



The
MOUNTAIN ROSE HERBS
Guide to Herbal Preparations

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HERBAL INFUSIONS & DECOCTIONS

Tea is a water extract of herbs called an infusion. Hot infusions draw out vitamins, enzymes, and aromatic volatile oils.



HOT INFUSIONS

Hot infusions draw out vitamins, enzymes, and aromatic volatile oils. A few good herbs for hot infusions include Chamomile, Holy Basil, Ginger, Nettle, Peppermint, and Skullcap.

BASIC METHOD

- Scoop 1-3 tablespoons of dried herb into a strainer.
- Heat 1 cup of water until it just comes to a boil.
- Place strainer in your cup.
- Pour hot water over herbs and cover to keep the essential oils from escaping.
- Steep for 15 minutes to 1 hour and strain.

COLD INFUSIONS

Cold Infusions are ideal for slimy herbs and herbs with delicate essential oils. A few good herbs for cold infusions include Marshmallow root, Chia seed, and fresh Lemon Balm.

BASIC METHOD

- Fill a quart jar with cold water.
- Bundle 1oz of herb in cheesecloth.
- Slightly moisten the bundled herb.
- Submerge the bundle just below the water in the jar.
- Drape the tied end over the lip of the jar.
- Secure by loosely screwing on the cap.
- Allow to infuse overnight.

ALTERNATE METHOD

- Place herbs in a quart jar, fill with cold water, and cap. Allow to infuse overnight.



DECOCTIONS

Decoctions are simmered teas that are perfect for the extraction of hard roots, dried berries, barks, and seeds.

BASIC METHOD

- Place 3 tablespoons of dried herb into a small saucepan.
- Cover the herbs with a quart of cold water.
- Slowly heat the water to a simmer and cover.
- Allow to gently simmer for 20 to 45 minutes.
- Strain the herb and reserve the tea in a quart jar.
- Pour additional hot water back through the herb in the strainer to fill your jar.

FUN TIP!

Add a bit of honey, fruit juice, licorice root powder, or powdered Stevia leaf to sweeten your tea. Freeze in ice cube trays or popsicle molds. Kids love these herbal ice pops!



TINCTURES

Tinctures are concentrated herbal extracts using alcohol as the solvent. You can use any spirit you like, but we prefer something neutral like vodka to fully experience the flavor of the herb.

Tinctures can be made with fresh or dried flowers, leaves, roots, barks, or berries, and they can be taken by the dropper or diluted in tea.



TINCTURES: THE FOLK METHOD

Simple, practical, and efficient, this method allows you to estimate your measurements by eye. The only supplies you'll need include organic herbs, glass jars, a knife or chopper, metal funnel, cheesecloth, alcohol, and amber glass dropper bottles.



TINCTURES

HOW MUCH PLANT MATERIAL TO USE?

FRESH HERBAL MATERIAL: LEAVES & FLOWERS

- Finely chop or grind clean herb to release juice and expose surface area.
- Only fill the jar 2/3 to 3/4 with herb.
- Pour alcohol to the very top of the jar. Cover plants completely!
- Jar should appear full of herb, but herb should move freely when shaken.

FRESH HERBAL MATERIAL: ROOTS, BARKS & BERRIES

- Finely chop or grind clean plants to release juice and expose surface area.
- Only fill the jar 1/3 to 1/2 with fresh roots, barks, or berries.
- Pour alcohol to the very top of the jar. Cover plants completely!
- Jar should appear full of herb, but herb should move freely when shaken.



TINCTURES LEAVES & FLOWERS VS. ROOTS, BARKS & BERRIES

DRIED HERBAL MATERIAL: LEAVES & FLOWERS

- Use finely cut herbal material.
- Only fill the jar 1/2 to 3/4 with herb.
- Pour alcohol to the very top of the jar and cover plants completely!

DRIED HERBAL MATERIAL: ROOTS, BARKS & BERRIES

- Use finely cut herbal material.
- Only fill the jar 1/4 to 1/3 with dried roots, barks, or berries.
- Pour alcohol to the very top of the jar and cover plants completely!
- Roots and berries will expand by 1/2 their size when reconstituted!



TINCTURES ALCOHOL PERCENTAGES



40%-50% (80-90 PROOF VODKA)

- "Standard" percentage range for tinctures.
- Good for most dried herbs and fresh herbs that are not super juicy.
- Good for extraction of water soluble properties.

67.5%-70% (1/2 80 PROOF VODKA + 1/2 190 PROOF GRAIN ALCOHOL)

- Extracts the most volatile aromatic properties.
- Good for fresh high-moisture herbs like lemon balm, berries, and aromatic roots.
- The higher alcohol percentage will draw out more of the plant juices.

85%-95% (190 PROOF GRAIN ALCOHOL)

- Good for dissolving gums and resins – but not necessary for most plant material.
- Extracts the aromatics and essential oils bound in a plant that do not dissipate easily.
- The alcohol strength can produce a tincture that is not easy to take. Stronger is not always better!
- Often used for drop dosage plants.
- Will totally dehydrate herbs.

