sandra is a renowned traditional Swiss herbal expert, midwife and nun. She spent three years learning from Sister Pauline many of the revered secrets of traditional European medicine, where she learnt how to incorporate plant medicine on a daily basis, to ensure good health, vitality and quality of life. Sandra opened a practice in Dunedin in 1995 and then in 1998 she founded Artemis, a leading traditional plant medicine company. Her vision is to share her proven medical knowledge of plants so that New Zealanders will discover how they can heal us and keep us well.
- **Donna Lee from Cottage Hill Herbs.** Donna lives in Akatarawa on the outskirts of Upper Hutt. She has been our local herbalist for 50 years, providing educational courses in herbal medicine and natural skin care, starting from humble beginnings without computers and view books available. She believes the resurgence of the old ways melded with the new

are now coming to the fore. “It is important to know how to care for ourselves, but knowing what to do with it is the key – especially those who are financially struggling out there with healthcare burdens and money issues, to know how to look after their families better using herbs and free food from the wild.” She has recently opened a Herbal Health and Ozone Clinic to add to her workshops and shop.

- **Jane Wrigglesworth** is a writer, editor and grower of flowers and herbs. She writes for *NZ Gardener* and *NZ Lifestyle Block* magazines and edits special magazine editions for *NZ Gardener*. She is the editor of a fabulous book *Growing and Using Herbs and Superfoods for Health and Wellbeing*. She is also our own editor of the Herb Federation of New Zealand’s *Herb News*. Jane is passionate about the curative powers of everyday herbs. She is a sleep expert (a certified sleep science consultant), armed with the knowledge and wisdom to help insomniacs get to sleep.

Workshops will include topics about herbs for chronic diseases, rongoā (traditional Maori medicine), culinary uses of native plants, and essential oils.

Along with the above, we have organised trips for attendees on Sunday. One bus will visit the Home of Compassion, with a tour of the Suzanne Aubert Heritage Centre and garden, the other will include a guided tour at Otari-Wilton’s Bush. Both will visit The Bait House, and the herb and rose gardens at the Botanic Garden.

Perhaps it’s a great opportunity for you to stay another night and spend a day visiting the other attractions of Wellington, eg Te Papa, or head to the Wairarapa.

There are a variety of accommodation options at Silverstream Retreat, which will mean you won’t have to walk far to the venue where all the action happens.

The full programme and registration details will be available late June, so check out the HFNZ website (www.herbs.org.nz) for more details.

We are very much looking forward to hosting you all here in Upper Hutt.

Medicinal Mushrooms

By Dr Christopher Hobbs

Mushrooms have been valued throughout the world as both food and medicine for thousands of years. In virtually every culture people enjoy hunting for wild mushrooms. Europeans have always appreciated their gastronomic value. In Japan, pushcart vendors on the streets still sell medicinal mushrooms to the average citizen who uses them to maintain health and promote longevity. Some Japanese people have even been said to travel hundreds of miles in order to collect wild mushrooms that grow only on very old plum trees, such as the reishi, renowned as a cure for cancer and degenerative diseases. Likewise, for over 3000 years, the Chinese have used and revered many fungi for their health-giving properties, especially tonics for the immune system.

Today, these health-promoting mushrooms are becoming an integral part of a healing diet. Further, they may also be an excellent food for staying trim and healthy. Because fats occur in mushrooms in minor amounts, especially compared with protein and carbohydrates, and the fatty fraction consists predominantly of unsaturated fatty acids, such as linoleic acid, they may be the perfect food for losing weight and maintaining a healthy heart and cardiovascular system.

Some Major Medicinal Mushrooms

SHIITAKE

Shiitake (*Lentinula edodes*) is a prized mushroom with a delicious taste and texture. It is used medicinally for diseases involving depressed immune function, including cancer, AIDS, environmental allergies, Candida infections, and frequent flu and colds. Shiitake is also beneficial for soothing bronchial inflammation and regulating urine incontinence (Bo and Yun-sun, 1980), as well as for reducing chronic high cholesterol.

Japanese products containing LEM (*Lentinula edodes* mycelia), a polysaccharide-rich extract from the shiitake mushroom, and similar extracts from maitake are currently undergoing trials in Japan and the U.S. to test their effectiveness in treating various forms of cancer.

