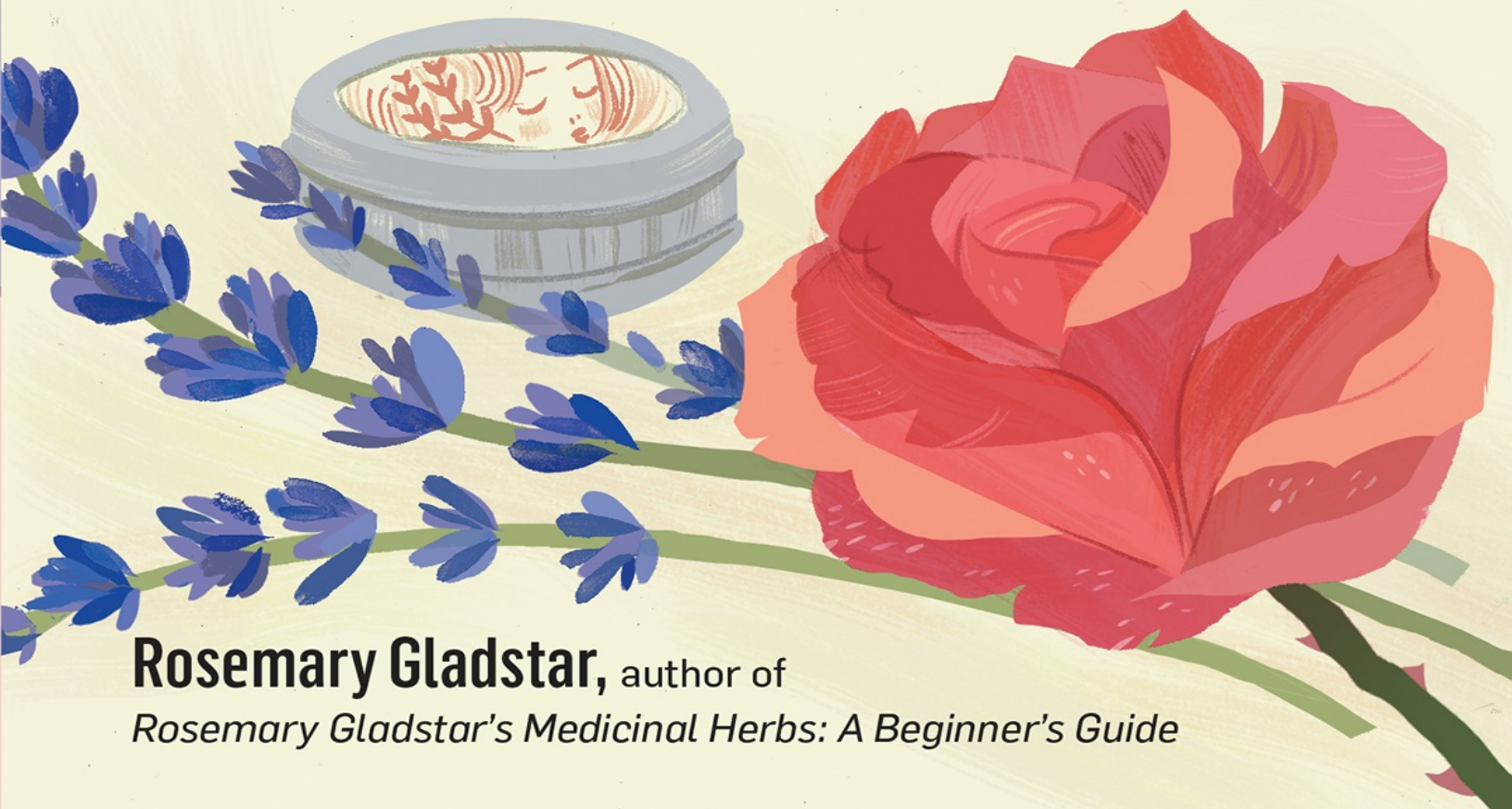


HERBS for NATURAL BEAUTY

Create Your Own Herbal Shampoos, Cleansers,
Creams, Bath Blends, and More



Rosemary Gladstar, author of
Rosemary Gladstar's Medicinal Herbs: A Beginner's Guide

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Share Your Experience!

To the original Garlic Queens, who inspired me with their moist and juicy tales, their vulnerability, and their exquisite wild beauty: Sara Katz, Diana DeLuca, Mindy Green, Brigitte Mars, Kathi Keville, Jane Bothwell, and Cascade Anderson Geller.

