

Tea from the Garden

We grow a number of plants in the Mountain Community Garden that can be used in making teas (hot infusion), cold infusions, decoctions, and oxymels. This educational session will focus on infusions, hot and cold using plants that we grow in the garden. We will take a tour of the Garden and you will pick the leaves, flowers or seeds from the plants that you would like to use to make your own tea. The following information provides a general overview and specific recipes for plants you will find in our Garden. Resources for researching additional information on making tea blends and growing plants for teas are provided.

Infusions, Decoctions, and Oxymels

Hot infusions (such as when we brew tea) draw out vitamins, enzymes, and aromatic volatile oils. Flowers, leaves, and aromatic roots are all ideal ingredients for hot infusions

Decoctions are simmered teas that are perfect for extracting the properties of hard roots, dried berries, barks, and seeds. They are much stronger in flavor than herbal infusions and also more concentrated.

Oxymel – from the Latin oxymeli meaning “acid and honey” has been made and used in many ways throughout the ages. Oxymel use has been documented since the age of Hippocrates as a means to use and extract herbs that are not so pleasant in flavor when taken through other methods (Hippocrates, 400 B.C.E.). Traditionally, an Oxymel recipe would be used to administer herbs that might not be so pleasant to take on their own. Additionally, some of the more pleasant herbs can become even more delightful after a bath in honey and vinegar!

Pineapple Sage Tea



The sweet, strong, pleasant odor of pineapple sage is suggestive of pineapple fruit.

Ingredients:

Water

Pineapple Sage leaves

Instructions

Add a few fresh pineapple sage leaves to water, boil for a few minutes and strain.

Calendula Tea



Put a pinch of dried or about four fresh leaves and a pinch of fresh or dried petals into a tea bag or teapot. Pour boiled water (176 to 186 deg F) over tea. Allow to steep four minutes. Strain. Serve with a couple of calendula petals. This is a gentle slightly sweet tea. The leaves have a mild peppery but fresh green flavor. (Homegrown Tea, Cassie Liversidge).

Mint — peppermint, spearmint, chocolate mint



Cucumber Mint Cold Infusion

Thinly slice one cucumber. Peel if it isn't organic! Add the sliced cucumbers to a 1/2 gallon glass jar, add 8 muddled fresh mint leaves, and fill with filtered water. Stir gently and place in refrigerator for at least 4 hours or overnight.

Four Mints Herbal hot or iced tea (Healing Herbal Infusions, Colleen Codekas)

The mint family is large and many of the species in this family have been used for years. Mint leaves are full of volatile oils that give off a wonderful aroma. Fresh leaves are great, but you can also use dried mint leaves.

This makes about 4 cups

Ingredients:

4 cups of water

½ cup fresh or 1 tbsp dried peppermint leaves

½ cup fresh or 1 tbsp dried spearmint leaves

½ cup fresh or 1 tbsp dried lemon balm leaves

½ cup fresh or 1 tbsp dried catnip leaves

Instructions

Boil water and pour over herbs (you can use a quart size mason jar). For hot tea, let steep for 15-20 min. For an iced tea let the infusion cool to room temperature and then strain and pour over ice cubes.

Other mint family leaves can also be used in this tea such as bee balm, hyssop, chocolate mint.

Chamomile (German and Roman)



Basic Fresh Flower Chamomile Tea

Ingredients:

- 1 handful of fresh chamomile flowers (increase petal amounts for stronger tea)
- 8 ounces boiling water
- 2 apple mint leaves OPTIONAL

Instructions:

1. Harvest the fresh flowers by removing the entire flower head from the stem. Rinse the chamomile flowers in warm water and pat dry. Chamomile tea is best made using freshly harvested flowers. If necessary, it is possible to store flowers in the refrigerator for up to 48 hours. Wrap the petals in a wet paper towel and store in an airtight container.
2. Boil water in a tea kettle or large pot on the stove. Infusion tea kettles are the best option for fresh flower teas since they have built-in devices to keep the petals separated. Alternatively, you can use another infusion device such as a tea ball or cheesecloth as a makeshift tea bag. Always use pure or spring water and not hot tap water when brewing tea to preserve flavors.
3. Place flower petals in an infuser and let the tea steep in the kettle or pot for 5 minutes.
4. Remove the flower petals and optional mint leaves before pouring into a teacup. Enjoy!