TINCTURES

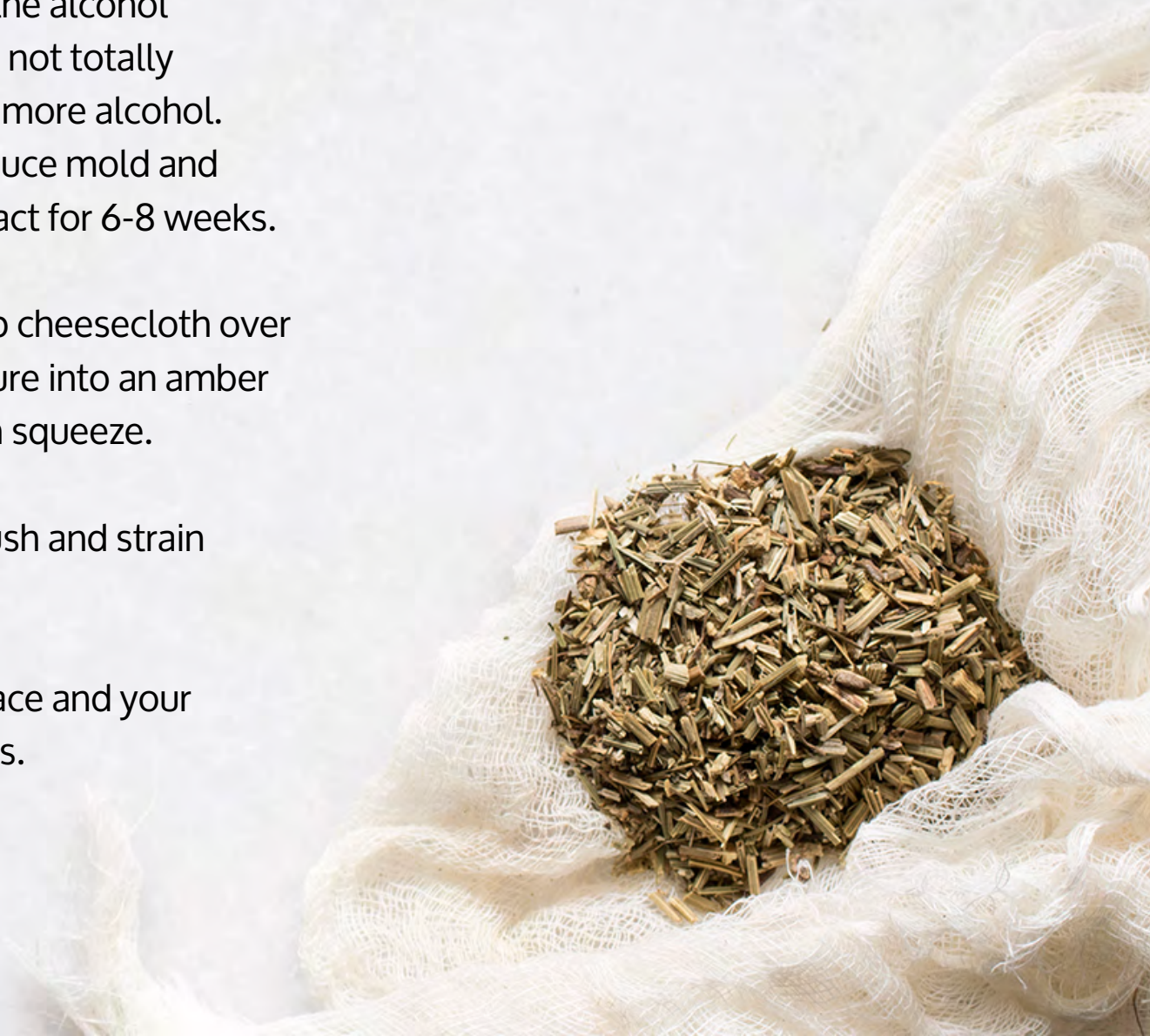
EXTRACTION TIME, BOTTLING

Store your tincture in a cool, dry, dark cabinet. Shake several times a week. If the alcohol evaporates a bit and the herb is not totally submerged, top off the jar with more alcohol. Herbs exposed to air can introduce mold and bacteria into your tincture. Extract for 6-8 weeks.

Time to squeeze! Drape a damp cheesecloth over a funnel. Pour contents of tincture into an amber glass bottle. Allow to drip, then squeeze.

Optional: Blend herbs into a mush and strain remaining liquid.

Keep extracts in a cool, dark place and your tinctures will last for many years.



TINCTURES: LABELS

This last step is perhaps the most important of all!

Once you've strained and bottled your tincture, be sure to label each bottle with as much detail as possible. You'll be so happy to have this information to play with next time you tincture the same herb. Don't lean on your sense of taste or smell alone – regardless of how well-honed your organoleptic skills may be, tinctures can trick even the most experienced herbalist. Skipping this step will surely lead to a dusty collection of unused mystery extracts.