And to one of the most beautiful women I know, my mother, Jasmine Karr, named after the exotic night-blooming flower.

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Thanks also to my editors, Deborah Balmuth and Nancy Ringer, for their endless patience, guidance, and care.

Preface

I recently found an old journal of mine (circa 1978). I would like to share with you a few thoughts from all those years ago.

“In the long winter evenings when friends would gather, we’d sit around the fire sipping herb teas and, most often, talk about herbs. I remember the first night we did herbal facials and massaged gently one another’s skin, stimulating the circulation, awakening the glow, creating friendships that seemed would last a lifetime. It felt so good to each of us that we began to experiment with natural cosmetics and skin treatments on a regular basis. We felt a bit unusual at first, walking around with egg white drying on our faces, honey dripping off our chins, and henna piled high in our hair. But the results were so rewarding, so fun and nourishing. *Cosmeos*, that ethereal being of harmony and balance, became our teacher. Our skin reflected our inner state of being, the mountains and rivers around us, and the nourishing good food we ate.”

As you experiment and play with these recipes, perhaps inviting friends and family to join you, may you also experience the fullness of life in the sharing of *Cosmeos*’s gifts. Use these natural recipes, all gifts from nature, to gently touch the hearts of those you love. It’s a wonderful way to practice the art of healing, and your children, partner, friends, and loved ones will love you the more for it.

CHAPTER ONE

Women's Health, Women's Beauty

There is a story we herbalists have conjured up that I particularly enjoy. Cosmeos, a mythical Greek goddess whose name meant harmony and balance, personified radiant health and inner beauty that flowed from a core of harmony and balance. Cosmeos never sought to mask what she was or how she looked; rather, she fed her inner fire with the eternal gifts of the earth. Her beauty was as unique as the flowers growing wild on the hillside and as powerful as the granite bones of the mountain. Wanting to endow the world and its inhabitants with greater beauty, Cosmeos gave to mortals the gifts of herbs, flowers, and other simple pleasures to nourish the body and soul.

The modern word *cosmetic* stems from the Greek word *kosmetikos*, meaning “skilled at adornment.” This is precisely what Cosmeos is all about. It was never her intent to cover up; she used her creations to revel in who she was. She is one of my favorite goddesses. I envision her as a wild woodland creature running freely through the forests with her sister herbalist Artemis, whose name also has been immortalized in the name of a plant.

Beauty at Any Cost?

The ethereal concept of beauty and cosmetics has created a rather bizarre fashion industry, one in which beauty means self-manipulation, starving oneself in the name of fashion, and actual surgical restructuring of the body to please somebody else's sense of style. There is little contentment in the profound sense of beauty anymore; rather, it has become a restlessness to achieve something unattainable.

We've replaced simple, old-fashioned truths such as "beauty is in the eye of the beholder" with the new adage "beauty at any cost." Whether that cost is the depletion of rare and precious resources, the inhumane use of animals to test cosmetics on, or the deprivations and depredations of the body to sculpt it in the manner deemed "beautiful" by the beauty industry, it hasn't seemed to matter. But beauty cannot exist long alone. It needs balance and harmony, Cosmeos's gifts, to truly emerge and endure.

Natural Beauty and Good Health

When I was a young child growing up on my parents' farm, I would often walk into the fields and lie in the tall grasses. I would take off my clothes and lay my body on the bare ground, and feel the earth beneath me. It nourished me and filled me with a deep sense of beauty. I would look up at the blue California sky and ask that I be a reflection of all that I saw in nature, so that when people looked at me they would see the fields and the wildflowers and the depth of the sky in my eyes. It is this early sense of beauty that has permeated me all these years.

The Healing Power of Beauty

Though much of my work as a community herbalist has been concentrated on making medicinal products and helping people manage and heal from their illnesses, I always find a way to weave

“the beauty way” into my healing work. I want Cosmeos’s hand in the pot!

When I mixed and blended my early medicinal tea blends, they always contained a few herbs “just for beauty,” such as roses, calendula, and blue malva flowers. My tinctures and medicines, likewise, had a sweet taste, a touch of the beauty way. I’m a firm believer in the fact that beauty aids in healing, and is perhaps one of the greatest healers. It seduces and induces people back to wellness, back to that place of balance and harmony that is the soul of life. Without beauty, why would anyone want to get well? The flowers, the fresh air, the running waters, and the loving hearts of those who care for us feed and nourish the soul and invite it back to wholeness.

