

Greetings everyone!

Hooray for summer holidays! Here on Waiheke, crowds of people have been swarming around the beaches, cafes, restaurants ...and roads, - our adage has become "this might look like a footpath, but, it's actually a road!" But despite this, it's not the tourists which have become our number one menace, (I personally love to see them enjoying themselves on our beautiful island), but the summer sun as well as various outbreaks of sea-lice, mosquitos, sand-flies or one too many glasses of champagne.

In this issue we will talk about a number of natural ways to counteract summer heat, stings, burns and hangovers... for those of you who haven't been able to avoid them by other means: ie, staying in the shade during the hottest hours of the day: 11 - 3pm, covering up, drinking a glass of water for every glass of alcohol, swimming in turbulent water to avoid sea-lice, using mosquito nets.. and your commonsense!..

### COOLING HERBS:

The most common herbs used to assist cooling are mint, chamomile and lavender. These all grow readily in our New Zealand summer climate, affirming the herbalists philosophy that: "Nature's medicine chest knows what to provide when we need it the most!"

*Mint* is a member of the Lamiaceae family: flowering plants that comprise over 240 genera and 6,500 species worldwide, belonging specifically to the *Mentha* genus. It has endless uses; freshen up vegetable or fruit salads with a few chopped leaves, add aroma to your room or al fresco table by keeping a bunch in a vase, add the final touch to your cocktail, make a cooling bath by adding some 'mint tea' after a day at the beach, or imbibe the tea as a delicious and soothing nightcap! Mint tea has been a mainstay in Middle-eastern countries for centuries where it grows like a weed. They drink it very hot and very sweet, which probably helps them digest their often sand-baked meals, and keep their circulation systems in cooling mode. My 11 yr old son loves to pick a handful from our patch by the back-door and make cups of mint-tea for both of us before bedtime - adding a large spoonful of honey to his!



Warning: take care with mint essential oil, too much can literally 'burn' your skin!



Try our *Waiheke Herbs Mint Lip Balm*! For a fresh breath and to soothe dry lips. Our other flavours are *Berry, Orange and Liquorice*, containing only beeswax, coco-butter, Almond Oil and essential oil.

*Chamomile* is very well known these days - most shops sell chamomile tea, and this also makes a soothing, relaxing night-cap. Great for hangovers too. There are two main types: *Roman Chamomile*, the annual, upright variety, which only grows in summer, with a sweet apple-like aroma, and a more delicate structure with properties more effective for emotional/hormonal balancing... and

*German Chamomile*, the perennial ground-cover variety, suitable for chamomile lawns, with a stronger, more 'antiseptic' aroma, more suitable for anti-bacterial uses, and tissue regeneration.



Both *Roman* and *German* chamomile have excellent calming properties.

Interesting eh? In herbalism we learn that plants' physical appearance can give us clues at to it's 'personality' just as people's physical appearance can. The 'sunny' appearance of chamomile flowers give us an indication that this plant could help counteract the effects of the sun, by providing cooling and soothing properties. The Egyptians dedicated this herb to the sun, using it in cosmetics and perfumes designed to soothe. Scientific analysis has revealed *German Chamomile's* powerful anti-inflammatory agent; azulene. This blue-crystal forms in the essential oil, and is extracted by steam-distillation. Pregnant women should avoid large doses.



*Introducing Waiheke Herbs Summer Crème - using chamomile essential oil, plus geranium (for balancing), and bergamot (a freshener and toner) essential oils, Apricot and Almond oils, beeswax and coco-butter, and last but not least, (in our 'simple' recipe) we use colloidal silver as a natural preservative, anti-bacterial/anti-fungal agent. Perfect to re-hydrate, soothe and tone after a day at the beach! This crème has a light texture which initially may feel slightly oily, but this soaks in quickly, leaving your skin feeling fresh, soft and delicately scented. Great for those who can't tolerate the average skin cream with lists of 'un-pronounceable' ingredients a mile-long. We believe you shouldn't put anything on your skin you couldn't eat...! (if you can help it...) as our skin absorbs everything we put on it. We have three other varieties of crème: Spring, Autumn, and Rose, and a Winter balm. More about these in our next issue..!*

***Lavender:** Another common garden herb, numbering a few thousand varieties! Many lavenders flower from early to mid summer when we need them the most - as our pale winter skins become exposed to the increasingly strong sun! We won't go on about lavender too much, since we have covered this herb in one of our previous newsletters (September 2009), but will remind you all about it's great healing properties: soothes/heals burns, insect repellent, deodorant and deodorizer, antiseptic, calming and relaxing. I always have a bottle of the essential oil in my first-aid kit, especially when going camping, a great all-round treatment! And safe to use. Our Colloidal Silver Moisture Mist uses lavender essential oil, aloe-vera gel, witch-hazel extract and colloidal silver, which I have used on school camp for a wide number of 'ailment's including sunburn, heat-rash, insect bites, and insomnia, with instant results! This product is a big hit with many of our customers, particularly those who shop at 'Fresha' in New Plymouth - as it happens to be right next to the local hospital! Also, East-West organics, Commonsense Organics Kapiti, Nature's Pantry, Te Awamutu, Naturally Organic, Albany. We hope to increase the availability of this product this year.*



*And.., touching on the subject of first-aid kits, (I made one up for my 16yr old son as a xmas present, for his holiday on Gt Barrier with friends, with a note "I hope you don't have to open this, but just in case....) another indispensable item is Betadine - the best antiseptic I have come across for using on cuts, grazes, impetigo and staphylococcus infections. This magic, natural antiseptic can save a small cut or sore, from turning into full-blown blood-poisoning - crucial when you are a long way from doctors or hospitals, or in a tropical ocean where these nasty bugs are a constant threat. And it is easily available from most chemists.*



*So, if you've overdone the sun, the alcohol, or been attacked by stinging things, we hope you try some of our remedies, cups of herbal tea, essential oils mixed with a carrier oil, or some of our products, and have found some relief! Of course, any severe cases ought to be taken straight to the doctor!*

### ***Herb Spread Recipe of the Month:***

*It must be summer when more Italian style meals are enticing me to prepare them: all those large, red, fleshy tomatoes, fragrant bright green basil leaves, cool juicy cucumbers, spicy rocket and capsicums, and that lazy holiday mode just begs for a quick pasta or pizza with a greek salad sprinkled with spring onion, feta and olives, all washed down with a glass of red Waiheke wine. Oh, that's right, I'm not in Tuscany..*



*Herb Spread adds flavour, colour, texture (and nutrients!) to the pasta, pizza and greek salad quickly and easily! Many of our customer say these are some of their favorite ways of using it!*

*Enjoy!*

***Wishing you all health, wealth and well-being  
From Wendy and Waiheke Herbs Team***