According to one prominent Japanese researcher, lentinan (a cell-wall constituent extracted from the fruiting bodies of shiitake) is an immunomodulating agent which may be useful both as a general rejuvenative for older persons, as well as prophylactically to protect healthy, physically active young people from overwork and exhaustion (Aoki, 1984).



Shiitake mushrooms
Image: freefoodphotos.com

Dose: The traditional dose of the whole dried shiitake in tea, soup or other dishes is given as 6–16g; fresh – about 90g (Bo and Yun-sun, 1980).

According to manufacturers' recommendations and the few clinical trials performed with humans, in the early stages of AIDS or chronic hepatitis, the best dose of LEM may be between 2–6g/day in 2 or 3 divided doses. Once the disease is more stable, the dosage may be decreased, perhaps to ½–1g per day (Sharon, 1988).

Commercial preparations of shiitake are available in natural food markets. Standardised extracts are preferred because the amount of lentinan present is clearly stated on the bottle.

Note that although fresh shiitake can be a valuable dietary supplement, the amount one would need to eat for medicinal doses is so high that it might cause digestive upset. That is why LEM, which is concentrated and easily absorbed, is preferred as medicine.

REISHI

Reishi (*Ganoderma lucidum*) is, without doubt, one of the most famous medicinal mushrooms. It is known as lingzhi in China and reishi in Japan. In the last 20 years, reishi has been tested in human clinical studies and is thought to be beneficial for a wide variety of disorders, including neurasthenia, insomnia, rhinitis, and duodenal ulcers (Ying et al, 1987). It has also been used for liver pain, symptoms associated with anorexia, retinal pigmentary degeneration, and progressive muscular dystrophy (Chang & But, 1986; Chang et al, 1984; Huidi & Zhiyuan, 1982). Reishi has also shown favourable results in treating hepatitis (Chang & But, 1986), chronic bronchitis; coronary heart disease, allergies, and altitude sickness.

Traditionally, reishi was very expensive, because it only grew in the wild, but it is currently both accessible and affordable due to cultivation techniques developed in the last 20 years (Willard, 1990). Today it is used primarily for aging-related conditions and cancer and as an immune stimulant.



Reishi mushrooms

Dose: The dose in tincture form is 10ml 3x/day; in tablet form (for insomnia) the dose is 1g tablets 3x/day.

MAITAKE

Maitake (*Grifola frondosa*) is a delectable mushroom that is extremely popular in Japan. In the U.S. it is currently being studied in medical clinics for patients with breast and colorectal cancers (Miller, 1994). In China, a maitake extract was shown to have an anticancer effect in patients with lung, stomach, hepatocellular cancers, and leukemia. Reduced side-effects from chemotherapy have also been reported (Nanba, 1994a,b). Dr Joan Priestley, MD, reports that her patients with Kaposi's sarcoma and other symptoms of AIDS show improvement when administered maitake extract, and Dr David Hughes, MD, has had positive results with Kaposi's sarcoma lesions (Nanba, 1994a). It potentially benefits diabetics (lowering blood glucose) and people with hypertension.

Dose: The recommended dose is 3–7g a day in supplement form, in tea, or in cooking (soups, etc.).

OYSTER

Oyster mushroom (*Pleurotus ostreatus*) is extremely delicious as well as conferring various health-giving properties. Traditionally, it has been used to strengthen veins and relax tendons. In China, oyster mushroom is indicated for joint and muscle relaxation (Yang & Jong, 1989). In the Czech Republic, extracts have been made from the fruiting bodies as the main ingredient in dietary preparations recommended for prevention of high cholesterol (Opletal, 1993).

The dried oyster mushrooms are said to be high in iron, so they are potentially good blood builders.

Dose: The recommended dose is 3–9g daily.

ENOKITAKE

Flammulina velutipes is a popular edible mushroom in Japan where a tender, cultivated form of the wild version is called enokitake. It is commonly used in Japanese cooking and increasingly can be found in salads in gourmet restaurants. If taken on a regular basis, *Flammulina velutipes* may prevent, as well as cure, liver disease and gastroenteric ulcers (Ying et al, 1987; Yoshioka et al, 1973).



Enokitake mushrooms

Enokitake contains several types of amino acids including valine, which inhibits the growth of Ehrlich ascites tumour and sarcoma 180 in mice; and lysine, reported to increase body height and weight (Ying et al, 1987). Enokitake contains a cardiotoxic protein (flammutoxin) that is rendered harmless when subjected to heat (100 degrees C) for 20 minutes. I would caution against the chronic use of enokitake raw in salads or other dishes.