Over the years I’ve delighted in making wonderful “all natural” cosmetics and skin care products. In the kitchen, whatever I was cooking up often went on my face! It wasn’t unusual to find me with egg or avocado or oatmeal on my face, my long hair rubbed with olive oil and rosemary and securely tucked up in a towel. I was a walking salad! I’d spend my evenings playing with and perfecting recipes for herbal masks, baths, and creams and then share these recipes with others. We’d stage “facial parties,” gathering friends together to treat one another to herbal hand and foot baths, facial steams, and masks. After the “works,” we’d finish with a gentle massage using my favorite face cream.

I’d often take the show on the road, packing up baskets of materials to take to workshops. I’d treat everyone there — and you can bet these classes were well attended. When I first moved to New England and was invited by Rick Scalzo to speak at the annual Gaia Herbal Symposium, I offered to do a cosmetics workshop. Rick was hesitant; he wasn’t sure anyone would be interested at a conference that featured herbal medicines. But I felt that if even just a few people showed up, it would be fun. So the cosmetics

workshop was included on the schedule, and Rick, still thinking it would be of limited interest, assigned me a small room in which to do my presentation. When it came time for the workshop, it was apparent that we would have to do some quick maneuvering; there were more than 150 people in attendance.

Making Your Own Natural Beauty Products

The recipes in this book are among my favorites. Most are my personal creations; a few have been enhanced by the creative suggestions of others. When I first began making my own natural skin care products, there were no classes being taught and very few books on the subject. Many of these recipes came to me in those moments of inspiration when I'd been out among the flowers. Others I labored long over to get the exact proportions and effects. And some of them were garnered from students, who often took a simple suggestion I made and added the oh-so-perfect ingredient to create a product of excellence.

Gathering the Ingredients

As with most undertakings, it is wise to assemble all the ingredients and utensils you need ahead of time. There have been times when I haven't followed this little bit of advice and in the middle of a project found I was out of a necessary ingredient. This can be either a big or little inconvenience, but it's always annoying.

As with any recipe, you can substitute ingredients and experiment with the formulas to create a more personalized

product, but be sure you understand what the particular ingredient in the formula is “doing” so that you can substitute one product with another that has similar properties; otherwise the product may not turn out as you hoped. For instance, in a cream formula, if you substitute liquid oil for a solid oil, the cream may turn out runnier than you’d like. So ask yourself: What is the purpose or role of this ingredient? Is it an emulsifier? Does it help thicken the product? Does it add moisture?

My recipes are designed with lots of room for creativity. I am one of those people who gets frustrated with exact proportions. Coffee cups are most often my measuring cups, and spoons from my silverware drawer serve as measuring spoons. When adding essential oils I lose count somewhere after the fourth or fifth drop and proceed forward by scent and common sense alone. Nothing is exact in my world, and, needless to say, things don’t always turn out exactly the same. But I’ve learned to follow my intuition, and generally it leads me on a very creative process. Using my common sense rather than exact measurements has often produced exquisite results.

Not to worry, however, if you prefer to follow exact directions! I have carefully formulated each of these recipes so that you can follow them step-by-step with assurance. I highly recommend that you make the recipes as directed the first couple of times so you get a feel for how they are supposed to turn out. Then begin experimenting! Try adding your own combinations of essential oils, substituting one type of oil for another, or using different herbs in the formula. Be sure to write down each of the ingredients so that you can re-create the formula at another time. Don’t make the common mistake of thinking that you’ll remember. I still lament the many times I’ve made a perfect product but couldn’t recall the oils I’d added or the proportions I’d used.

Use Cruelty-Free Products

Though I'm a stickler for using cosmetic products that are as pure and natural as possible, of even greater concern to me is the barbaric use of animals for testing cosmetics in the name of beauty. Though we are assured that this testing is necessary and humane, visits to animal testing labs will convince you otherwise. There is nothing humane about placing shampoo in a rabbit's eyes — the gentler of the procedures practiced — or testing for allergic reactions on its shaved skin, often creating huge, ulcerated sores on these gentle creatures.

While many cosmetics companies have changed their animal testing policies in recent years, both because of pressure from caring citizens and animal rights advocates and because science has developed more sophisticated testing methods that do not require animal subjects, there are many still that refuse to end the abuse. When purchasing commercial beauty products, check the labels for the words "Against Animal Testing" or the "Leaping Bunny" symbol; this emblem indicates that no animals were harmed during the making of the product.

