

Tisane



ti·sane ti-'zan, -'zän, n.
Etymology: Middle English, from Middle French, from Latin *ptisanana*, from Greek *ptisanē*, literally, crushed barley, from *ptissein* to crush – Date: 14th century : an infusion (as of dried herbs) used as a beverage or for medicinal effects

To get on our mailing list, e-mail to newbrg@aol.com or drop an old-fashioned note to the return address on page four. Once our mailing list is set up, sample issues will be available for a stamp or S.A.S.E. (Yes, that is subject to change, too!)

If you are on line, join us on the *sca-herbalist* mailing list on onelist (go to www.egroups.com/subscribe/sca-herbalist to sign up).

Do you have a favorite herb, gardening tip, historical tidbit, or recipe? Maybe a book you think the world should share? That's perfect for this newsletter — send it to the Chronicler!



The quarterly newsletter of the Herbalists and Apothecaries' Guild of the East Kingdom

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September, 2000

Mission Statement: (proposed)

The goal of the Eastern Kingdom Herbalists and Apothecaries' Guild is to encourage study, teaching and practice of medieval herb uses, as well as study of medieval apothecary and pharmacy practice, in the East Kingdom. The Guild should serve as a conduit for herbalists and apothecaries in the kingdom to communicate with and learn from each other, and to disseminate knowledge about medieval herbalism and pharmacy to others.

From the Chronicler:

Meetings and Salutations

(Okay, so I'm a sucker for a pun.)

The Guild scheduled a meeting at Great North East War in July, but unfortunately the site was double-booked and we got mixed up with a discussion on, of all things, greyhound coursing. <sigh> Thanks, Aelfwyn — it was a good try!

At Pennsic things went a little better, with seven people turning up for the scheduled meeting. This included one from Atlantia and one from Lochac, and Guild business took a back seat to herbal discussion. However, nothing daunted, our relentless Agitator has scheduled a meeting for A Walk in the Garden, to be held in Silver Rylle September 16th. We really, really need to get the charter put together to send a petition to Crown. Once that is done, we want to give some thought to our proposed ranking system: see the article elsewhere in this newsletter for a summary of the discussion that has taken place on *sca-herbalist* (the electronic mailing list) on this subject.

Oyez! Oyez!

The Herbal Guild of Meridies has changed its website: it's now at www.geocities.com/herbguild.

The "Summer Cold" Discussion

This is a summary of a recent discussion on sca-herbalist, concerning the care and feeding of the summer cold. **Lyn** began it by complaining: *I have a cold coming on ... I have the cheese-cloth for a bath sachet, but no idea what to put in it. Thoughts? Rosemary and mint crossed my mind, but it also occurred me that two such strong scents might clash.*

Amy commented that Echinacea tea, while not period, has been shown to increase the white blood cell count, and therefore is good for fighting illness. She mentioned horehound lozenges, and that Nostradamus (or someone) made rose hip lozenges during the plague years. And closed by adding, *I think rosemary and mint would be wonderful together. I've seen them used together in soaps and lotions.*

Jadwiga contributed: *I drink a sage/rosemary/mint/lemon peel tea sometimes when I feel something coming on. One of my old teachers used to swear by a decoction made from Celestial Seasons Bengal Spice teabags, extra sage, rosemary, lots of cayenne, coltsfoot, mullein, and a number of other things, all sweetened with honey. .. It was a lot like hangover remedies are supposed to be; once you got the cupful into your system, for ten minutes you thought you were going to die, and then you felt a LOT better.*

But **Madrun** voted for a mix of Elecampane root, rosemary, and sage. *It smells really bad, but with enough honey (which is another demulcent) it doesn't taste too bad. A good bath with eucalyptus and lemon balm will clear your sinuses and you will sleep like a baby. Eating candied ginger always helps, too.'*

Getting back to the horehound lozenges, **Amy** commented, *I made those the year I had a huge herb garden, and they worked great. Even more effective was a tea I made of horehound, coltsfoot, mints, comfrey, and borage. It was rather bitter, but it held off chronic bronchitis. Then she posted a recipe for the lozenges.*