Dose: The dose is 8–9g/day.

Making Preparations

Since the scientific literature seems to point to whole mushroom fruiting bodies as being especially active as antitumour agents and immune enhancers, I recommend taking dried and powdered mushrooms by the teaspoon, either in a cup of ginger tea, or even sprinkled into soup or on stir-fries and rice, etc.

When placed in “00” capsules, the average amount of powdered mushroom/capsule is about 400mg. For mild to moderate immune support, I recommend 2 capsules morning and evening. For specific immune-suppressed conditions, take 2–3 capsules 3 times a day.

To make a mushroom extract that is stronger and more readily assimilated, try simmering the mushrooms (as many fruiting bodies or pieces as can be covered by the water in a pot) for about an hour. Strain off the dark tea (keep it in a heat-proof container) and replace the liquid with fresh water to cover the mushrooms and simmer for another 30 minutes. Strain the new tea and add it to the first decoction; simmer several hours until it is reduced to a thick paste. Take this paste off the heat, scrape it out with a cake spatula, and knead it with an organic rice or wheat flour to a dough-like consistency. Pack small pieces of this dough into “00” capsules and take 1 of them morning and evening. The dough can also be dried in a food drier or oven with low heat. The dried extract pieces can then be powdered in a blender or coffee grinder. The powder can be packed into capsules or sprinkled on food.

Teas and Soups

Teas are a good way to use medicinal mushrooms, and they should be simmered until the tea is somewhat dark and strong-tasting – about 40 minutes to an hour.

For soups, add a variety of vegetables to the mushroom tea stock. Fish, chicken, or a little red meat can be added for certain deficiency conditions. Drink the broth (1–3 cups a day) and eat the vegetables.

Summary of Uses for Major Medicinal Mushrooms

Chanterelle

Main Uses: tumour inhibition

Preparations: fresh or dried

Dose: ad lib.

Contraindications: no toxicity

Enokitake

Main Uses: liver disease, gastroenteric ulcers

Preparations: fresh or dried

Dose: cooked, ad lib; dried, 8–9g/day

Contraindications: some toxicity raw; no toxicity cooked

Maitake

Main Uses: high blood pressure, tumour inhibition, liver protectant

Preparations: fresh or dried

Dose: 3–7g/day

Contraindications: low toxicity

Oyster

Main Uses: tumour inhibition, high cholesterol

Preparations: fresh cooked; dried, powdered

Dose: ad lib.

Contraindications: low toxicity

Reishi

Main Uses: immune activation, tumour inhibition, expectorant, hepatitis, hypertension, nervousness, general weakness

Preparations: dried, liquid extract, tablets

Dose: tincture, 10ml 3x/day; tablets, 3 x 1g tab 3x/day

Contraindications: very low toxicity reported

Shiitake

Main Uses: immune regulator, tumour inhibition, antiviral, antibacterial, liver protectant

Preparations: fresh, dried, liquid extract, tablets

Dose: dried, 6–16g; fresh, 90g

Contraindications: no toxicity; some contact dermatitis

Recommended Reading List

Medicinal Mushrooms by Christopher Hobbs.

Kombucha by Christopher Hobbs.

Manual on Mushroom Cultivation by Peter Oei.

Mushrooms Demystified by David Arora.

Mushrooms in the Garden by Helmut Steineck.

The Shiitake Growers Handbook by P. Przbylowicz and J. Donoghue.

The Mushroom Cultivator by P. Stamets and J. Chilton.

Growing Shiitake Mushrooms in a Continental Climate by Mary Ellen Kozak and J. Krawczyk.

Cultivating Edible Fungi by P.J. Wuest.

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Fight it... With Herbs

**Naturopath and medical herbalist Angela Haldane finds
a herb – or herbs – for everyday ailments.**

Immunity

Q.

This winter I would like to be proactive by strengthening my immunity rather than waiting for some virus or bacteria to strike. What natural remedies do you recommend?

A.

A prevention-is-better-than-cure approach – I like it! Firstly, immunity begins in the gut – this is our frontline to many pathogens and bugs. We are meant to have 3kg of bacteria in our digestive system, which play an important role in immunity.

With an increase in antibacterial products, antibiotics, and stress in our lives, these have been found to knock out the friendly bacterial count. I would start on the immune-boosting path by replenishing good bacteria in the gut. From the kitchen, this can be a good-quality yoghurt (six spoonfuls taken throughout the day) on an empty stomach, or a quality refrigerated probiotic product.