Helpful Kitchen Tools

No special tools are needed for creating any of the wonderful cosmetics described in this book. A kitchen with all its normal gadgets will supply you with most of what you need, and the

ingredients called for are mostly found in supermarkets or natural food stores. If not available locally, these items are easily ordered from the suppliers listed in the resources at the end of this book.

Although you don't need many specific items in order to create your natural beauty products, these everyday tools will be helpful:

- Blender
- Fine-mesh strainers
- Hand grater — reserved for grating beeswax, because it's almost impossible to clean the wax off
- An assortment of glass bottles and jars
- Stainless steel or glass mixing bowls
- Measuring cups
- Labels of various sizes

CHAPTER TWO

Selecting the Ingredients

Following is a list of some of the most common natural cosmetic ingredients, with some discussion of their properties and “actions,” or what they do in the formulas. Understanding the basic action of each ingredient helps you determine when to use it and gives you greater ability to personalize and formulate your own recipes. Most of these ingredients are widely available. They vary greatly in prices, so shop wisely!

Common Natural Ingredients

One of the best reasons for making your own skin care products is that you can control which ingredients go into them. Do not be fooled by the many “natural” ingredients used in commercial skin care products. Many of these ingredients are added only so that the consumer is impressed. Notice how far down on the list of ingredients the natural ones are. The farther down it is, the smaller the amount of the ingredient is in the product. Also note how many ingredients are preservatives, coloring agents, synthetic scents, and other chemicals.

While it is true that not all “chemical-sounding” ingredients are synthetics or “unnatural” additives, most natural ingredients are called by names we recognize. My advice is to know what you are putting on your skin in the same way you are responsible, or try to be responsible, for what you eat. The skin is, after all, our largest organ of assimilation and elimination. If you don’t recognize an ingredient, look it up. Don’t use it on your body until you know it is really natural, safe, and good for you — and the environment.

Truly natural skin and hair care products take advantage of the incredible diversity of nature in their formulations. Though ingredients will vary, I’ve listed here those that are ubiquitous,

valued across the board for their usefulness, effectiveness, versatility, and safety.

Aloe vera

What it is: This plant originated in Africa but is now found growing in most tropical and subtropical regions of the world. It is also an excellent houseplant to keep around.

What it does: The juice from the large, succulent leaves is an excellent first-aid treatment for burns, rough or irritated skin, and wounds. (Because of its ability to seal over a wound, it should never be used on staph infections.) Aloe juice is a wonderful moisturizer that also firms and tones the skin. Though fresh aloe juice is wonderful to use in products that you'll use up in a few days, it doesn't have preservative properties. For those products that need a longer shelf life, such as creams and lotions, use aloe vera gel that has at least 1 percent citric acid added as a natural preservative; you can find commercial preparations of this type of aloe gel in most natural foods stores and pharmacies.

Beeswax

What it is: This rich honey-scented wax is made by bees to build their honeycombs.

What it does: Beeswax is one of the most popular and widely used thickeners in skin care products, found in everything from lip balms to body butters, creams, salves, and lotions. But along with thickening products, it also adds its own rich, soothing, healing, antibiotic properties — bee energy!

Most recipes call for grating beeswax, so that it melts more quickly; you can also buy beeswax granules. Be sure that the beeswax you buy is pure and unrefined. It should be golden to green in color, not white. White beeswax has been refined.

Borax

What it is: Borax, or sodium borate, is a natural mineral mined from only a few places in the world. Imagine the surprise when women discover that those lovely bath salts they love contain the same ingredient as the popular laundry soap 20 Mule Team Borax. In fact, you can use grocery-store borax in your formulas.

What it does: This mineral softens water, is a cleansing agent, and has the unique ability to suspend soap particles in water so they don't adhere to the skin or clog the pores. The skin is left cleaner and softer because of it.

Vegetable Waxes and Butters

Though beeswax is my preferred wax for a thickening agent, there are other natural waxes available. You could use candelilla wax, derived from the leaves of *Euphorbia antisyphilitica*, a tree native to the southwestern United States and Mexico, or carnauba wax, derived from the Brazilian palm *Copernicia prunifera*. Both of these waxes are good, non-animal-derived alternatives to beeswax.

