

**The quarterly newsletter of the
Herbalists and Apothecaries' Guild
of the East Kingdom
Volume 8, Issue 3
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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

Garlic

Medieval Gardens Database

Book Review

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.

From the Agitatrix:

And this time I mean it.

Greetings!

I'd say that once again it was time for me to say I was going to put more time into our guild, but ... it may be an empty promise. As the winter draws in and the nights get longer, it's even odds whether I'll get more energetic or less — and I expect you, my readers, feel the same. I've recruited several people who are willing to serve as Guild Syndics and help support the guild and run guild activities, but we can always use more. So, if you're interested, drop me a line.

Of course, we would like contributions to the Kingdom Guild Tithe, to be presented to the Queen at East Kingdom Twelfth Night. If you won't be there, I'll be happy to accept items by postal mail or SCAdian express-- drop me a note for my mailing address.

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To get on our mailing list, e-mail to joanne@jafath.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.yahoo.com/groups/subscribe/sca-herbalist to sign up) or the East-specific *EK-Herb* (sign up from our website at www.eastkingdom.org/guilds/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!

ANNOUNCING: MEDIEVAL GARDENS DATABASE

Good morrow to all.

Well, it is finally up and running! Please visit my database of Medieval garden plants at: http://www.buttery.org/marian/Garden_Welcome.html

This database contains 260 herbs, fruits, vines, trees and shrubs named in Medieval garden lists by authors from the 9th through the 16th centuries (plus Palladius, since he was much translated and consulted in our period). The database provides common and Latin names, descriptions (both period and modern), and pictures; it notes uses for scent, cookery, dyes, medicine, and other purposes.

I used Filemaker Pro because of its incredible search capabilities, but if you are not familiar with the program, please see my Helpful Notes page for an introduction.

As an example of the search function, suppose you are only interested in gardens described by ANY German author:

(1) Click the magnifying glass icon to go into Find Mode;

(2) choose YES for Walafrid Strabo;

(3) click PERFORM FIND (the results will show 32 plants, which you can browse by clicking on the pages of the open book icon -- right page browses forward, left page browses backward).

Go into Find Mode again and choose YES for Hildegard von Bingen. Instead of Perform Find, click EXTEND FOUND SET (the results now number 129 for the combined search).

Repeat these steps (find, chose, extend) choosing YES for Albertus Magnus and get a total of 196 records.

On the other hand, if you want to see only those plants mentioned by ALL German authors: Go into Find Mode; choose YES for Walafrid, Hildegard, and Albertus; click Perform Find; you'll see the only 22 plants mentioned by all three.

How would you know these were the German authors? Start by clicking on the gold button for MORE ABOUT THESE LISTS.

I hope you find it useful, but I would appreciate any and all feedback.

Thanks,
--Old Marian



BOOK REVIEW  **BOOK REVIEW**  **BOOK REVIEW**

Parsleys, Fennels, and Queen Anne's Lace

Barbara PerryLawton

Timber Press, Portland, Oregon 2007

The author and publisher of 2005's *Mints* now explore the *Umbelliferae*. With color photographs, a botanical glossary, and a catalog labelled "From *Aciphylla* to *Zizia*", Lawton answers the question, "what do parsley, carrots, angelica, celery, and hemlock all have in common?" Also included is more information than you thought possible on the family of Sea Hollies, not often met with in suburban American flower beds.

GARLIC

Allium sativum L.

Poor Man's Treacle, Glove Garlic, Common Garlic, Stinking Rose

Moderns can use up a lot of time and words debating whether garlic and onions are vegetables, herbs, or spices, but in period no one cared, and garlic often got listed in all three categories. Katzer's website (which covers the history of herbal words), states:

Garlic is believed to stem from Central Asia, although no wild form is known. Of the about 700 species of genus *Allium*, many are native to central Asia, the center of diversity ranging from the Himalayas to Turkestan.

Under "Etymology", it adds that the Romans called it allium; the English "garlic" comes from the German, with possible relatives in Old Irish.