Many people are low in iron and zinc. Low energy and recurrent opportunistic infections are signs that you are lacking in iron. This can be clarified with a blood test. Zinc deficiency often manifests as white dots on the nails, lack of taste or smell, and slow wound healing. Meat, dark leafy vegetables and nuts/seeds will boost your iron and zinc levels.



ASTRAGALUS

The herb *Echinacea purpurea* or *E. angustifolia* prepared from the roots – which is more effective than the flowering tops (a good-quality product will make your tongue tingle). *Astragalus membranaceus* and *Withania somnifera* also strengthen immunity and provide resistance to stressors.

And don't forget to keep fit and make time for leisure and laughter; your immune system will thank you for it.

Dry Eyes

Q.

My eyes have been dry for several months. What can I do to fix this?

A.

You are suffering a surface eye ailment characterised by excessive dryness of the conjunctiva and cornea of the eyes. This may be the result of a lack of water in the tear ducts and/or a deficiency in the production of sebum or mucin. Dry eyes may be a symptom of Sjögren syndrome, which would need to be diagnosed by your doctor.

You could also be lacking in Vitamin A, in which case a supplement may help: there is a practitioner product called Alanase which contains a high dose of Vitamin A. Or try Oculoheel eyedrops, available from your registered naturopath or medical herbalist (visit www.nzamh.org.nz to find a practitioner in your area). Vitamin A may prevent the loss of goblet cells from the conjunctiva of the eyes, and can improve the function of the epithelial cells that line the conjunctiva.

Studies show that gamma linolenic acid (1500mg a day) from blackcurrant oil or evening primrose oil, combined with Vitamins C and B6, can improve tear production. Combine this with a diet rich in anti-inflammatory omega 3 oils, such as fish, flaxseed oil and ground linseed. Magnesium can also alleviate dry eyes; it plays a role in the formation of prostaglandin E7, a compound necessary for the production of tears. As for herbal medicine, demulcent herbs such as marshmallow, hoheria and eyebright are useful for many types of eye inflammation.



BLACK CURRANT

Mouth Ulcers

Q.

For the last 6 months I have been getting mouth ulcers recurrently. How can I get over this?

A.

Often mouth ulcers occur when you are run down. Vitamin B deficiency has been associated with mouth ulcers. Vitamin B deficiency often results from stress.

Zinc and Vitamin A heals mucous membranes and raises immunity.

Myrrh herbal tincture as a mouthwash is excellent for its astringent and healing qualities. Myrrh has a long traditional reputation for treating mouth ulcers.

Kiwiherb Manuka mouthwash, which is effective, is available over the counter. Alternatively, you could use propolis tincture.

Vitamin C in a low-acid formula would be helpful to aid healing and build resistance.

Salt water gargles as a kitchen cupboard remedy can be useful in the early stages.

If you have white plaques on your oral mucosa, you may also have oral thrush, which can be treated with a probiotic powder which you mix into a paste and hold in your mouth for as long as possible. This will reinstate the friendly bacteria that normally exists in your digestive tract.

Mouth ulcers can occur following ingestion of foods that you are sensitive to. Given that you get mouth ulcers regularly, if the previous treatments do not help, I would then recommend an allergy test to identify food intolerances. We do this at the clinic.

Soft nutritious foods such as soups and smoothies are great for providing antioxidants rich in vitamins and minerals... without causing any pain from your ulcers.

Angela Haldane – 'Natural Ange' – is a naturopath, medical herbalist and registered nurse working at Harvest Natural Health Centre in Grey Lynn, Auckland. Angela is a professional member of the New Zealand Association of Medical Herbalists (NZAMH) and the Naturopaths and Medical Herbalists of New Zealand (NMHNZ). Visit her website: www.naturalange.co.nz

Treating Coughs and Congestion

Kumerahou

Pomaderris kumerahou

Key Actions:

- Expectorant
- Bronchospasmolytic
- Antimicrobial
- Depurative

A favourite at Phytomed, kumerahou is the best herb we know for stubborn coughs and chest congestion. Long used for respiratory conditions, kumerahou exerts a noticeable expectorant action quickly after taking, courtesy of the saponins, which are a main active constituent of this plant.

Kumerahou is a bitter herb and therefore ideally combined with herbs such as aniseed, liquorice, marshmallow or hoheria for their complementary actions and flavour benefits. Large doses may cause nausea in sensitive people, so taking with food is recommended.