Important details to include on your labels:

Common Name

Latin Name

Part Used

Fresh/Dried

Alcohol %

Habitat/Source

Date

Dosage



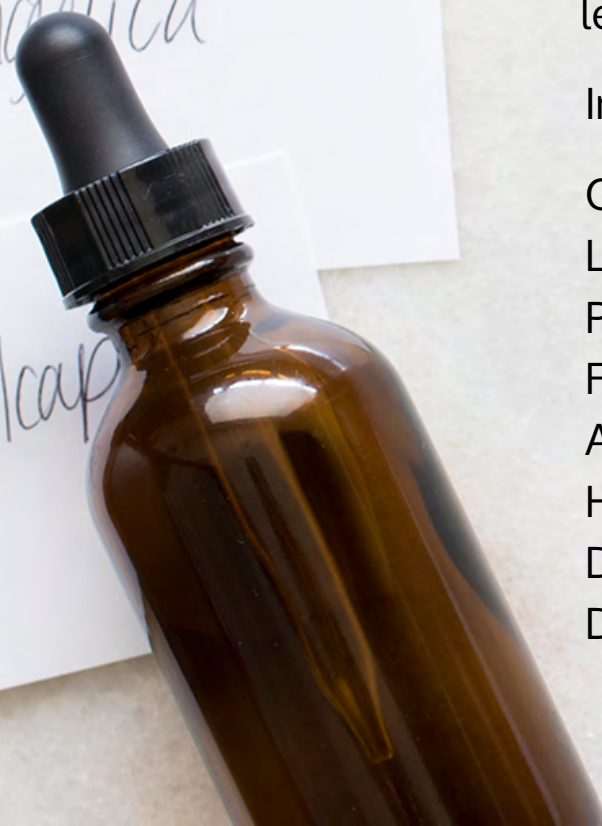
Wort

gallica

leap

Echinacea

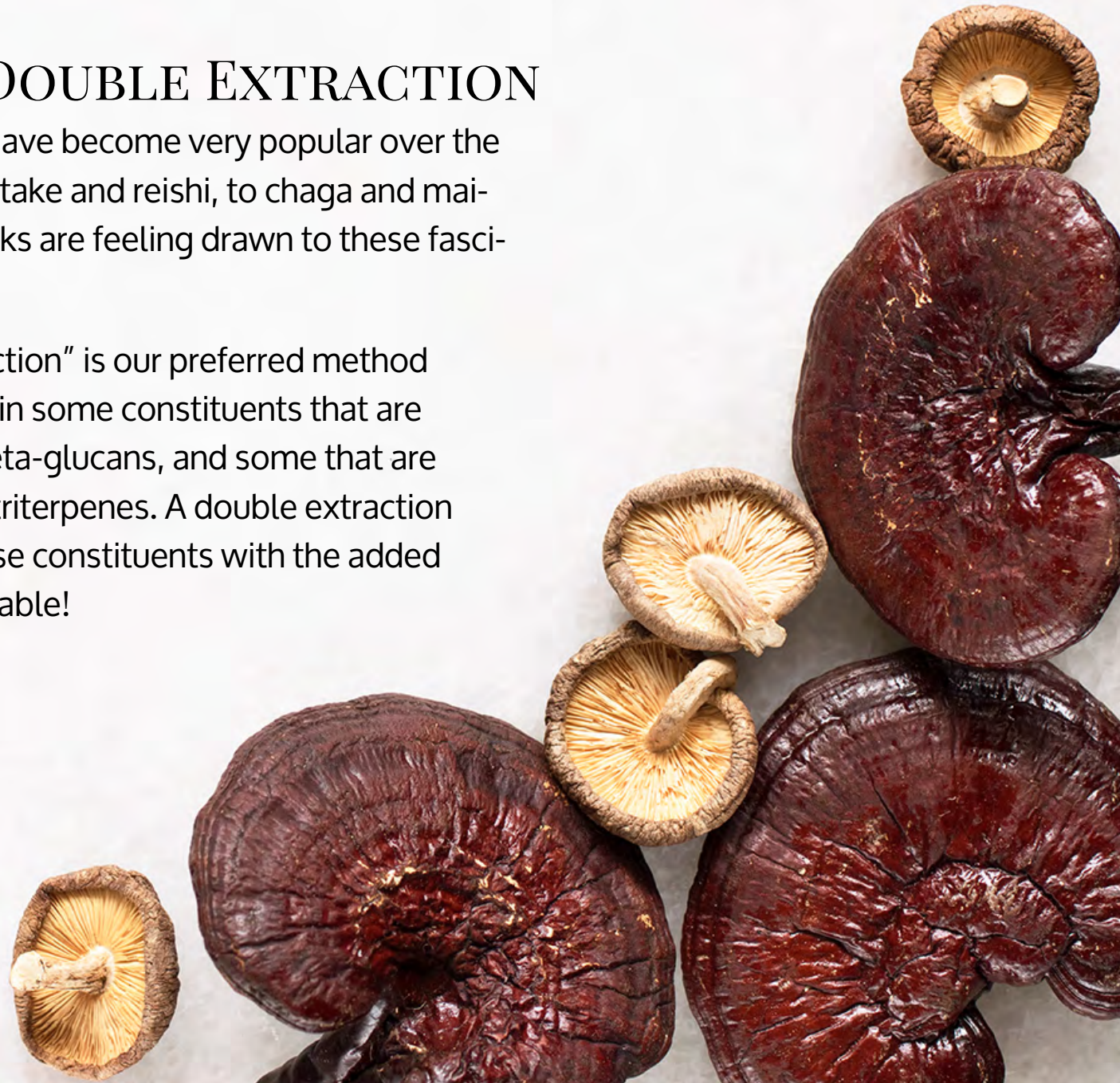
St. John's Wort



MUSHROOM DOUBLE EXTRACTION

Medicinal mushrooms have become very popular over the last few years. From shiitake and reishi, to chaga and maitake, more and more folks are feeling drawn to these fascinating and useful fungi.