You could also use any of the solid or semisolid butters, such as **Cocoa butter** or **Coconut oil**. Illipe butter (pressed from the nuts of *Shorea stenoptera*, native to Borneo) or kokum butter (pressed from the seeds of *Garcinia indica*, native to India) may also do.

These vegetable waxes and butters differ in texture from beeswax, so if you substitute them for beeswax, you'll have to experiment to determine the right amount to use.

Clay

What it is: Clay is another one of those wonderful substances mined from the earth. It is the essence of a mountain ground down through the ages into a smooth powder, and blessed by thousands of sunrises, sunsets, wind, and rainstorms. When we use clay in our formulas, we are unleashing the energy of thousands of years.

What it does: Clay has been used for thousands of years as both a medicine and a cosmetic. It is found in products as varied as kitty litter (as a deodorizing and absorbent agent), poultices and facials (to help draw out impurities), and bath salts (to cleanse and remove impurities). There are many types. All are drawing, drying, and mineral rich. The concentrations of the various minerals are what determine the color and different effects of the clay. But when one clay isn't available, another clay will do.

Bentonite

This softer, more mucilaginous clay has mild properties good for most skin problems. Bentonite is also taken internally as a mineral supplement. It aids in binding toxic minerals, making them insoluble, so they can be more easily eliminated.

Green Clay

High concentrations of minerals (chromium, nickel, and copper), plant material, and volcanic matter give this clay its green coloring. It is my favorite clay for medicinal purposes, but I also

find it excellent for most cosmetic purposes. It is fairly mild and can be used successfully for most skin types. However, its green color isn't appropriate for some body powders.

White Clay

This is the most versatile of all clays and the one used most often in cosmetics. Because it's milder and less drying than other clays, white clay is used in skin masks, body packs, powders, and bath salts. The white clay generally used in cosmetics is called *kaolin* and is available in natural food stores but can be purchased at a much lower price in ceramic supply stores. White clay is comprised primarily of aluminum oxide and small amounts of zinc oxide.

Red Clay

Rich in the minerals silica, magnesium, calcium, potassium, and iron, red clay sports a rusty color. It is very drying and drawing and is primarily used in medicinal preparations for poison oak/ivy, rashes, and wounds. Red clay is also useful in preparations for oily skin, acne, or other problem skin.

Flower waters (hydrosols)

What it is: Hydrosols, or flower waters, are made by steam-distilling plants. They are often the by-product of essential oil production, a recapture of the water used to steam the plant materials in order to extract their oils, but better-quality hydrosols are made on their own, not as by-products. (Make your own! See recipe for **Handmade Rose Water**.) Though they contain many of the plant's active constituents, hydrosols are far less concentrated than essential oils and so have less potential to be irritating to the skin.

What it does: Hydrosols are used as spritzers and sprays and as a base (in place of water) in many skin care products such as creams and lotions. They are wonderful used alone as refreshing facial sprays and deodorizing room sprays; they can provide a wonderful cooling mist on a hot day's drive or in a stuffy hot room. Depending on the plant being used, hydrosols can be slightly astringent or moisturizing.

Glycerin, vegetable

What it is: Glycerin is a chemical component of all fats and oils. It is a thick, emollient, soothing, and very sweet substance used in soap making, natural skin care, and medicinal products. Glycerin derived from vegetable sources — such as palm oil, soy nuts, or coconuts — is of much higher quality than glycerin from animal fats.

What it does: Glycerin is a humectant (it draws moisture from the air) and helps moisturize and soothe the skin. It also helps to smooth and detangle hair and is found in many hair care products, especially conditioners. However, though glycerin makes the hair feel smooth and look shiny, it actually coats the shaft of the hair, causing it to weaken and break. It is not recommended for long-term use on hair.

Lanolin

What it is: Lanolin is the protective oil found on the wool of sheep. It helps keep the sheep warm and makes their wool weather-resistant.

What it does: This thick, viscous substance is the oil most like our own skin oil, making it one of the best moisturizers for humans. You can buy hydrolyzed lanolin, which is odorless but heavily processed and often laden with synthetic chemicals. Though it's a bit more challenging to use, I recommend using pure lanolin, or anhydrous lanolin. Use only small amounts, as the sheep-like odor will definitely permeate everything you make.

