

Tisane



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 beverage or for medicinal effects

HEADLINES

Queen's Tith to be presented at 100 Minutes
War in Rusted Woodlands, November 22

Input requested on guild badge

See the scroll of our charter on page two!

Mission Statement:

The goal of the Eastern Kingdom Herbalist's 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.

Report from the Agitatrix:

Greetings! First, the best news of all — our guild charter has been confirmed by Their Royal Majesties, Darius and Roxane, and we have it in writing! Thanks to Laurensa who calligraphed and illuminated the lovely scroll!

Guild activities: we had a nice little meeting at Pennsic and another at the EKV in Montvale. We spent most of our time talking about how we used herbs, and not very much time talking about the Guild structure.

One subject that is very near and dear to my heart is the idea of a Guild badge. We were generally agreed that a mortar and pestle and a sprig of some herb ought to be involved. I would like to very strongly suggest that we have the sprig of herb displayed ON the mortar, because that will make the badge easier to draw, paint, embroider and appliqué. But what herb do we want to use? And

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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. If you are on line, join us on the sca-herbalist mailing list (go to www.yahogroups.com/subscribe/sca-herbalist to sign up) or the East-specific EK-Herb (sign up from www.eastkingdom.org).

While you're on line, take a look at our website at www.eastkingdom.org/herb

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



Be it proclaimed throughout the Kingdom of the East that We, Darius and Roxane, are pleased to Confirm the Charter of the Herbalists and Apothecaries Guild of the East Kingdom to wit: It shall be the duty of this Guild to serve as an open forum for the exchange of information on the Herbal Arts and lore of the current and then Middle Ages.

It is Our pleasure that this Guild be open to any of Our subjects who express an interest in the Herbal Arts.

It is Our wish that this Herbal And Apothecaries Guild shall serve the Kingdom as a resource in all matter appropriate to the Art and Science of Herbalism. Therefore We charge the members of this Guild with the responsibility of sharing their knowledge and skills with all those of Our subjects who may wish to approach them for the purpose of instruction or information, whether it take the form of classes, mentoring or other arenas as yet unexplored.

We direct the Guild to institute a voluntary system of ranking and certification on the basis of knowledge and expertise, assigning ranking levels through a system of panelling by the Masters of the Guild. It is further Our wish the Guild shall annually present to the Rulers, as a fee, goods of the Guild's manufacture. The public face of the Guild shall be represented by an Agitator, whose qualifications shall be decided upon by the Members of the Guild. Through the person of the Agitator, the Guild is directed to foster the goals herein outlined, making themselves available for the education and enlightenment of any who so desire.

Comfrey



A *Modern Herbal* quotes Culpepper as saying: "The great Comfrey restrains spitting of blood. The root boiled in water or wine and the decoction drank, heals inward hurts, bruises, wounds and ulcers of the lungs, and causes the phlegm that oppresses him to be easily spit forth.... A syrup made there of is very effectual in inward hurts, and the distilled water for the same purpose also, and for outward wounds or sores in the fleshy or sinevy parts of the body, and to abate the fits of agues and to allay the sharpness of humours. A decoction of the leaves is good for those purposes, but not so effectual as the roots. The roots being outwardly applied cure fresh wounds or cuts immediately, being bruised and laid thereto; and is specially good for ruptures and broken bones, so powerful to consolidate and knit together that if they be boiled with dissevered pieces of flesh in a pot, it will join them together again.

The roots of Comfrey taken fresh, beaten small and spread upon leather and laid upon any place troubled with the gout presently gives ease: and applied in the same manner it eases pained joints and tends to heal running ulcers, gangrenes, mortifications, for which it hath by often experience been found helpful.

Comfrey, *Symphytum officinale*, is a member of the Boraginaceae, the same family as forget-me-not and borage. Its other names are Common Comfrey, Knitbone, Knitback, Consound, Blackwort, Bruisewort, Slippery Root, Boneset, Yalluc (Saxon), Gum Plant, Consolida, or Ass Ear.

Comfrey has had its ups and downs. In folklore it's a heal-all, good for knitting broken bones, treating rheumatism and gastrointestinal ulcers, and speeding the healing of bruises and rashes. In the time of Mrs. Grieve's book, it was recommended as a garden ornamental. In the 21st century, it's been declared an herb *non grata* by the FDA and gardeners warn that once you let comfrey into your garden, you will never be able to remove it, since it has deep roots and any remnant left in the ground will sprout.

Growth

Comfrey is a hardy perennial that prefers sunny well-watered locations. It grows up to three feet high. The leaves are wrinkled and hairy, and the root, which is said to resemble a turnip, is slimy when dried. The flower of *S. officinale* is purple, while the closely-related *S. tuberosum* blooms white or pink. The two varieties do not cross in the wild. There is also a variety that blooms blue, *S. Asperimum*, or Prickly Comfrey. This was imported as a fodder plant originally but unfortunately most stock didn't care for it.

Medical Applications

Comfrey is described as demulcent, mildly astringent and expectorant. The primary ingredient appears to be mucilage, which is why it was often given for intestinal problems. The root is given as a decoction for coughs and pulmonary complaints. The leaves are used as a poultice for sprains, swellings and boils.

Contraindications

In 1998, the FDA listed comfrey as a health hazard capable of doing liver damage. Although hybrids are being developed which do not contain the alkaloids in question, most modern practitioners will not administer comfrey in any of its applications in cases of open wounds, pregnancy, breast-feeding, existing alcoholism, cancer, or liver disease. And it is not recommended for children in any case.

what colors do we want to use? Here are four suggestions, please get back to me or the list about your preferences: — Gold mortar and pestle with green rosemary branch — Gold mortar and pestle with green sage leaf — Purple mortar and pestle with gold leaf — Purple mortar and pestle with gold calendula flower

This, and the rankings discussion that was never completed, brings up a further issue. How do we make decisions as a group. As the membership of the Guild gets larger — and the percentage of the guild members who can make time to go to meetings and/or participate in electronic discussion gets smaller — we need to have a group decision making process.

This probably means we need to create one and write it down, as a set of bylaws of some kind. That will require discussion. If you have thoughts on this, please post them to the email list, or contact me or Johanna with your comments.

I have contacted Their Royal Highnesses Balfar and Luna and we will be presenting our Guild Tithe to them at Hundred Minutes War, in Rusted Woodlands, on November 22. I'd also like to have a guild meeting then. Please plan to contribute something of your herbal work; if possible, 7-9 of something would be optimal (jars of syrup, tea bags, etc.)

There will be a fundraiser for the Tisane at Balfar's Challenge in Dragonship Haven, also. Think about buying a ticket or tickets for the raffle.

Keep up the good work, everyone!

— *Jadwiga, Agitatrix*

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