Ribwort

Plantago lanceolata

Key Actions:

- Anticatarrhal
- Anti-inflammatory
- Demulcent
- Mild Astringent

Ribwort is traditionally used to alleviate congestive and allergic conditions affecting the upper respiratory tract, and is considered a gentle but effective treatment for both acute and chronic sinusitis or nasal congestion in both children and adults.

Ribwort's diverse range of therapeutic activities make it a well-balanced and safe 'mucous membrane tonic', which can complement or replace conventional drug treatments in some cases. The soothing demulcent properties of its polysaccharide hydrocolloids on mucous membranes, combined with the mild astringency of the tannins and antibacterial effects of the iridoid glycosides, make ribwort well suited for the management of sinusitis and nasal or bronchial congestion or irritation.

Anti-inflammatory effects seem to occur through several mechanisms, including inhibition of nitric oxide and tumour necrosis factor- α production, as well as cyclooxygenase-1 (COX-1), COX-2 and 12-lipoxygenase enzymes.

Regarded as a very safe herb, ribwort is one for which reasonably high doses should generally be taken. As with all plants, allergic reactions can occasionally occur. There are no known interactions with drug medications.

Aniseed

Pimpinella anisum

Key Actions:

- Expectorant
- Antispasmodic
- Carminative
- Antimicrobial

Aniseed has been used throughout history for respiratory and digestive complaints. Traditionally, aniseed is used for respiratory catarrh, coughs, colic, bloating and dyspepsia. The volatile oils are major active constituents of aniseed and have been shown to contribute antispasmodic, antimicrobial and expectorant actions. Well tolerated and pleasant tasting, aniseed is perfectly suited for spasmodic coughs, bronchitis and lower respiratory congestion.

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P is for Pineapples

By Marilyn Wightman

When travelling south for Easter, just on the northern outskirts of Fairlie, in the Canterbury region, there is a bunch of hills to negotiate. Coming round a sharp bend it was a surprise to find a grey wallaby by the side of the road. It reminded me of the last time we had seen these animals, at a pineapple farm in North Queensland. Part of the bus trip of the Australian Herb Conference was visiting all sorts of – to us – exotic fruit farms. The farmer at the pineapple plot was muttering about the wallabies and how they have a penchant for nibbling the pineapples. They are considered a big pest problem there, attracted, as they are, to the great-smelling fruit.

Pace Farm is a family run enterprise that has been in the family since 1936, the first family members emigrating from Malta in the late 1890s.



Field of pineapples

Pineapples were first grown in Australia for the canning industry. The smooth-leaved variety tends to have a high acidity level, especially in winter, hence its preference as a processed food rather than a fresh fruit. In the last 30 years the crop has evolved and is now grown and marketed as fresh fruit, mainly because of the importation of a hybrid variety brought in from Hawaii. The 'Gold' variety was



Pineapples for sorting

bred in 1973 and, as it has a lower acidity content, it is the

preferred type for eating fresh. There are five preferred varieties grown commercially in Queensland – rough leaf; smooth leaf; 73/50 Gold; Rollingstone Gold and MD2. Another Australian-bred variety, ‘Ice Jubilee’, doesn’t perform as well on this farm and yields too small a fruit.

Soil analysis is essential to determine which pineapple variety will perform best. After all, the whole intent is to have as big a crop as possible. For their pineapple plot they plant 72,000 plants and will glean \$80,000 per hectare. Potassium is applied as a liquid fertiliser and it takes 15 to 18 months for the newly planted crop to grow, mature and be harvestable. Ideal as a crop for this area, pineapples grow in the temperature range between 18 and 35 degrees Celsius.

Pineapple (*Ananas sativus*) is a member of the bromeliad family. From one plant one pineapple will be harvested. Each plant throws side suckers from the main growing stem. These are removed and propagated for the next generation of plants. There are many varieties around the world and on Pace Farm they have a breeding programme to develop their own varieties.

Some 4,500 tons of pineapples are grown from the farm annually. Some of you may remember the Pace brand available here in New Zealand a few years ago. This local market has now been taken over by Dole, and Pace can no longer export their fruit here. As 170,000 tons of pineapple get consumed in Australia alone, there is enough market to cope with their production. It is transported south to the markets and it fetches a high price. Pineapples are still a high-end, luxury item.