Chamomile and Lavender Tea

Ingredients:

- 1/2 cup fresh chamomile flowers
- 1/2 cup fresh lavender flowers
- 1/2 cup apple mint leaves
- 2 whole lemons - juiced
- 1/4 cup honey

Instructions:

1. Use a kettle or large pot to boil water. Remove from heat and cool for 1 minute.
2. Add the chamomile flowers, lavender flowers, and mint leaves to a tea ball and infuse in the hot water. Steep for 5 minutes.
3. Remove the tea ball or use a fine mesh sieve to strain loose flowers and leaves.
4. Add lemon juice and honey to hot tea. Serve immediately.

Lemon Verbena

Lemon Verbena and Mint Tea



Refreshing herbal tea made with fresh lemon verbena and mint leaves.

- Prep time: 10 minutes
- Yield: Makes 2 cups

Ingredients:

- 1/2 cup of fresh mint leaves (not the stems, they're bitter), rinsed, lightly packed (about 20 leaves)
- 1/2 cup of fresh lemon verbena leaves, rinsed, lightly packed (about 10-15 leaves)
- 2 cups of water

Instructions:

Heat water: Bring a pot of fresh water almost, but not quite to a boil.

Pour over mint and lemon verbena in tea pot: Put the mint and verbena leaves in a teapot. Pour the hot water over the leaves. Let sit for 3-5 minutes. Strain into tea cups.

from Simply Recipes ~ https://www.simplyrecipes.com/recipes/lemon_verbena_mint_herb_tea/

Rose



Rose Petal Tea:

Ingredients:

2 cups fresh fragrant rose petals (about 15 large roses) *

3 cups water

Honey or granulated sugar to taste

* All roses that you intend to consume must be free of pesticides. Do not use or eat flowers from florists, nurseries, or garden centers. In many cases these flowers have been treated with pesticides not labeled for food crops. The tastiest roses are usually the most fragrant.

Instructions:

Clip and discard bitter white bases from the rose petals; rinse petals thoroughly and pat dry. In a small saucepan over medium-high heat, place the prepared rose petals. Cover with water and bring just to a simmer; let simmer for approximately 5 minutes or until the petals become discolored (darkened).

Remove from heat and strain the hot rose petal liquid into teacups. Add honey or sugar to taste.

Makes 4 servings.

Rose Hip Tea Recipe

Ingredients:

Rose hips

Water

Instructions:

Use 1 tsp per 8 oz of boiling water and let steep for 5-10 minutes or steep 10 tsp in a quart of boiling water then add 3 quarts of cold water and refrigerate.

Rose Hip and Hibiscus Tea

Rose Hip and Hibiscus Tea

Ingredients:

- 2 tablespoons rose hips
- 2 tablespoons hibiscus flowers
- 2 cups water
- A little honey (OPTIONAL)

Instructions:

1. Bring water to a rapid boil in a pot on the stove.
2. Turn down the heat and add the dried rosehips and hibiscus flowers to the boiling water.
3. Let the tea steep for 10 to 15 minutes with a lid covering the pot.
4. Use a fine mesh sieve to strain the dried leaves from the hot water.
5. Pour the tea concentrate into tea cups and serve with a dash of honey or a sprig of mint.

Rosehip tea is one of the easiest wild foods to forage for and harvest. The rose plant is easily recognizable and hardy enough to grow in numerous different locales. Grow a few bushes in your own yard and brew delicious rosehip tea. The cook time is only 10 to 15 minutes, so you can sip this sweet and tart elixir in no time.

Lemon Balm

(<https://www.herbalremediesadvice.org/lemon-balm-tea.html>)

Rest & Digest Tea

This tea is lightly floral, delicious, and calming.