Making a “double extraction” is our preferred method since mushrooms contain some constituents that are water-soluble, called beta-glucans, and some that are alcohol-soluble, called triterpenes. A double extraction effectively pulls out these constituents with the added benefit of being shelf-stable!



MUSHROOM DOUBLE EXTRACTION

INGREDIENTS

- 80 proof or higher alcohol (we use vodka)
- Organic dried mushrooms such as Reishi, Maitake, Chaga, or Shiitake
- Spring water

EQUIPMENT

- Quart-size mason jars
- Stock pot
- Straining equipment: funnel and cheesecloth



MUSHROOM DOUBLE EXTRACTION

INSTRUCTIONS

- Make an alcohol extract by filling a mason jar halfway full of dried mushrooms. Fill jar with the alcohol, making sure that it completely covers the mushrooms but leave about a 1/2 inch of space at the top of the jar. Let it sit for a month, shaking daily.
- After a month, strain mushroom-infused alcohol into another glass jar and set aside.
- Next, make a water extract by bringing a half gallon of water to a simmer in a stock pot. Add the mushrooms from the alcohol extract to the simmering water.
- Simmer the mushrooms for about 2 hours, until the water has reduced to approximately 8-16 ounces. Make sure to keep an eye on the water level, as you don't want it to completely evaporate. You may need to add water to the pot throughout the process.
- Let it cool. Strain and compost the mushrooms, reserving the mushroom-infused water.
- Combine the water extract with the alcohol extract.
- The final product is your mushroom double extract! The alcohol percentage should be somewhere between 25-35%, making it shelf-stable.



GLYCERITES

Have you been searching for an alternative to alcohol-based tinctures? Maybe you like your remedies a little on the sweet side?

A great solvent for preserving plant constituents without the use of alcohol, glycerine extracts are also known as "glycerites" and make an excellent choice for administering herbal support to pets, children, or people with alcohol sensitivities.

Glycerites have a shelf life of 14-24 months.



GLYCERITES

Ratios: A mixture of 60% or more glycerine to 40% or less water is a safe ratio.

If you are working with fresh, moist herbs, you can use 100% glycerine for your extract, just be sure to muddle well.

- Fill a mason jar 1/2 full with dried herb or 2/3 full with fresh herb.
- In a separate jar, mix 3 parts organic Vegetable Glycerine and 1 part distilled water. Shake to combine.
- Pour liquid mixture over the herb and completely cover to fill the jar.
- Label container with date, ratio of glycerine to water, and herbs used. Agitate daily for 4-6 weeks.
- Strain with cheesecloth, bottle, label.



Wondering which herbs to try first?

Burdock, Chamomile, Cleavers, Dandelion, Echinacea, Elderflowers, Fennel, Ginger, Goldenseal, Hawthorn, Mugwort, Mullein, Nettle, Oat Tops, Peppermint, Skullcap, Valerian.

HERBAL INFUSED VINEGARS

Did you know that vinegar can be infused with medicinal herbs to create wonderful alcohol-free extracts? While not as potent as alcohol based tinctures, an herbal vinegar extract is another effective alternative for children or anyone abstaining from alcohol.

Vinegar has been used for thousands of years to preserve food, disinfect surfaces, deodorize, and to make medicinal formulas. In fact, before stills were used to produce high-proof alcohol, most herbal extracts were made with solvents like water, wine, and vinegar. The original Four Thieves formula is thought to have been made with vinegar as the base.

We know that vinegar, especially raw apple cider vinegar, offers health benefits in addition to its extraction abilities. Studies show that vinegar can be helpful for maintaining normal blood sugar and cholesterol levels, is helpful for maintaining healthy skin and hair, as well as aiding in digestion and managing fatigue. Medicinal extractions can be made with vinegar alone or with both vinegar and alcohol to create an acetous tincture. This method will release more active properties than vinegar alone, but straight vinegar extracts still have a lot to offer if properly prepared.

Dried herbs tend to produce the most effective medicinal vinegar extract, but fresh herbs can be used to make nutritive or culinary recipes, since the vinegar will extract minerals as well as the flavor of the herbs.