One of the owners of Pace Farm, Stephen Pace, took us through the packing shed; it is a high-tech business to grow, pick, sort by size and grade, then package the fruit into boxes ready for pickup by the truck transporters.

Pineapples originated in Mexico, Panama, Guyana and Brazil. They were popular among the first plant finders who explored the unknown world, because they last long as fresh fruit. They were taken on their sea voyages for provisioning on-board, which accounts for pineapples being spread around the globe by these early explorers. Hawaii now grows 50 per cent of the world’s crop, though it is an introduced fruit and not native to the Pacific.

Making Your Own Skincare Products

By Misty Rae Cech

Have you always wanted to try the world's finest skincare products but found the prices somewhat outrageous? Ever considered making your own? It's so easy to do, and you can create a formula precisely to match your skin type, with remarkably effective, natural and pure botanicals (plant-based ingredients). Making these yourself will give you a skincare product that matches or exceeds the effectiveness of anything you can buy over the counter at a truly affordable price. Try one of these recipes and you may never go back to fancy labels, boxes and prices ever again.

Essential Oils: The Best Skincare Botanicals

You'll find essential oils in every 'high end' mature skin beauty product, though sometimes you'll see them discretely labelled as "plant extracts" or similar terms. The thing is that many folks still don't realise that essential oils truly are medicine, not just fine-smelling precious liquid in tiny bottles. When you understand that essential oils are simply the concentrated, volatile (easily evaporated liquid) constituents naturally present in ALL plants, you'll see that they're nothing less than any other herbal concentrate. And essential oils are so very compatible with our skin – they are very easily absorbed – that they can actually work better than other types of botanical skincare ingredients. Making a custom recipe for yourself is as simple as matching the therapeutic properties of the essential oils to your skin's needs, then mixing them together with one or more fixed oils, and voila! You've got the perfect daily skincare creation.

Women's Oil of Beauty: Rose Essential Oil

Again and again, in every natural skincare recipe book, one finds one oil more highly regarded than any other – rose otto, the steam-distilled variety of rose (it is also found as an absolute, which is more appropriate for natural perfumes). Rose otto has a host of therapeutic skincare properties: it hydrates without being greasy; it's gently antiseptic, soothing to damaged skin; it can heal broken capillaries; and it supports the skin's natural metabolism. It is also the most important oil for women for its heart-opening, antidepressant action – considered the "oil of the highest vibration" used in aroma-therapeutics. While a bit pricey, it's very potent; only a few drops are needed in any recipe.

Calendula: Nature's Healing Magic

Calendula oil has been used for hundreds of years for all sorts of skincare uses. It's exceptionally soothing, with the traditional use being for infants' skincare. The flowers have been hard to work with, however, limiting the uses of this magnificent medicinal plant. A new extraction technique now offers us a calendula oil concentrate, often labelled calendula CO₂. This extract is highly antioxidant, powerfully wound-healing, and one of the most effective soothers of irritated or damaged skin available on Earth.

Companion Oils for Balance and Vitality

One or more of these three oils are excellent companion oils to the rose and calendula. Rosemary verbenone is a skincare specialty oil, distilled from a particular variety of rosemary herb. Long used in all sorts of body-care preparations, rosemary is thought to work by stimulating cellular metabolism (increasing the amount of nutrients getting into our skin cells), speeding the creation of new cells, and enhancing our skin's vitality. Helichrysum is even more potently regenerative – often used in wound healing. Helichrysum will also increase new skin cell production, while drawing waste products from skin tissues. And let's not forget lavender, the granddaddy of skincare medicine. Lavender is regenerative, antiseptic, anti-inflammatory, and aids skin conditions where stress may be an underlying factor.

For specific skincare needs, we'll also include sandalwood and myrtle essential oils in certain blends (you'll see which oils go with which skin type in the recipes below). Both these oils are considered excellent for acne-prone skin. Myrtle is potently antiseptic, regenerative, and commonly found in acne and oily-skin formulas. Sandalwood is hydrating AND an excellent treatment for acne. Myrtle offers a great herbaceous 'high note' to your blend, while sandalwood gives a lovely earthy tone.