1 tablespoon dried lemon balm
1 tablespoon dried chamomile flowers
1 tablespoon dried rose petals
1 tablespoon dried oatstraw
Pinch of dried lavender flowers

Steep the herbs in 14 ounces of hot water, covered,
for 5 (or 20) minutes.
Strain. Add honey if desired.
Enjoy!



Cold Brew Lemon Balm

A refreshing drink for hot summer days

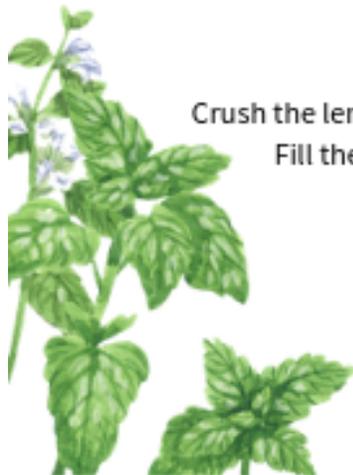
2 springs fresh lemon balm (15-20 leaves)
1 quart water

Crush the lemon balm (to release its scent) and add it to a quart jar.
Fill the jar with cool water, cover, and put in the fridge.

Steep for 30 minutes or overnight.

Strain, only if desired.

Drink within 24 hours.



Lemon Balm Nourishing Infusion

A strong brew that is deeply relaxing.

1/2 cup dried lemon balm
3 1/2 cups of water

Place the lemon balm in a 1-quart jar or teapot.
Fill the jar with just-boiled water.
Add honey or stevia if desired.
Let steep, covered, for 4 hours or overnight.
Strain.
Drink within 24 hours.



Tulsi Basil



Sacred Tulsi Herbal Tea Time

Try a cup or two of this tea in the afternoon when you are feeling a bit sluggish or had one of those mornings when your life got the best of you. It's best enjoyed while sitting in a comfortable chair reading an uplifting poem or outside under a tree.

- 3 parts [holy basil](#)
- 2 parts [rosemary](#)
- 1 part [peppermint](#)
- 1 part [cinnamon](#)
- 1 part [cardamon](#)
- 1 part [fennel](#)

Pour 2 cups hot water over 4 tablespoons of tea. Steep for 15 minutes and strain.

Rosemary



Anise Hyssop

The Cheyenne drank a tepid tea of anise hyssop to relieve the pain from coughing with chest colds. This herb produces sweating, and the Cheyenne also used it for sweatlodges. The Cree added it to regular tea to improve the taste, the Dakota and Omaha people flavored cooked foods with it, and the Iroquois made it into a wash against the itching of poison ivy. It's also been used as a traditional poultice for burns.

Ingredients

2 teaspoons of fresh or 1 teaspoon of dried herb in a mug of hot water

Instructions

Steep for 7-10 minutes for a slightly sedating and tranquilizing tea.

Raspberry

(Mountain Rose Herbs <https://www.mountainroseherbs.com/products/raspberry-leaf/profile>)

Raspberry leaf is a balanced herb for everyone of any age. Plus, raspberry leaf has vitamins and minerals (like iron, manganese, and niacin) in an easily absorbable form. You can pair it with other nutritive herbs like nettle and rosehips.

Raspberry leaves are among the most pleasant tasting of all the herbal remedies, with a taste much like black tea, without the caffeine. Raspberries were said to have been discovered by the Olympian gods themselves while searching for berries on Mount Ida. Raspberries are indigenous to Asia Minor and North America, with the first real records of domestication coming from the writings of Palladius, a Roman agriculturist. By Medieval times it had a great many uses, including the juices which were used in paintings and illuminated manuscripts. King Edward the 1st (1272-1307) was said to be the first to call for mass cultivation of raspberries, whose popularity spread quickly throughout Europe. Teas of raspberry leaves were given to women of the Cherokee, Iroquois, and Mohawk nations in North America, and have earned approval of the authoritative British Herbal Compendium.

Raspberry Leaf Tea Recipe

Ingredients

1 to 2 tsp dried raspberry leaves
1 cup boiling water

Instructions

Pour boiling water over leaves and steep for 10 minutes. Sweeten if you like.