HERBAL INFUSED VINEGARS

- Chop or grind your dried herb to a coarse powder. You can also find many powdered medicinal herbs available online at www.mountainroseherbs.com. Fill 1/5 of your sterilized jar with the herb. Pour organic apple cider vinegar over the herb until the jar is filled to the top. Cover tightly and allow to extract for 14 days in a cool, dark place. Be sure to shake the jar daily.
- After 2 weeks, strain the herb through cheesecloth. Set the strained liquid in a capped jar on a shelf and allow the sediment to settle overnight. Decant the clear liquid layer into another sterilized jar using a strainer. Cap tightly, label, and store for up to 6 months in a cool, dark place.
- If you are infusing the vinegar with roots or barks, there is one more step. Once the mixture has extracted for 2 weeks and the herbs have been strained out, heat the infusion just short of boiling and filter through cloth while hot. The heat will help congeal albumin in the solution that can then be removed when straining. Excess albumin can encourage your extract to spoil quickly.
- Due to the acid content in vinegar, be sure to avoid direct contact with your teeth. You may want to mix each dose of medicinal vinegar with water or tea to dilute the acidity.



FIRE CIDER

Fire Cider is a traditional remedy with deep roots in folk medicine. The tasty combination of vinegar infused with powerful spices makes this recipe especially pleasant and easy to incorporate into your daily diet to help boost natural health processes, stimulate digestion, and get you nice and warmed up on cold days.

Because this is a folk preparation, the ingredients can change from year to year depending on when you make it and what's growing around you. The standard base ingredients are apple cider vinegar, garlic, onion, ginger, horseradish, and hot peppers, but there are plenty of other herbs that can be thrown in for added kick. Some people like to bury their fire cider jar in the ground for a month while it extracts and then dig it up during a great feast to celebrate the changing of the seasons.

Optional Ingredients:

Thyme, Horseradish Root Powder, Reshyps, Star Anise, Schisandra Berries, Astragalus, Burdock, Oregano, Peppercorns, Beet Root Powder, Habanero Powder, Bird's Eye Chili Powder, Whole Chili Peppers, Orange, Grapefruit, and Lime.



FIRE CIDER

INGREDIENTS

- 1/2 cup fresh grated organic ginger root
- 1/2 cup fresh grated organic horseradish root
- 1 medium organic onion, chopped
- 10 cloves of organic garlic, crushed or chopped
- 2 organic jalapeno peppers, chopped
- Zest and juice from 1 organic lemon
- Several sprigs of fresh organic rosemary or 2 tbsp of dried rosemary leaves
- 1 tbsp organic turmeric powder
- 1/4 tsp organic cayenne powder
- organic apple cider vinegar
- raw local honey to taste

DIRECTIONS

Prepare all of your roots, fruits, and herbs and place them in a quart sized jar. If you've never grated fresh horseradish, be prepared for a powerful sinus opening experience! Use a piece of natural parchment paper under the lid to keep the vinegar from touching the metal or a plastic lid if you have one. Shake well! Store in a dark, cool place for one month and remember to shake daily.

After one month, use cheesecloth to strain out the pulp, pouring the vinegar into a clean jar. Be sure to squeeze as much of the liquid goodness as you can from the pulp while straining. Next, comes the honey! Add 1/4 cup of honey and stir until incorporated. Taste your cider and add another 1/4 cup until you reach the desired sweetness.



HERBAL SYRUPS

Syrup is a great way to administer those not-so-pleasant tasting herbs to kids and adults alike. Also a versatile preparation for culinary recipes, herb infused syrup makes a great addition to teas, desserts, bubbly beverages, cocktails, or simply on its own by the spoonful! Syrups can be prepared with sugar, but we love to use raw local honey!

The best thing about syrups is that like tea or tinctures, you can formulate with any combination of herbs to create remedies for your needs. While Elderberry syrup is the most popular, we also enjoy Ginger, Thyme, Elecampane, Chamomile, Peppermint, Marshmallow root, Schisandra berry, Echinacea root, Elder flower, Hawthorn berry, Holy Basil, and Hop flower syrups!

Tip: For proper preservation, a ratio of 1:1 (tea to honey) is recommended. You can also add some tincture to help preserve your syrup longer and give it an extra medicinal boost.



HERBAL SYRUPS

BERRY ROOTY SYRUP

INGREDIENTS

- 3 cups cold water
- $\frac{3}{4}$ cup organic elderberries
- $\frac{1}{4}$ cup organic schisandra berries
- $\frac{1}{4}$ cup organic eleuthero root
- $\frac{1}{4}$ cup organic echinacea root
- 1 organic cinnamon stick
- $\frac{3}{4}$ to 1 cup raw local honey
- 1.5 ounces brandy (optional)
- 1 tsp fresh grated ginger root (optional)

DIRECTIONS

Combine herbs with cold water in a pot and bring to a boil. Reduce heat and allow herbs to simmer for 30 to 40 minutes. Remove from heat and mash the berries in the liquid mixture. Strain the herbs through cheesecloth and squeeze out the juice. Measure the liquid and add an equal amount of honey. Gently heat the honey and juice for a few minutes until well combined. Do not boil! Stir in brandy and bottle in sterilized glass. Label and keep refrigerated for up to 6 months.*

Optional: Add 1 part tincture or brandy to 3 parts syrup for a medicinal boost and longer shelf life.