Holding It All Together: Your Formula's Base

While the essential oils are often considered the active ingredients, it's important to consider the carrier oils are exceptionally therapeutic as well. For these recipes, we highly recommend the use of two very well regarded tropical nut oils: coconut and kukui. Coconut has a very long history (thousands of

years, actually) in skincare, mentioned often in Ayurvedic medicine. It is antimicrobial and hydrating, spanning the needs from the acne-prone to the chronically dry. Kukui has similar properties, and remains liquid at room temperature, allowing easy mixing and application of your custom recipe. These two oils have been used by people of tropical climes to care for the skin of the young and old, successfully, for so long – and now you, too, can reap their benefits.

Rosehip Seed: A Woman's Beauty Gift from the Mountains of Chile

For everyone EXCEPT those prone to acne, rosehip seed oil is the third important base oil. Rosehip seed naturally balances the incredible tropical nut oils, coming from the high mountain arid regions of South America. Rosehip seed may be the most thoroughly studied carrier oil for skincare use – and with excellent results. Rosehip has been shown to significantly reduce the appearance of wrinkles, fine lines and scars, while smoothing overall skin texture and colour. Imagine what it's going to do with all these other top-notch therapeutic ingredients.

Get Started

Gather your ingredients: 1 glass bottle 30 or 60ml (1 or 2 ounces), preferably coloured glass (helps protect the oils) with an eyedropper (makes it easy to dispense your formula later). ALL recipes are for EACH FLUID OUNCE, so you'll want to know the size of your bottle to make measuring easier. A funnel might make things easier as well. And, of course, your selected base oils and essential oils (note for purchasing oils: the recipe calls for drops, and essential oils are sold in millilitres -- there are 25 drops per millilitre).

Mixing instructions: Add the required number of drops of each essential oil to your empty bottle. If making 2 ounces, double the amounts, 4 ounces, 4 times, etc. With a funnel, add approximate amounts of your carrier oil – if using all three carrier oils, for example, just fill the bottle about a third of the way with each oil. Don't overfill, as you won't be able to get the eyedropper in (if using one) without spilling! Gently invert the bottle several times and let set for a bit. The aroma will not really be brilliant until the following day, but you can use the mixture right away. The formulas are designed for using one to three times per day.

Brilliant Beauty Recipes for All Skin Types:

Moderate to severe dry skin with smile lines: Rose otto 8 drops, lavender 12 drops, calendula CO₂ 6 drops, three parts coconut and one part each kukui and rosehip seed oils.

Mature skin with scars or colour variations and smile lines: Rose otto 6 drops, lavender 8 drops, helichrysum 6 drops, rosemary verbenone 6 drops, equal parts coconut, kukui, and rosehip seed oils.

Irritated or sensitive skin, perhaps with broken capillaries: Rosemary 8 drops, lavender 6 drops, calendula CO₂ 6 drops, sandalwood 6 drops, in three parts coconut and one part each kukui and rosehip seed oils.

For oily, acne-prone or combination skin: Myrtle 10 drops, lavender 8, drops, rosemary verbenone 6 drops, in equal parts of kukui and coconut oils.

Four easy recipes to get you started – and there's so many essential oils to choose from, with a range of therapeutic properties. These blends described here can be VERY effective, and by making them yourself this first time, you'll open up whole new doors to formulating your personal, customised, high-end skincare at a fraction of the cost of the big names in the business. May you have beautiful, healthy skin wherever you go!



lavender



rosehip

Misty Rae Cech is a degreed naturopath and herbalist, and owner of Ananda Aromatherapy and Synergy Essential Oils of Boulder, Colorado. Her passion is getting the word out on the amazing healing effects of essential oils, in particular, and natural medicine in general. More on aroma-therapeutics is available at The Ananda Apothecary at www.anandaapothecary.com



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HFNZ & Society News

Canterbury Herb Society

Canterbury Herb Society celebrated their 50th anniversary last year. In one of their recent newsletters they reprinted a recipe from their sixth newsletter, which was published 50 years ago.

Eggs Kromeski

By Avice Hill

Ingredients

4 hard-boiled eggs	6 tablespoons sieved breadcrumbs
2 dessertspoons chopped parsley	2 dessertspoons chopped onion
1 teaspoon finely chopped mixed herbs	salt & pepper
4 rashers bacon	

Method

Shell the eggs. Mix crumbs, parsley, onion, mixed herbs, salt and pepper. Smooth out bacon about 7in (18cm) long and spread equally with the savoury mixture. Roll an egg in each rasher. Spear with a toothpick. Place on rack in a baking tin and bake at 350°F (180°C) for about 20 minutes, turning at half time. Serves 4.

