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Botanical Skincare

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Infused Oils

Herbal Infused Oil:

An herbal infused oil (also known as a macerated oil) is carrier oil that has been 'infused' with the goodness of a herb or a flower. By letting herbs and flowers infuse in oil for a certain period of time we are able to extract many of the powerful and healing properties of the plant into a usable form.

Essential oil:

An essential oil is a concentrated hydrophobic liquid containing volatile (easily evaporated at normal temperatures) chemical compounds from plants.

Hydrosol:

Hydrosols, also known as hydrolats, are the aqueous product of distillation and carry the hydrophilic properties (water-soluble components) of the plant in solution as well as microscopic droplets of essential oils in suspension.

Instructions to Make a Hydrosol

You will need:

- A stainless steel pot with well-fitting lid
- A small bowl or glass measuring cup to set inside of pot to collect hydrosol
- A vegetable steamer basket or metal trivet (something to put the collecting bowl on that gets it off of the bottom of the pot)
- Any herb of choice
- Filtered water
- Ice

Clean and sanitize all the dishes. Place trivet in bottom of pot and place collecting bowl or measuring cup on top of the trivet. Surround trivet with plant material and add filtered water. Use enough water to cover the plant material. Place the lid on the pot upside down and put a bag of ice on the lid. Turn on the stove to medium high.

After awhile the water will boil and the steam and essential oils from the plant will condense on the lid and drip down into the collecting bowl. Check on it periodically and remove from heat when most of the water has been collected into the bowl. Let cool with the lid on and then transfer the contents of the bowl to a 1-2 oz

mister bottle. Label and use as a facial mist for a refreshing, toning spritz! The mist will last for several months at room temperature, and I like to store extra hydrosol in the fridge and refill my mister bottle as needed.

Methods for Making Herbal Infused Oils

*I typically 1 oz of dried herb for 4-6 oz of oil.

Oven method for herb infused oils.

Place the herbs and oil in a large ovenproof dish and place in a preheated 250 degrees oven. Turn the oven off and place the herb filled bowl in the oven for 24 hours uncovered. Then strain.

Double boiler method for herb infused oils.

Place the herbs and oil in a double boiler and bring to a slow simmer. Slowly heat for 30-60 minutes. Keep the heat nice and low for a longer simmer time and to help release medicinal properties. Decant, bottle, and store following the instructions above.

Don't forget to label!

InstantPot method for infused oils.

Place the herbs and oil in a sterilized mason jar and cap tightly. Set the jars in the instant pot with some water in the pot and set it to 72 hours on the yogurt setting. Let infuse for 5 days, continuing to reset the instant pot. Take out jars and strain out plant material.

Dehydrator method for infused oils.

Place the herbs and oil in a sterilized mason jar. Set the jars in dehydrator with the shelves taken out. Set to 100 degrees F. Let infuse for 5-7 days. Take out jars, cool and strain out plant material.

Car method for infused oils:

Place the herbs and oil in a sterilized mason jar. Wrap the jar in brown paper and place in car during warm months. The heat from the car will gently infuse the herbs (but be careful on really hot days, you don't want it to get over 125F). Let infuse for 7-10 days and shake every time you get out of your car. Then strain, label and store in a cool dark place.

Labeling Tips

- Common name
- Botanical name
- Fresh or dried (and plant part if applicable)
- Weight to Volume Ratio (herb : oil)
- Type of oil
- Date
- NOTE: I like to use masking tape because it transfers easily and you can peel off and stick on storage container of your herbal infused oil

Examples:

Holy basil (*Ocimum tenuiflorum*) Dry [1:4, grapeseed oil] 03.02.20

Calendula (*Calendula officinalis*) Dry [1:6, olive oil] 03.02.20

RECIPES:

Herbal Salve

To make an herbal salve, combine infused oils with beeswax and melt over gentle heat (such as over a double boiler, in an oven at a very low temperature, or in a jar surrounded by water in a crockpot on low). Use a ratio of 1 oz beeswax to 1 cup of infused oil. If adding essential oils, place drops of essential oil in bottom of

container that it will be stored in, then pour in liquid salve. Stir with a chopstick or knife to disperse. It will solidify quickly as it cools down.