Pour syrup into bottles and label. Store in the refrigerator, where it will last for up to 6 months.





HERBAL INFUSED OILS

Simply infusing oil with herbs can transform them into medicinal preparations. You can use herbal infused oils as the base for homemade massage oils, salves, lip balms, facial serums, hair treatments, body creams, soaps, and more!

A variety of dried herbs and organic carrier oils can be used depending on your specific needs. Jojoba oil and olive oil are wise choices because they have a long shelf life and are suitable for a variety of topical applications.

HERBS TO INFUSE

Arnica Flowers	Myrrh
Calendula Flowers	Peppermint
Cayenne Peppers	Plantain
Cedar Tips	Poke Root
Chamomile	Rose
Chickweed	Rosemary
Comfrey	St. John's Wort
Lavender	Thyme
Lemon Balm	Vanilla Beans
Mullein Flowers	Yarrow

Feel free to combine herbs or infused oils to create special blends:

Floral Oil – This aromatic oil smells divine and will lift the spirit. Apply to the skin after a shower, bath, or during a massage. To make, infuse organic rose petals, lavender flowers, or chamomile flowers in organic jojoba oil.

Sleep Oil – A fragrant blend of relaxing herbs, use after a bath or shower to help find tranquility and sleep. You can also rub on the temples at night before bed. Infuse a mixture of organic hops, chamomile flowers, and lavender flowers in organic olive or jojoba oil.



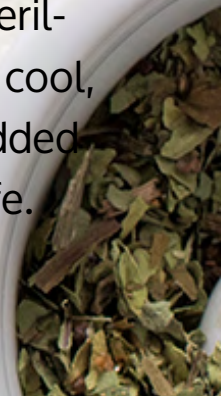
FOLK METHOD

- Place dried herbs in a clean quart jar. If using fresh herbs, wilt them first for at least 12 hours to remove the moisture (moisture will cause your oil to go rancid), cut into small pieces, and crush with a mortar and pestle before adding to the jar. You can find an extensive selection of dried herbs at www.mountainroseherbs.com.
- Pour enough oil to cover herbs by at least 1" and leave at least 1/2" of space at the top of the jar so the herbs will have room to expand. If your herbs soak up all of the oil, then pour more oil on top to ensure that the herbs are completely covered.
- Stir well and cap the jar tightly.
- Place the jar on a warm, sunny windowsill and shake once or more per day. You can also cover the jar with a brown paper bag if you prefer that to direct sunlight.
- After 4-6 weeks, strain the herbs out of the oil using cheesecloth. Make sure to squeeze out every precious drop of oil!
- Pour into glass bottles and store in a cool dark place. The oil should keep for at least a year. Vitamin E oil may also be added to prolong the shelf life.

QUICK METHOD

Another way to infuse oils in a pinch uses direct heat. Much care needs to be taken when creating herbal oils this way, because you don't want to fry your herbs!

- Place herbs in a crock-pot, double boiler, or electric yogurt maker, and cover with organic extra virgin olive oil (or other carrier oil of choice) leaving at least an inch or two of oil above the herbs. Gently heat the herbs over very low heat (preferably between 100 to 140 degrees Fahrenheit) for 1-5 hours until the oil takes on the color and scent of the herb.
- Turn off the heat and allow to cool. Once the oil is ready, strain using cheesecloth and bottle into dry, sterilized amber bottles for storage in a cool, dark place. Vitamin E oil may be added at this point to prolong the shelf life.



HERBAL SALVES

Salves are such a simple, effective, and useful medicinal preparations! They can easily be slipped into a purse, pocket, or first aid kit. Although semi-solid at room temperature, salves soften once applied to the skin, making them less messy to apply than oils. They also make great gifts and are an easy and approachable way to introduce newbies to the medicinal properties of herbs. Plus, salves can be crafted for a wide variety of topical uses. The addition of beeswax offers additional benefits including protective, soothing, emollient, nourishing, and healing properties.