Rose water

What it is: Pure rose water is a hydrosol (see **Flower waters**), a distillate of rose petals. It smells heavenly and tastes delicious. When purchasing rose water, be sure to buy only 100-percent pure steam-distilled rose water. Often what is available in pharmacies and even some natural food stores is water with synthetic rose oil and preservatives added. Luckily you can make your own (see **Handmade Rose Water**).

What it does: Rose water is used in cosmetics for its lovely scent, but also because it has light astringent properties. As the gentlest of all astringents, rose water is often used as toner for sensitive and dry skin. It is also relaxing and calming. It is often used for romance and love!

Vitamin E oil

What it is: This oil is pressed from seeds and nuts that have high concentrations of vitamin E. You can purchase vitamin E in liquid form or in gelatin capsules (d-alpha tocopherol and mixed tocopherols). The capsules are usually more concentrated and often of higher quality. To use, prick with a pin and squeeze the oil out.

What it does: A powerful antioxidant, vitamin E is excellent for preventing scarring, healing burns, and revitalizing aged skin. It also has good preservative properties and is often used in natural formulas to extend their shelf life.

Witch hazel extract

What it is: This old-fashioned extract is steam-distilled from the bark of the witch hazel plant, a small, shrub-like tree native to the North American continent.

What it does: Witch hazel extract is used in many cosmetic products for its light astringent and firming properties. Witch hazel also has mild antibacterial properties, making it an excellent treatment for acne and skin problems. You can make your own extract by purchasing witch hazel bark from an herb company, then soaking it in alcohol (rubbing alcohol for external purposes; brandy or vodka for internal purposes). However, I find it easier to buy it; it's available in most pharmacies and natural food stores.

Essential Oils

Essential oils are highly concentrated extracts of the potent, volatile, aromatic constituents of plants. Aromatherapy, the art and science of using essential oils for healing purposes, has been practiced for over eight thousand years and is often combined with herbal therapeutics. Essential oils are highly concentrated; it often takes hundreds of pounds of plant material to make even a few ounces of essential oil. For instance, it takes 60 pounds of roses to make one drop of rose oil, and 10 pounds of lavender to make 1 ounce of lavender oil. Because of their extreme concentration, essential oils need to be used with caution. They are recommended for external use only.

Essential oils are potent transporters of healing properties. Herbalist Stephanie Tourles, in her excellent book *Organic Body Care Recipes*, states, “I consider essential oils the life force or soul of the plant. They embody the plant’s precious, aromatic hormones and chemical compounds that can regenerate and oxygenate the skin. Essential oils are important to include in therapeutic personal care formulations because, due to their minute molecular structure, they easily penetrate into the dermis to nourish, rejuvenate, and revitalize skin cells, unlike many of the heavier ingredients in face and body care products, such as base oils, waxes, and thickeners, which remain primarily on the skin’s surface or penetrate only slightly beneath it.”

Most essential oils will last for two to three years, and some much longer, if stored in a cool place, out of direct light. Use sparingly, and in the amounts recommended. Most essential oils should be diluted in a carrier oil before being put on the skin, though some are safe to use “neat” (directly on the skin). Don’t ingest them, unless you’re working with a trained aromatherapist or herbalist. And keep them out of reach of children.

I’ve listed here a few of my favorite essential oils to use in natural beauty products. They are generally readily available, in the inexpensive to moderately priced range, and sustainably harvested.

Essential vs. Fragrance Oils

Essential oils are *not* the same as synthetic “fragrance” oils. Though they may smell and look similar to essential oils, and they are often packaged similarly (and labeled “pure” or “natural” or “naturally made”), synthetic fragrance oils do not

contain the energy of the plants; they are chemical creations manufactured in laboratories. If the label does not state "essential oil," then it is not the real thing.

While many people prefer not to use any synthetic fragrance oils in their products, I do use them occasionally. For instance, when the cost of adding a pure essential oil such as rose or jasmine to a large batch of bath salts or body powder might be prohibitive, I may use some fragrance oil. But that's purely for scent. If I am making a product where I want the oil's healing properties, I use only pure essential oils.

Cardamom

An exotic sensuous scent, cardamom is so yummy it's almost addictive. It is wonderful combined with vanilla, rose, orange, ylang ylang, and other blends. Try it in personal lubricants and your sensuous love balms!

Carrot seed

Carrot seed is an excellent healing essential oil especially indicated for sun-damaged, wrinkled, and sagging skin, but it can be used for all skin types. It adds a mild earthy scent and golden color to skin care products and is excellent blended with other oils in serums and creams for aging and mature skin.