Herbal Lip Balm

- 0.5 oz shea butter
- 1 oz herbal infused coconut oil
- 0.25 oz castor oil
- 0.4 oz beeswax

Place the oils, wax and shea butter in a heatproof jar or glass measuring cup. Set this down into a pan filled with a few inches of water and bring the water to just under a simmer. Heat until the wax and shea butter is melted. Remove from heat, pour into container.

Choosing Herbs

There are many ways that you can choose which herbs you want to begin incorporating into your life through various herbal remedies. The important thing to remember is that you can't really go wrong. Here is a lovely quote from Melissa Kohl.

"Plants work. They do. They work if you simmer leaves or if you infuse them for 8 hours with a lid on. They work if you use organic herbs or if you have to resort to Celestial Seasonings Chamomile tea. They work if you write their name down on a piece of paper and keep it in your pocket, if you carry them on you, if you rub them on your body, if you ingest them, if you call on the plant spirit and think of them, if you tincture them. Plants work because we evolved with them. Every aspect of our being is interwoven with them. Their phytochemicals need to wash our cells regularly for our bodies to function properly. We have to see them for our immune systems to function properly. We have to smell them for our cardiovascular systems to function optimally. We must be in close connection with them for our spirits to feel comfortable on this earth."

-Melissa Laurita Kohl

<http://www.herbstalk.org/blog/herbal-energetics-or-not>

Herbal Actions Reference Sheet

Adaptogen - increases the ability to respond and adapt to stress

Alterative – “cleans” the blood, increases the efficiency of lymph glands, liver, kidneys, to detoxify and cool the blood

Amphoterich – normalizes organ function, can either stimulate or sedate, activate or tonify

Anti-depressant - relieves symptoms of depression

Anti-inflammatory - reduces inflammation

Anti-microbial - kills infectious organisms

Anti-spasmodic – relieves muscle spasms or tightness

Aromatic - contains high amounts of volatile oils, stimulates digestion, reduces congestion, may be diaphoretic, see also **Carminative, Diaphoretic**

Astringent - binds tissues together, reduces secretions

Carminative - stimulates digestion, relieves flatulence, spasm and bloating, see also **Aromatic** and **Stomachic**

Circulatory stimulant – stimulates circulation, increases cardiac function

Demulcent - soothes irritated tissues, usually internally
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Diaphoretic - causes sweating, surface releasing

Diuretic - stimulates urine production, reduces blood volume/pressure, balances fluid levels

Emollient - soothes and moistens tissues, usually external

Expectorant - stimulates the break up and elimination of mucus from the respiratory system

Hepatic - tonifies and detoxifies the liver

Lymphatic - stimulates lymphatic drainage, reduces lymphatic swelling

Nervine relaxant - relaxes the central nervous system

Stomachic - stimulates digestion

Vulnerary - promotes tissue healing by increasing cell regeneration, used internally or externally

Learn More

Recommended Reading

- Herbal Constituents: Foundations of Phytochemistry – Lisa Ganora
- Herbal Therapy and Supplements – David Winston and Merrily Kuhn
- Medicinal Plants of the Southern Appalachians – Patricia Howell
- Adaptogens: Herbs for Strength, Stamina and Stress Relief – David Winston and Steven Maimes
- Alchemy of Herbs – Rosalee de la Foret
- Growing 101 Herbs that Heal – Tammy Hartung
- Medicine Makers Handbook – James Green

Learn More:

- Botanologos
 - Beginner and intermediate online herb programs
- Chestnut School of Herbal Medicine
 - Has various online programs
- Learning Herbs
 - Membership site with lots of great info
- American Herbalist Guild
 - Lots of free webinars and herbal education, especially for people interested in clinical herbalism

Herb Sourcing:

- Regional Herb growers
 - Pangaea plants
 - Heilbron herbs
 - Gentle Harmony Farm – has 3 day Small Scale Herb Farming Training!
- Large scale herb sellers
 - Mountain Rose Herbs
 - Starwest Botanicals
 - Frontier Herbs
 - Monterrey Bay Spice Company
- Brands I trust for purchasing products
 - Herb Pharm
 - Gaia
 - Red Moon Herbs
 - Heartsong Herbs
 - Heilbron Herbs