Savoy Cabbage Salad

Ingredients

1 savoy cabbage
1/3 cup shelled walnuts
1 very small onion
¾ cup lemon balm and parsley (equal quantities)

Method

Shred cabbage, onion, parsley, lemon balm, all finely chopped. Grind walnuts finely and sprinkle over cabbage mixture. Serve with dressing: 3 tablespoons sunflower oil, 3 teaspoons lemon juice, 1 level teaspoon sugar

Remembering...

Oraina Jones

27 January 1944 – 8 March 2019



Oraina Jones will be remembered by friends and community for her love and promotion of wild foods as nature's powerhouse sources of food and healing.

Oraina trained as a nurse and became more and more concerned with the increased use of pharmaceuticals and how they were affecting nursing care. Around this time her interest in herbs was influenced by attending workshops with Susun Weed. Susun, author of *The Wise Woman Herbal – Healing Wise*, visited New Zealand several times in the late 1980s and early 1990s. Her message was to empower grassroots use of local and wild weeds (herbs) for health and nutrition.

Oraina joined the Herb Federation of New Zealand in the late 1980s. She was also a member of the Nelson Herb Society and served as President at around that time.

Oraina's zest for life was integral in all she did and in 1991 she bought a property with her sister Berylla. Together they created a herb garden – Earthsong – and later a studio on the property where, for many years, they ran herb classes, "Herbs for Health and Enjoyment." Allowing people to interact with the growing herbs was an important aspect of the classes, which covered identification, cooking, healing, fragrance, growing, use around the home, and more. They also ran a herbal business manufacturing ointments and tinctures.

Oraina became a friend of Mary Garbely, who, in collaboration with others, brought out *A New Perception: Flower Essences of New Zealand*. Mary's book was published in 1990 and Oraina became a flower essence practitioner using Mary's essences, Bach flower essences and her own Earthsong range.

In daily life the phone would ring, there would be a long conversation, a trip to her herbal dispensary in the studio and a parcel placed in the mailbox for pick-up. Or there would be a knock on the door. A conversation over a coffee and a trip around the garden to find a herb, or else a remedy or tincture would be brought out. Often as not, the visitor would also go home with plants, seeds or produce from the garden.

Oraina grew many heirloom varieties of plants and was an avid seed saver, contributing to seed banks and having stalls at many local events.

Many a time Oraina would be found in the garden 'grazing' on the herbs – chickweed and dandelion were favourites, as well as fat hen, nettles and amaranthus. She was one who practised what she preached.

Outside of her garden Oraina would venture into politics and campaign for a GE-free New Zealand or to protect wildlife and plants. She was not one to sit quietly.

Her energy and enthusiasm will be sorely missed. She died after a long journey with Alzheimer's and was buried, as she wished, in an eco cemetery in Otaki. She was farewelled by family and friends.

Berylla Jones

Society Contacts

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MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION FORM

I/We wish to apply for membership to the **Herb Federation of New Zealand Inc**
(PLEASE PRINT)

Mr/Mrs/Ms/Miss _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____ Email: _____

INDIVIDUAL \$35.00

FAMILY (For two members) \$40.00
Add \$5.00 for each additional member.

OVERSEAS \$40.00

DONATION \$ _____

TOTAL ENCLOSED \$ _____

Payment by direct credit is available. Our bank is Westpac, Account No. 03-1549-0030463-00. Please make sure you name is identified with the payment.

- ☐ Please tick if you require a receipt.
- ☐ Please tick if you want your details kept confidential. (Your name will only appear on any membership list required for official **HFNZ** business.)

Please send your application to: The Treasurer,
Herb Federation of New Zealand, PO Box 128077, Remuera, Auckland 1050

For office use

DATE: _____

RECEIPT: _____



The Aims and Objectives of the Federation

- To promote greater interest in herbs and an appreciation of the value of herbs and their safe use.
- To increase knowledge through education.
- To assist in maintaining the diversity of herb collections.
- To protect and promote the use of herbs, now and for future generations.
- To encourage accurate identification of plants and the use of botanical names.

Activities we promote include Herb Awareness Week events, establishment and maintenance of herb gardens and plant collections, seed and plant exchange, workshops and booklets on specific topics, visits to interesting gardens, nurseries and garden centres, exchange of newsletters.

Long term aims include the possibilities of a national garden and support for recognized herbal qualifications.

CONTRIBUTIONS FOR SPRING 2019

**Herb Society members are invited to submit
contributions for the next edition of Herb News**

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