

Hi Everyone,

and welcome to our first ever **Waiheke Herbs** monthly newsletter. In each newsletter we will be exploring a different herb, it's various qualities, and how it can be used around the home for health and well-being, including various culinary/ cosmetic recipes. We will also provide some growing tips for those of you who are interested in always having this herb close at hand.



And for our dedicated Waiheke Island Herb Spread consumers, we will share a new Herb Spread recipe in each newsletter.



The herb of this month is: **Chamomile**.



I like to start each morning with a cup of herbal tea, since I feel like it cleanses away that sluggish morning feeling. Overnight, the body is doing it's housework, and you can give it that final polish, by having a cleansing drink at least an hour before you have breakfast or that speedy coffee. Water with a dash of lemon is also an effective option for removing congestion and stimulating the liver. This morning I reached for the chamomile tea. The packet read: "Is an excellent gentle sedative, safe for use with children. It will contribute its relaxing actions in any combination and is thus used in anxiety and insomnia. Indigestion and inflammations such as gastritis are often eased with Chamomile. It can be

used as a mouthwash for mouth inflammations, a gargle for sore throats and an eye bath for sore eyes. As an inhalation over a steam bath, it will speed recovery from nasal catarrh".

** Infusion: pour a cup of hot water onto 2 tsp of the dried herb and infuse for 5-10 minutes. Drink after meals or before bedtime. A stronger infusion should be used as a mouthwash for conditions such as gingivitis."

I have used both Chamomile tea and tincture regularly over the years and found both very effective for over-tired children, particularly toddlers. My 9year old son still likes to have a small cup of chamomile tea with a little honey before he goes to bed, and this makes a nice bedtime ritual for both parent and child. I used to make my own tinctures which are useful if you are travelling with toddlers, or for yourself to help relax after a stressful day at work:



Chamomile Tincture "Take a cupful of chamomile flowers and cover with about half a cup of either vodka or brandy. I quite like brandy as it is a little sweeter. Leave in a sealed jar in a sunny spot for about three weeks. Strain off the plant material, and put into small bottles and **label them**. Those small nip bottles you can buy at liquor outlets are perfect, but make sure the husband doesn't mistake them for the original thing! The tinctures should last for at least a year, and one drop is equivalent to a whole cup of tea. Buy an eyedropper for administering your dose. One drop on a fretful toddler's tongue worked wonders!"



Growing Chamomile: There are two types of Chamomile: **German** – which is an upright, annual which can be easily grown in a sunny spot in summer, and the flowers harvested in Autumn This is the most commonly used for tea's and cosmetics. The **Roman** variety is a perennial, and can be grown as a fragrant lawn cover, but only flowers in summer. It has a stronger aroma when crushed, but can be an irritant to those who show sensitivity to some plants.

Ancient Majick: Chamomile has been found in ancient Egyptian medicine where it was dedicated to the Sun god for its curing powers. Much of it's lore comes from the position it can hold in the garden for it brings health to the other plants – a great companion plant which will deter other harmful insects or diseases.

A friend of mine has starting growing mesclun salads organically here on Waiheke Island. At one stage she was having problems with a fungal disease which was causing young seedlings to rot in a weblike growth. She began using chamomile tea to water the beds with, and after a week, the fungus had disappeared....

Chamomile healing crème: **Makes 3 cups of crème.** Melt 3 teaspoons of beeswax and 1.5 teaspoons of coco-butter over a slow heat. Stir in 2 cups of cold pressed almond oil and keep warm so it doesn't solidify. Mix together 1 tablespoon of witch-hazel, and 1 cup of either colloidal silver or purified water. Blend the water/liquid into the oil/wax mix by pouring it slowly in as if you were making mayonnaise. If using a blender, pour the oil mix in first, then slowly add the watery liquid. Lastly, add about 12 drops of chamomile essential oil. When it cools, it should solidify into a crème. **Use for eczema, nappy rash, insect bites, sunburn.**

Pregnancy: Because chamomile is a uterine stimulant, it should be avoided during pregnancy. However, a cup of weak chamomile tea is probably harmless during the middle stages, and may be useful in bringing on contractions for birthing. Check with your midwife/doctor first.

Herb Spread Recipe of the Month:

CHICKEN/TOFU NOODLE SOUP

- Boil up some noodles, - rice, egg or soba noodles are all good.
- Chop up chicken breasts (or tofu if you are vegetarian), into 1" chunks, and fry in a pre-heated pan with olive oil, tamari or shoyu, and a spoonful of **Herb Spread**. (extra garlic optional).
Once the chicken/tofu is cooked through and browned all over, add 3-4 cups of water with extra soup stock/sea salt to taste. Vegetables such as chopped carrots, spinach, peas or broccoli can be added. Then simmer slowly for about 10 minutes. Add cooked noodles, garnish with a dollop of **Herb Spread**, and serve with crusty bread (corn bread is a nice wheat-free option)



Takes about half an hour to prepare – perfect on a cold winter night, or to have for lunch on the weekend.

Well, that's it for this month. I hope you have enjoyed the read, and found something interesting and useful.

If you wish to unsubscribe, please send an email to info@waihekeherbs.co.nz .

Or if you know someone who is interested in receiving newsletters, send us their email address!

Wishing you all health, wealth and well-being,

from Wendy and the Waiheke Herbs Team