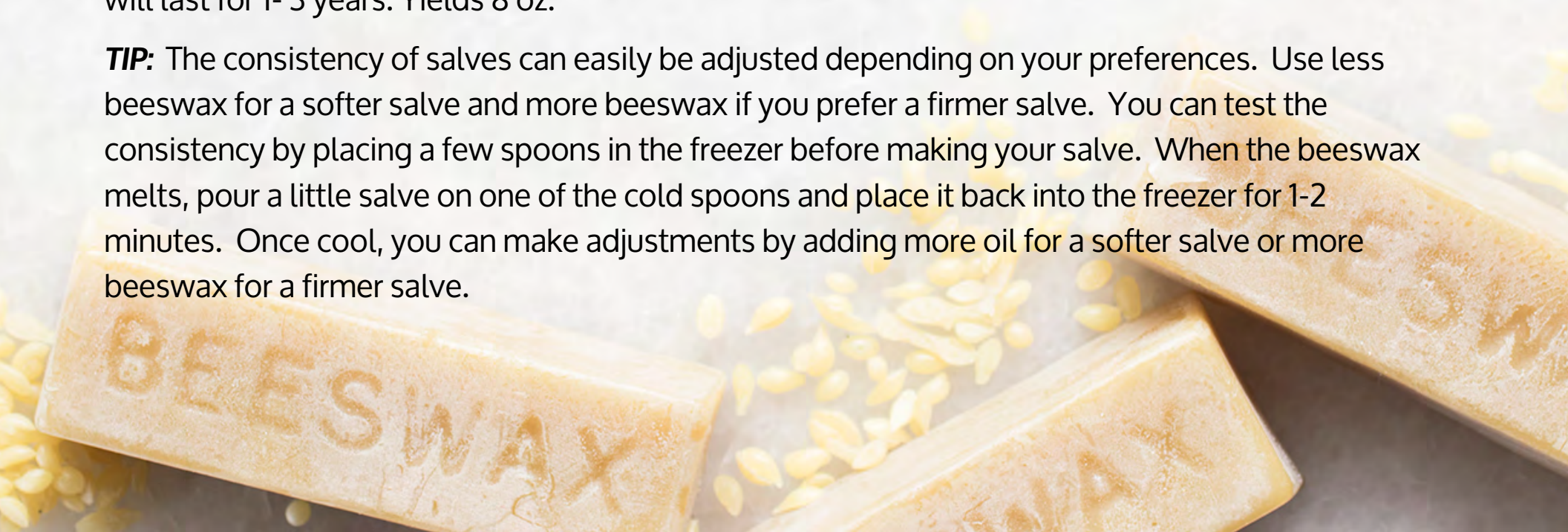
SALVE METHOD

- 8 oz herbal infused oil(s) of your choice. Choose one or a combination.
- 1 oz Beeswax (use Carnauba Wax for a vegan salve)
- Vitamin E Oil (optional)
- 10-20 drops essential oil of choice (optional). Some essential oils commonly used are Lavender and Tea Tree.
- Glass Jars or Tin Containers

DIRECTIONS

Place herbal infused oil and beeswax over a double boiler and gently warm over low heat until the beeswax melts. Remove from heat and add the essential oil and Vitamin E oil. Quickly pour into tins or glass jars and allow to cool completely. Salves should be stored in a cool location where they will remain semi-solid and will not continue to melt and solidify. If stored correctly, salves will last for 1- 3 years. Yields 8 oz.

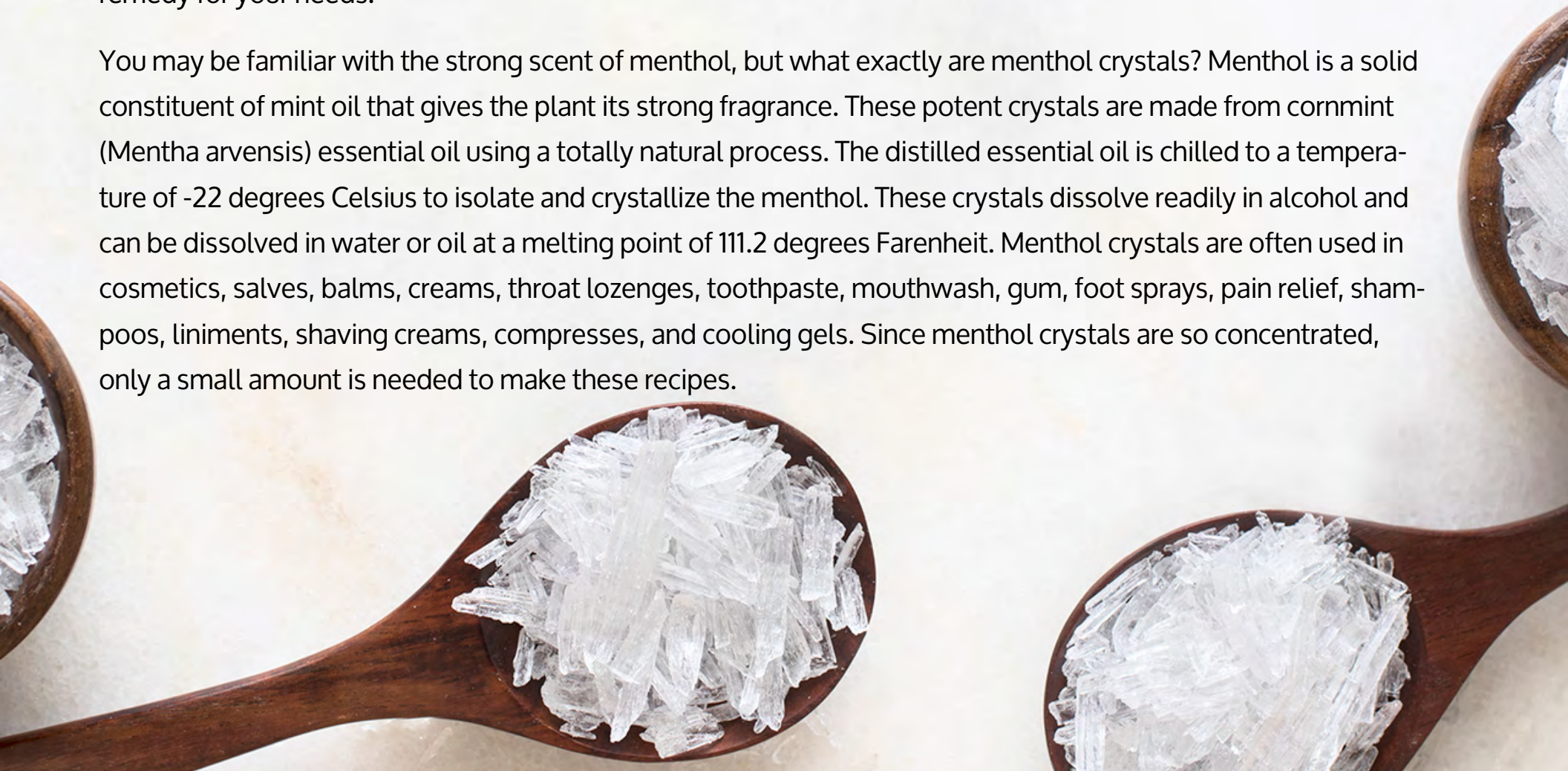
TIP: The consistency of salves can easily be adjusted depending on your preferences. Use less beeswax for a softer salve and more beeswax if you prefer a firmer salve. You can test the consistency by placing a few spoons in the freezer before making your salve. When the beeswax melts, pour a little salve on one of the cold spoons and place it back into the freezer for 1-2 minutes. Once cool, you can make adjustments by adding more oil for a softer salve or more beeswax for a firmer salve.