Pliny provides a long list of ills for which garlic was considered helpful, and Galen called it "the rustic's theriac" (*Theriac* being the word for "heal-all.") In Chaucer's time it was "Poor Man's Treacle," which is a fairly direct translation of Galen's language.

According to Mrs. Grieve,

Garlic is mentioned in several Old English vocabularies of plants from the tenth to the fifteenth centuries, and is described by the herbalists of the sixteenth century from Turner (1548) onwards. It is stated to have been grown in England before the year 1540. In Cole's *Art of Simpling* we are told that cocks which have been fed on Garlic are 'most stout to fight, and so are Horses': and that if a garden is infested with moles, Garlic or leeks will make them 'leap out of the ground presently.'

Garlic is most often recommended, historically, for asthma and other respiratory illnesses, and is still considered an aid to digestion. In modern times it has been said to fight high blood pressure.

Against asthma in particular, garlic was prescribed in the form of syrup. Mrs. Grieve gives a recipe:

It is made by pouring a quart of water, boiled hot, upon a pound of the fresh root, cut into slices, and allowed to stand in a closed vessel for twelve hours, sugar then being added to make it of the consistency of syrup. Vinegar and honey greatly improve this syrup as a medicine. A little caraway and sweet fennel seed bruised and boiled for a short time in the vinegar before it is added to the Garlic, will cover the pungent smell of the latter.

"Wine of Garlic", made by macerating three or four bulbs in a quart of proof spirit, is supposed to stave off baldness. Putting chopped garlic in a chicken's food before she starts laying will improve future egg production. Garlic in your dog's food will help fight fleas, although modern research seems to show that it can be toxic to cats. And we all know it is proof against vampires!

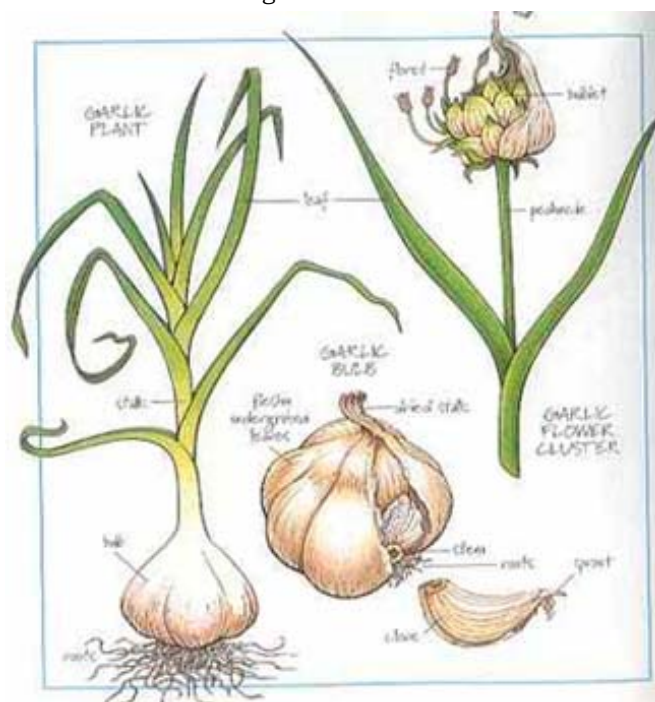
Seriously, Commission E has certified garlic in the treatment of arteriosclerosis, hypertension, and high cholesterol.

SOURCES

www.botanical.com, (*A Modern Herbal* online)

www.uni-graz.at/~katzer.engl (Gernot Katzer's *Spice Pages*)

PDR for Herbal Medicine



From the Agitatrix,

Continued from Page One:

As I write, many people are preparing for a month-long bout of insanity, namely National Novel Writing Month. (I'm making it my National Finish My Pamphlet on Historical Hygiene Month, myself.) I'm challenging you all — and myself — to do something different this month. Do something herbal. Write to the email list or the *Tisane* or to me to tell us about it. My email address is jenne.heise@gmail.com.

Consider writing a short (125 words!) note about what you did and submitting it to the *Tournaments Illuminated* editor for publishing.

Plant something new. Let's see what comes up!

-- Jadwiga



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