Cedarwood

Cedarwood adds a woody, warm odor to skin care products. It is relaxing and grounding, and a good base note in blends. It's helpful for blemished skin and acne.

Cinnamon

Adds a wonderful warm and familiar scent to skin care products. It can be especially nice in lip balms, bath salts, and facial masks. But use the oil sparingly, as it is very potent and can be irritating to the skin. Or use powdered cinnamon instead.

Citrus (lemon, lime, grapefruit, and tangerine)

Citrus essential oils add a refreshing, uplifting, “clean” scent to skin care products. Most have stimulating and invigorating properties and are astringent and disinfectant. They blend well with heavier and/or very sweet scents. They can also be used in edible body care products. My favorite is grapefruit. (Note that sometimes citrus essential oils can be photosensitizing and/or lighten skin. Test on yourself in a small area before using.)

Conifers (balsam, pine, and spruce)

These oils add a refreshing, woody scent to body care products. They are generally relaxing but invigorating, and they add a fresh, clean energy.

Frankincense

A thick, resinous oil, frankincense has a rich, deep odor and calming and relaxing properties. It is used in formulas for dry and mature skin and in healing salves and balms to rejuvenate skin and accelerate healing.

Lavender

One of the most widely used and inexpensive essential oils, lavender is popular in cosmetics, skin care, and bath and laundry products. It is wonderfully calming and relaxing, as well as disinfectant. You can't go wrong using lavender. It can be used neat (directly on the skin, undiluted).

Mints (peppermint, spearmint)

Mint essential oils add an invigorating and uplifting energy to skin care products, and they are often used to flavor mouthwash and toothpaste products. They are cooling, refreshing, and energizing.

Patchouli

People seem to either love or fervently dislike patchouli essential oil. Its often associated with the '60s, as it was a favorite scent of that era; *everyone* wore it! It has a rich, musky odor that is sensuous and relaxing. Patchouli has cell-rejuvenating properties and is especially useful for mature and damaged skin.

Sandalwood

One of the most popular essential oils for centuries, used in incense, skin care products, and medicinals, sandalwood is now at risk of becoming endangered, so be sure to use only sustainably cultivated sandalwood. It has a sensuous, almost intoxicating scent that is deeply relaxing; for the skin, it offers soothing, emollient, toning properties.

Vanilla

Be prepared to have people fall in love with you when you wear the scent of vanilla. It is warm, friendly, and sensuous in a homey, familiar sort of way. It blends wonderfully with other scents. The essential oil (like the extract) is derived from the bean of the vanilla orchid, which may in part explain its sensuous nature! Use in lip balms, body butters, sensual love balms, and lubricants.

Vetiver

A warming, earth-scented oil, vetiver can be used in place of sandalwood. It is calming, relaxing, and grounding and is used to treat depression. Great in blends!

Ylang ylang

Ylang ylang essential oil has an intensely sweet, spicy, exotic scent that can be somewhat overpowering — but oh so captivating. The oil is extracted from a gorgeous tropical flower. It's actually quite common, so this essential oil is more reasonably priced than other richly scented floral oils such as rose and jasmine. It blends well with other essential oils.

There are many other lovely essential oils that are wonderful to experience and experiment with in your homemade products. Oils such as rose, jasmine, neroli, and helichrysum are exquisite, but usually quite expensive. You might wish to practice with some of the less expensive essential oils, perfecting your formulas, before experimenting with some of the more costly ones.

Carrier or Base Oils

Carrier or base oils, pressed from the fruits, seeds, or nuts of various plants, serve as the base of many skin care products. They are sometimes called “fixed” oils because they are not volatile, as essential oils are. Each oil has different properties, but all protect the skin. The best ones are those that have been minimally processed. Look for oils whose labels state that they are “unrefined,” “cold pressed,” or “expeller expressed” — and of course organic, if available. These plant-based oils generally have a short shelf life and are best stored in the refrigerator or in a cool pantry out of direct sunlight. Learn to recognize the smell of rancid

oil — it has a strong “off” odor — and don’t use an oil if you suspect it may be rancid.

The base or carrier oils you use will make a big difference in your products, so choose those that are best suited to your skin type (and wallet!). While there are hundreds of different kinds of carrier oils available these days, here are my favorites.

Almond oil

What it is: Extracted from the kernels of almonds, this sweet oil is one of the most versatile for skin care products.