HERBAL CHEST RUBS

Need something cooling and soothing to open up the respiratory passages, but want to steer clear of petroleum-based products? Unfortunately, most of the chest rubs we grew up using are made with a base of petroleum jelly and turpentine, along with herbal ingredients that are actually helpful, like eucalyptus and menthol. Such a shame! Making your own rubs at home is super easy and allows you to harness the powerful benefits of these plants without relying on a byproduct of the oil industry. All you need is a simple salve base of organic carrier oil and beeswax to get started. You can then add essential oils or menthol crystals to formulate a remedy for your needs.

You may be familiar with the strong scent of menthol, but what exactly are menthol crystals? Menthol is a solid constituent of mint oil that gives the plant its strong fragrance. These potent crystals are made from cornmint (*Mentha arvensis*) essential oil using a totally natural process. The distilled essential oil is chilled to a temperature of -22 degrees Celsius to isolate and crystallize the menthol. These crystals dissolve readily in alcohol and can be dissolved in water or oil at a melting point of 111.2 degrees Fahrenheit. Menthol crystals are often used in cosmetics, salves, balms, creams, throat lozenges, toothpaste, mouthwash, gum, foot sprays, pain relief, shampoos, liniments, shaving creams, compresses, and cooling gels. Since menthol crystals are so concentrated, only a small amount is needed to make these recipes.



BASIC VAPOR RUB

- 8 oz organic carrier oil (we used almond oil)
- 3/4 oz – 1 oz natural beeswax, coarsely chopped or use pastilles
- 25 drops organic eucalyptus essential oil
- 10 drops organic peppermint essential oil

DIRECTIONS

Depending on the texture you want, measure out the beeswax. Less wax will yield more of an ointment viscosity, while using the whole ounce of wax will create a more solid, lip balm like consistency. Place beeswax and oil in the top of a double boiler and heat gently until the beeswax melts. Remove from the stovetop and stir in the essential oils, counting each drop carefully. Immediately pour the mixture into glass jars and place lids loosely over the jars so the oils don't escape, but allow to cool completely before placing caps onto the containers.

MENTHOL CHEST BALM

- 8 oz organic carrier oil (we used olive)
- 1/2 – 1 tsp organic menthol crystals
- 3/4 oz – 1 oz natural beeswax, coarsely chopped or use pastilles
- 20 drops organic eucalyptus essential oil
- 10 drops organic rosemary essential oil

DIRECTIONS

Depending on the texture you want, measure out the beeswax. Less wax will yield more of an ointment viscosity, while the whole ounce of wax will create a more solid, lip balm like consistency. Heat the olive oil and beeswax in a double boiler until the beeswax melts. Remove from heat. Add menthol crystals (1/2 tsp for a gentle balm or 1 tsp for a stronger remedy) and essential oils, stir until dissolved, and quickly pour into jars. Immediately place lids loosely over the jars so the oils don't escape, but allow to cool completely before placing caps onto the containers.

Note: The menthol crystals may be irritating when inhaled, so always use them in a well ventilated area or wear a mask if needed.

RESOURCES

ORGANIC BULK HERBS

ORGANIC CARRIER OILS

ORGANIC ESSENTIAL OILS

ORGANIC GLYCERINE

ORGANIC MENTHOL CRYSTALS

BUTTERS AND WAXES

TEA SUPPLIES

AMBER DROPPER BOTTLES

SALVE TINS

GLASS JARS

CHEESECLOTH

FUNNELS

HERBAL MEDICINE MAKING BOOKS

MOUNTAIN ROSE BLOG

