

Tisane

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

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Mission Statement:

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.

ti·sane ti-'zan, -'zän, *n.*
Etymology: Middle English,
from Middle French, from Latin
ptisana, from Greek *ptisanē*,
literally, crushed barley,
from *ptissein* to crush – Date:
14th century : an infusion (as
of dried herbs) used as a bev-
erage 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 the mailer.

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 (go to www.yahoo.com/groups/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!

Greetings to the members of the Guild from Jadwiga Zajackowa, Agitator.

First of all, I'd like to agitate for a few things. We need more stuff on our calendars, folks, especially in the Northern and Central Regions. If you are teaching a class or holding a meeting, please let the chronicler and I know and we'll put it up! We also need to find a local group who would be willing to sponsor an Herb Guild event in 2002. Basically, it's an [small-sized] event in a box: the local group supplies autocrat, reservationist, and dayboard, and we supply the rest. I'm also sure, while I'm agitating, that our chronicler would like more articles for Tisane written by someone other than Johanna or myself!

We do have some activities coming up, though. Come to Northern Lights in Panther Vale in March — we'll have a meeting. Isabella was organizing something at Balfar's Challenge in Dragonship Haven; I hope to have a meeting at the Spring War Practice at Owl's Rest. In June, there will be a mustards & sekanjabins tasting at Landsknecht/King's & Queen's Champions of Arms in Eisental, and in July there will be the usual meeting at the War Camp in Eisental. We will be holding an annual meeting at Pennsic, as well.

Remember, it's not difficult to run a Guild meeting. We even printed instructions for running a meeting in Tisane. And to be a member, you just have to be willing to admit you're in the guild!

We're still working on a badge for the guild, and on updating our bibliographies and our website. By the way, we are definitely looking for one or more people to be the Webminister for the guild. (The page is at <http://tulgey.browser.net/~EKherb/>)

-- Jadwiga, Agitatrix

East Kingdom Herbalists and Apothecaries Guild Annual Tithe to the Queen & Twelfth Night, 2002

Senkajabin syrup: Alayne Alexandra Nyvern Nightwatcher
Strewing herbs mixture: Carowyn Silveroak
Bruise balm: Johanna le Mercer
Soaps, assorted: Isabella d'Allaines-sur-Comte
Rose honey: Juanita Robles
Aniseed comfits & caraway seed comfits: Aegidius of Eisental and
Jadwiga Zajaczkowa
Silk bag dyed with tumeric: Carowyn Silveroak
Fighters' muscle massage oil: Aegidius of Eisental and Jadwiga
Zajaczkowa
Scented powder with anti-chafing properties: Sarah bas Mor-
dechai, Aegidius of Eisental, and Jadwiga Zajaczkowa
Queen of Hungary water perfume: Jadwiga Zajaczkowa
Plum cordial: Iuliana Zafiri



From An Dubhaigeainn

by Sulis Riganna

We had a cosmetics class on November 2, 2001, making period herbal powder, face cream, and facial salve. Another class was held on January 18, 2002, also cosmetics. These classes are being taught by Selene, who has her own cosmetics line called P.Foster's Herbs. She also makes herbal soaps.

An Dubhaigeiann hosted a St. Andrew Sails the Seas event on November 22, 2001. The Herbalists' Guild made a presentation to the outgoing Baron and Baroness. The Baron Muirdach received an herbal salve and the Baroness Margaret received Winter Wonder cream for her lovely face.

January 26 was Carnival for An Dubhaigeainn, an RP. We presented to the King and Queen and also to the new Baron and Baroness!

On April 6, 2001, Canton of the Western Gate is hosting its own event, "Halfway to Pennsic". The Herbalists' Guild will be presenting a class, likely on herbal salve making. (Pikestaff will have exact details). If time permits, I will teach a class on simple infusions for the winter season and I will speak to the Feastocrat about serving some herbed breads or an herbal dessert.

On Brewing with Herbs

by Master Richard the Poor of Ely

Herbs and spices have long had many roles in brewing, as flavorings, colorings, and even preservatives. Let's take a look at how they've been used.

BEER: These days, you can't make beer without Hops (*Humulus lupulus*). While now used to provide a bitter flavor to complement the sweetness of the barley malt, hops were originally used as a preservative. Also, they weren't universally used until near the end of Period. Before that, many other herbs were used. Common ones were Alecost (*Chrysanthemum balsamita*) and Ground Ivy (*Glechoma hederacea*). Virtually any strong, slightly bitter herb can be used, either alone or in combination with others. Try Dandelion leaves (*Taraxacum officinale*).

Some beer styles (which may or may not be Period) call for spices like Coriander (*Coriandrum sativum*) and Grains of Paradise (*Aframomum melegueta*). These usually appear in wheat beers or "summer" ales in conjunction with citrus fruits.