Raspberry and Nettle Leaf, Rosehips, Hibiscus And Orange Tea

This recipe creates 4 oz. of tea blend. One of the most helpful tools for home tea blending is a small kitchen scale. Measuring herbs by weight instead of volume enables you to maintain the accuracy and integrity of the blend! Or, you could just estimate.

Ingredients

- 1.5 oz. organic raspberry leaf
- 1 oz. organic nettle leaf
- 0.5 oz. organic rosehips
- 0.5 oz. organic hibiscus flowers
- 0.5 oz organic dried orange peel

Instructions

Blend together all ingredients. Place 1-3 teaspoons of the blend in a tea strainer, tea filter, or other tea accessory of choice. Pour freshly boiled water over the blend and let steep covered for at least 5 minutes, or longer to taste. This blend is also wonderful iced!

Lemon thyme

The lemony scent and flavor of this herb is very versatile — it works in any recipe calling for lemon including marinades, lemon herb seasonings, cookies or tea. In tea, it has a light lemony flavor that's excellent when blended with other herbs or dried fruit.

Ingredients

Making thyme tea is as easy as steeping a few thyme sprigs in hot water. You will need about 3 thyme sprigs for 1 1/2 cup of boiling water.

Instructions

If you have a tea ball infuser, you can also chop the thyme sprigs before steeping. Boil water and pour over tea. Steep until flavor is to your liking. Thyme tea tastes great on its own and you can also add a slice of ginger, lemon, and a little bit of honey to the tea. Cold thyme tea can be infused with different fruits. Just add some apple or peach slices to the cold thyme tea for a refreshing drink.

Borage

Borage is a self-seeding annual that grows into a large bushy plant about the size of a tomato plant. Its fuzzy, bristly leaves and stems are accentuated by stunning blue star flowers that bees adore. You can use borage flowers and young tender leaves in salads and iced teas. Borage adds a cucumber-like flavor for making infused water.

Ingredients

Take 1-3 tablespoons of fresh borage leaves (some flowers are okay, too) or 1-3 teaspoons of dried herb per cup of water

Instructions

Boil the water, pour over the herbs.

Let it steep for up to 20 minutes. Strain sweeten with stevia and/or honey, and sip slowly until finished.

Bee Balm

Bee Balm Tea

(<https://practicalselfreliance.com/using-bee-balm/>)

The individual petals of bee balm flowers pull out easily and can be dried to make a beautiful bright red tea. In season, the petals can also be used fresh. Like most herbal teas, it takes a bit longer to steep than a standard black tea.

Ingredients

1 tablespoon of dried flower petals or 2 tablespoons of fresh petals to every cup of water.

Instructions

The water should be just below the boiling point because herbal flowers are a bit more delicate than teas made with roots or stems. Pour boiling water over and steep for about 15 minutes.

Resources

How to create your own herbal tea blends (<https://blog.mountainroseherbs.com/guide-tea-blending>)

Guide to Making Tea (<https://blog.mountainroseherbs.com/guide-to-tea-brewing>)

What is the difference between green, white, and black tea?
(<https://blog.mountainroseherbs.com/difference-between-white-green-and-black-tea>)

How to Make Herbal Infusions & Decoctions (<https://blog.mountainroseherbs.com/herbal-infusions-and-decoctions>)

How to make Herbal Oxymels (<https://blog.mountainroseherbs.com/herbal-oxymels-methods>)

Books

Growing 101 Herbs That Heal, Gardening techniques, recipes, and remedies. 2000. Tammy Hartung. Story Books. Pownal, Vermont.

Healing Herbal Teas. 2016. Sarah Farr. Storey Publishing. North Adams, Massachusetts.

Homegrown Tea. An Illustrated Guide to Planting, Harvesting, and Blending Teas and Tisanes. 2014. Cassie Liversidge. St. Martin's Griffin. New York.

Healing Herbal Infusions. Colleen Codekas. 2018. Page Street Publishing Company. Salem, Massachusetts.

Alchemy of Herbs. Rosalee De La Foret. 2017. Hay House. Carlsbad, California.

The Herbal Kitchen. Kami McBride. 2017. Conari Press. Newburyport, Massachusetts.