

Venice Williams' Top Eleven Herbs...And a Few More

1. Calendula

Calendula flower is used to prevent muscle spasms, start menstrual periods, and reduce fever. It is also used for treating sore throat and mouth, menstrual cramps, cancer, and stomach and duodenal ulcers. Calendula has also been used for measles, smallpox, and jaundice. Calendula is applied to the skin to reduce pain and swelling (inflammation) and to treat poorly healing wounds and leg ulcers. It is also applied to the skin (used topically) for nosebleeds, varicose veins, hemorrhoids, inflammation of the rectum (proctitis), ear infection, gum disease, peeling lips (exfoliative cheilitis), diaper rash, vaginal yeast infection, and inflammation of the lining of the eyelid (conjunctivitis). Essential oil of calendula has been used as an insect repellent.

2. Chamomile

In the United States and Europe, chamomile is most often used as an ingredient in herbal tea. It is one of the world's most widely consumed herbal teas. But it has also been used for thousands of years as a traditional medicine for settling stomachs and calming the nerves. Chamomile also helps reduce inflammation and treat fevers. You can grow either German chamomile or Roman chamomile. The two are interchangeable when it comes to making tea, but they are grown very differently. German chamomile is an annual plant that grows up to three feet tall. Roman chamomile is a perennial but only grows to about a foot high. German chamomile is more commonly known for its blossoms.

3. Cinnamon Basil

Basil is a common aromatic herb in the mint family, the same plant family as other nutrient-dense, beneficial herbs, including mint, oregano and rosemary. Thanks to its cinnamate compound, this basil variety is beneficial against diarrhea, constipation, kidney problems, cough, headache and warts. It can also provide immediate relief from the gas in your stomach and intestines, stomach cramps, indigestion and flatulence. It is a GREAT tasting tea, and is often used in baking.

4. Fenugreek

Fenugreek leaves and seeds are important for cooking and medicines. Fenugreek seeds, also known as methi seeds, are a common ingredient in Indian curries, as well as Turkish, Persian, Eritrean, Ethiopian, and Egyptian cuisine. Because of their sweet, maple-syrup like smell and flavor, fenugreek seeds are also added to artificial maple syrup, candies, ice cream, beverages, tobacco, soaps, and cosmetics. Fenugreek is widely used as a galactagogue, or a milk flow-enhancing agent in new mothers. Fenugreek is used as a supplement to control blood glucose, especially to prevent or treat diabetes. One of fenugreek's ancient uses is to enhance libido. It may also: Balance cholesterol, Soothe upset stomach and digestive problems, Reduce menstrual cramps, Reduce appetite, Reduce fat mass, Maintain liver and kidney health, Soothe muscle pain, Reduce fever

5. Holy Basil

Holy basil isn't like the sweet basil in your mom's marinara sauce or the Thai herb you use to flavor a steaming bowl of pho. This green leafy plant, also known as Tulsi, is native to Southeast Asia. It has a history within Indian medicine as a treatment for many conditions, from eye diseases to ringworms. All parts of the holy basil plant act as an adaptogen. An adaptogen is natural substance that helps your body adapt to stress and promotes mental

balance. Since holy basil targets metabolic stress, it can also help with weight loss and cholesterol levels. Holy basil can counteract the effects of stress-induced ulcers. It naturally increases your stomach's defense by: decreasing stomach acid, increasing mucus secretion, increasing mucus cells, extending life of mucus cells.

6. **Lavender**

Grown as a condiment and for use in salads and dressings, lavender will give most dishes a slightly sweet flavor. Lavender syrup and dried lavender buds are used in the United States for making lavender scones and marshmallows. Health benefits include the soothing of insect bites and headaches when used with herbs and aromatherapy. Lavender plants will survive in many growing conditions but do best in full sun in warm, well-drained soil.

7. **Lemon Balm**

Often said to help ease stress and anxiety, lemon balm contains rosmarinic acid (a chemical compound with antioxidant properties). The herb is also used for insomnia, cold sores, high cholesterol, genital herpes, indigestion, heartburn and to reduce stress. Lemon balm may enhance memory and cognitive function and may be helpful in addressing a variety of factors associated with dementia.