MEAD: What Digby wrote was true in Period, and it still is:

"I conceive, that bitter and strong herbs, as Rosemary, bayes, Sweet-marjoram, Thyme, and the like, do conserve Meathe the better and longer, being used as it were instead of hops. But neither must they....be too much boiled: For the Volatile pure Spirit flies away very quickly. Therefore rather infuse them..."

"The Closet of the Eminently Learned Sir Kenelm Digbie Kt. Opened", 1669

Since when making mead, you have to add some tannins to feed the yeast, why not use some herbs as the source? Technically, meads that use herbs and spices for their flavor are called metheglins. Lemon and Ginger is one popular combination for mead. I recall one delightful mead made with bay leaves and rosemary...

WINE: Most wines don't use any additionally flavorings. One notable exception is May Wine, which uses Sweet Woodruff (*Asperula odorata*). In the case of spiced or mulled wines, such as hippocras and clary, the spices (usually Cloves (*Syzygium aromaticum*) and Cinnamon (*Cinnamomum zeylanicum*)) are generally added after the fermentation process has been completed.

LIQUEURS: It is in the case of liqueurs that herbs and spices really come into their own. Many of the world's finest liqueurs owe their flavors entirely to herbs and spices. Anisette is made with Anise (*Pimpinella anisum*), Kummel uses Cumin (*Cuminum cyminum*) and Caraway (*Carum carvi*), and Strega gets its taste from Angelica (*Angelica archangelica*). Cynar (pronounced CHEE-nar) gets its flavor from artichokes! Some liqueurs, like Vermouth and Benedictine, can use dozens of herbs and spices; Chartreuse is made with 130 botanicals! Technically speaking, a liqueur is a tincture (an alcohol-based solution). A lazy person can make a simple one by doing a cold infusion of bags of herbal teas in vodka and then adding honey to sweeten it to taste. It must be kept in mind, however, that Period liqueurs were almost exclusively intended as medicine. Gin itself was invented in 1650 as a medicinal drink.

The number of flavor combinations thus available is extremely large, so feel free to come up with your own special secret recipes. Of course, that goes for beers and meads as well.



For most of us, it's still too early to start in the garden. But you can have some related fun by strolling through your local library. For instance, you might find these:

McNaughton, Virginia, *Lavender: The Grower's Guide*. Timber Press, 2000.

More than most people would ever want to know about lavender! This beautifully illustrated book doesn't just *describe* the differences among hundreds of varieties of lavender — it *illustrates* them, with color photographs. It's not a book you can sit down and read, but it's a great identification resource. (Now I know why my current lavender plot looks so different from the one I used to have

— the plants came labelled identically, but they are actually different varieties!) History included.

Benjamin, Joan, and Deborah L. Martin, eds, *Great Garden Formulas*. Rodale Press, 1998.

Eradicate weeds with Coca-Cola? Or gin? Base a foot cream on tofu? Plan a dry-climate garden (even in the East, we may need this one before long)? Most of the recipes aren't period, but the gardening hints look like fun and the directions for drying scented herbs or making basic creams haven't changed over the centuries.

Hitchcock, Susan Tyler, *Wildflowers on the Windowsill*. Crown Publishers, 1984.

A book for the daunted wildcrafters among us! Love the wild plants, but don't have unlimited foraging? Maybe you can grow your own. Hitchcock spent years finding out what would grow indoors and what hated it there. She passes along her knowledge of light and water requirements, along with guidelines for gathering — such as making sure the plant you dig up gets home alive!

Rupp, Rebecca, *Blue Corn & Square Potatoes*. Garden Way, 1987.

How big were Roman melons? How many pickled peppers in a peck? Did King John really die of eating too many peas at a sitting? Here's a book of food history and trivia. It will be helpful if you're having trouble getting it clear what vegetables are period, but fun to read at any time.

Klauer, Doretta. *Violets of the United States*. A.S. Barnes, 1976.

I got into this one because I wanted to know why the violets in my lawn had no scent. This volume is even larger than the "lavender" one, with drawings instead of photographs. I'm afraid I will never be able to tell the varieties apart, but at least now I know that *viola odorata* sends out runners, which will help me when I look for it in other people's lawns!

Carmelite Water

Recently the topic of discussion on the sca-herbalist listserv, Carmelite Water is supposed to "renew youth, strengthen the brain, relieve languishing natures and prevent baldness," according to Edith Grey Wheelwright in *Medicinal Plants and Their History*.

List member Ealdgyth, (who provided the source and the quote) gives the formula as consisting of balm in canary wine, flavored with nutmeg, lemon, and angelica root.

A somewhat more detailed recipe was provided by another member, Carowyn, but without a source:

1 lemon	½ t coriander seeds
4 oz vodka	1 nutmeg
3 T chopped lemon balm	1 3-inch cinnamon stick
3 T chopped angelica root	1 T cloves

Anyone else want to experiment?