*1 cup horehound tea
4 cups sugar
2 cups dark or light corn syrup
boil horehound leaves to make a strong tea,
Drain, reserving 1 cup of liquid. add the tea to the
other ingredients and boil until it just starts to
caramel. Put onto a flat greased cookie sheet. Start
cutting with kitchen shears or scissors as soon as it starts
to hard on the edges.*

*You can include other herbs, such as chamomile, to
make the one cup of tea.*

And **Robin Song** chipped in that the bitterness of horehound tea can be ameliorated by added honey, fruit, or juice, not to mention cinnamon, nutmeg, allspice, or cloves. On the other hand, the use of sugar may inhibit absorption by the body.

So there you are, completely armed against next summer's (or the winter's) sniffles and sneezes. Needless to say, none of us consider ourselves any kind of medical authority, and recommend you beware of sensitivities, and follow your doctor's advice, as well.



Horehound
(*Marrubium vulgare*)

And so — Valerian.

Valeriana officinalis is an herb of which the root is the useful part. A recent query on sca-herbalist led to the following tidbits concerning it.

Valerian is used primarily as a sleeping aid. (How many English detective novels have featured this being prescribed for the hysterical dowager after the murder is discovered in the stately mansion?) It is considered generally safe, although something like 10% of the population is sensitive to it and can experience hallucinations, hyperactivity, or a rash.

Cats love it almost as much as they like catnip, with the added attraction that the part of the plant above the ground holds no interest for them. However, delirious feline binges on stolen valerian root have been reported. Store it safely!

Several people commented on the unattractive smell of this root ("dead earth" being one description) — for that reason it is often mixed with chamomile or other herbs to make it more palatable. Also, such a mixture seems to offer less hazard to those for whom valerian grants hyperactivity.

Valerian is also recommended for intestinal cramps, gas, and other irritable bowel symptoms.



Seeds Slips Cuttings

Plants grow from some small part of themselves into something usable. The same is true of our Guild. Here is another "small part" of those proposed Guild projects — a list of websites of interest to herbalists. Please add your own bits of information (by mail, listserv, or e-mail), and we'll share it, here and on sca-herbalist.

Books

Hill, Thomas. *The Gardener's Labyrinth* [The first English gardening book]. ed. Richard Mabey. NY: Oxford University Press, 1987. ISBN: 0-19-217763-X.

A Medieval Home Companion: Housekeeping the fourteenth century (from *Le Menagier de Paris*) trans. ed. Tanioa Bayard. NY: HarperCollins, 1991.

Parkinson, John. *A Garden of Pleasant flowers: Paradisi in Sole*. NY: Dover Publications, 1991. isbn: 0-48-626758-X.

Tusser, Thomas. *His Good Points of Husbandry*, 1557. Published 1931 by Country Life Ltd, London; Ed. Dorothy Hartley.

Farrar, Linda. *Ancient Roman Gardens*. Sutton Publishing, 1998. new in paperback, ISBN: 1-85-7932730-0.

Hobhouse, Penelope. *Plants in Garden History*. Pavilion Books. ISBN: 1-85-7932730.

Grant, Mark. *Galen on Food and Diet*. Routledge. ISBN: 0-41-5232325

Suppliers

Richters (Canada) <http://www.richters.com>

Leaves and Roots (Florida) <http://leavesandroots.com>

Another Canadian source: <http://www.herbs.mb.ca>

Websites

Culpepper on Line! full printable text of TheEnglish Physican:
<http://www.med.yale.edu/library/historical/culpepper>

HERALDRY FOR APOTHECARIES

In the last issue of *Tisane*, it was reported that only one device is registered to a Herbalists Guild — the Barony of Bjorneborg (San Antonio, Texas).
Theirs is:

*Or, within an annulet of
cloves sable a mortar
and pestle gules*

It has been brought to our attention that the An Tir Herbalists Guild also has such a device:

*Or, a mandrake plant
eradicated proper
within a bordure vert*

Anyone had any ideas yet for a device for the East Kingdom Herbalists and Apothecaries Guild?



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