8. **Lemon Thyme/Thyme**

Many of the compounds found in thyme are known to have ability to prevent certain diseases and to promote and enhance immune system. Thyme is very high in the most important minerals that are essential for health. The leaves of thyme are excellent source of iron, calcium, manganese, magnesium, selenium, and potassium. Due to these minerals, thyme is used as an antioxidant, and it helps control blood pressure and heart rate. Lemon Thyme combats respiratory tract ailments, providing relief from bronchitis, whooping cough and similar illnesses. The antifungal and antibacterial properties of thymol and other components can help to prevent and/or treat gingivitis and other dental problems

9. **Lovage**

Lovage is a member of the parsley family, and is a widely-used herb in parts of Europe and southwest Asia. Lovage offers a number of health benefits, including supporting kidney health, fighting harmful organisms, and supporting joint health. It turns out lovage is loaded with compounds that may soothe rough patches in the body. Traditional medicine uses lovage to loosen phlegm in the lungs.

10. **Rue**

Rue herb which is also known as the 'Herb of Grace' or by its botanical name – *Ruta graveolens* has been cultivated and used for many centuries for its medicinal uses. Rue helps our body fight against fungal infections such as dermatitis and athletes' foot. The anti-fungal properties of rue also helps it to cure de-complexion of the skin, to reveal a more beautiful and clear skin. Its rich antioxidant potential makes it the perfect antidote for premature signs of aging such as wrinkles, fine lines and other blemishes.

11. **Sage**

Common sage was traditionally used to reduce menopause symptoms . It's believed that compounds in sage have estrogen-like properties, allowing them to bind to certain receptors in your brain to help improve memory and treat hot flashes and excessive sweating. Sage may help reduce the intensity and frequency of menopause symptoms, such as hot flashes and irritability. The leaves of common sage have been used

traditionally as a remedy against diabetes. Antioxidants are molecules that help fortify your body's defenses, neutralizing potentially harmful free radicals that are linked to chronic diseases. Sage contains over 160 distinct polyphenols, which are plant-based chemical compounds that act as antioxidants in your body.

Let Us Forage

DANDELION

In terms of nutritional content, the dandelion patch in your backyard can join the rankings with the rest of your vegetable garden. From root to flower, dandelion are highly nutritious plants, loaded with vitamins, minerals and fiber. Dandelion greens can be eaten cooked or raw and serve as an excellent source of vitamins A, C and K. They also contain vitamin E, folate and small amounts of other B vitamins. What's more, dandelion greens provide a substantial amount of several minerals, including iron, calcium, magnesium and potassium. Traditional herbal medicine practices use dandelion for their diuretic effect based on the belief that this can detoxify certain organs. Dandelion has a protective effect on liver tissue in the presence of toxic substances and stress

MULLEIN

A common weed, mullein, has long been used in herbal medicine, especially in remedies that aim to soothe the respiratory tract. These remedies involve the use of mullein's flowers and leaves. Mullein has been found to fight flu-causing viruses. In a 2003 study of 171 children with otalgia (ear pain or an earache), those who used ear drops containing mullein (along with garlic, Calendula, St. John's wort, lavender, vitamin E, and olive oil) had a statistically significant improvement in ear pain over the course of three days. In fact, those who were given ear drops alone had a better response than those who were given ear drops together with amoxicillin. In lab tests published in 2002, researchers found that mullein helped kill certain types of bacteria, including *Staphylococcus aureus* (the most common cause of staph infections) and *Escherichia coli* (or *E. coli*). Herbalists typically use mullein to address the following health problems: Upper respiratory tract infections, Coughs, Bronchitis, Asthma.

NETTLE

Stinging nettle has been a staple in herbal medicine since ancient times. Ancient Egyptians used stinging nettle to treat arthritis and lower back pain, while Roman troops rubbed it on themselves to help stay warm. Stinging nettle offers a variety of vitamins, minerals, fatty acids, amino acids, polyphenols and pigments — many of which also act as antioxidants inside your body. Stinging nettle helps suppress inflammation, which in turn aids inflammatory conditions, including arthritis. Stinging nettle helps reduce prostate size and treat symptoms of an enlarged prostate gland in men with BPH. It improves urinary flow and relieves other BPH symptoms including incomplete emptying of the bladder, post urination dripping, and the constant urge to urinate (bladder irritability). Stinging nettle helps lower blood pressure by allowing your blood vessels to relax and reducing the force of your heart's contractions. Medicines containing stinging nettle extract have been found to reduce excessive bleeding, especially after surgery. Applying stinging nettle creams supports wound healing, including burn wounds. It stimulates milk production and increase the supply of breast milk in breastfeeding mothers.

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