What it does: Almond oil is light, rich in fatty acids, and beneficial to most skin types. It has a light, pleasant odor and soothes, softens, and reconditions the skin.

Apricot kernel oil

What it is: Cold-pressed from apricot pits, this oil is a versatile moisturizer.

What it does: One of my favorite carrier oils, apricot kernel oil is light, has a non-oily feel, and is good for most skin types. It is especially suited for sensitive and mature skin. It has a light, pleasant odor.

Argan oil

What it is: Argan oil is extracted from the nut of the argan tree, a small tree found growing in the Moroccan high desert. Until very recently the oil was seldom found outside the region where the tree grows, and the tree itself was endangered due to overgrazing by goats. Due to the hard work of women's collectives in Morocco, the nut is now sustainably grown and harvested, and the oil is exported as a "miracle" skin care product.

What it does: Rich in natural tocopherols, squalene, and fatty acids, the oil is reported to heal scar tissue, soften skin, and reduce fine lines and wrinkles. It is absorbed quickly into the skin and is used as a conditioner and treatment for the hands, face, hair, and nails. But it is expensive and can be difficult to find. Though I'm happy for the women's cooperatives in Morocco, and for the argan trees that are being preserved now that they are seen as economically beneficial, frankly I think the oil is a little overrated.

Avocado oil

What it is: This rich, buttery oil is expressed from the fruit and nut of the avocado. It is light to dark green in color.

What it does: A very nutritive oil, with high levels of vitamins A, D, and E, avocado oil is especially good for dry, mature, and aging skin. Because it is thick and emollient, it doesn't penetrate the skin as readily as lighter oils and isn't recommended for oily skin types. It is skin protective and helps keeps moisture in the skin.

Castor oil

What it is: This viscous oil is extracted from the beans of the castor plant. Though not used for cooking, it has an excellent reputation as a medicinal oil.

What it does: Castor oil is perhaps best known for its purgative properties, but it is also excellent for skin care. It is often used in compresses to help dissolve cysts and tumors. It is highly emollient, soothing, thick, and viscous, and it is good for dry and mature skin, and especially for eczema, psoriasis, and those rough areas around the heels and elbows.

Cocoa butter

What it is: Cocoa butter is the fat surrounding the cacao bean, from which chocolate is made. No wonder it smells heavenly; in fact, everything made with it has the potential to smell deliciously like chocolate — though this may not always be desirable in your products! It is thick and solid at room temperature.

What it does: Cocoa butter is one of the richest oils available, so use it sparingly in formulas intended for oily skin! On the other hand, cocoa butter is excellent for dry, mature skin. It's also excellent (and delicious) in personal lubricants. Along with its emollient properties, it will help thicken body care products. (Small tapioca-like kernels in your cream are an indication that you've added too much cocoa butter to your base.)

Coconut oil

What it is: Coconut oil is pressed from the milky pulp of the coconut. It is a semisolid oil that liquefies at temperatures above 75°F (24°C). Long treasured for its protective emollient properties, today coconut oil is probably the most common oil used for cosmetic purposes.

What it does: Coconut oil is a rich emollient with a sweet fragrant odor. Not as thick or fatty as cocoa butter, this oil is more suitable for most skin types and is a wonderful carrier oil in many skin care products. It is commonly used as a moisturizer for skin and a conditioner for hair. It is also delicious in lip balms, body butters, and lubricants.

Grapeseed oil

What it is: This light green, liquid oil is one of the lightest you can use in skin care products. It is expressed from the seeds of grapes, usually as a by-product of the wine industry. Use organically cultivated grapeseed oil whenever possible, as grapes are usually heavily sprayed with herbicides.

What it does: Considered a “non-oily” oil, grapeseed oil is light, non-greasy, quickly absorbed by the skin, and odorless. It’s perfect for oily skin; it’s one of my favorites for skin care products for teenagers, who tend to have oily skin.

Jojoba oil

What it is: Jojoba “oil” is expressed from the nuts of a small shrub that grows in the high desert of the American Southwest. Jojoba is technically not an oil but a liquid wax ester, similar in structure to our own moisturizing sebum. Because of its natural antioxidant properties, it keeps for a long time and requires no refrigeration.

What it does: Jojoba is one of the most highly prized carrier oils in natural skin care products because of its similarity to human sebum and its ability to moisturize the skin. Use for all skin types. It is popular in creams, massage oils, lip balms, skin salves, and hair care formulas.

Kukui nut oil

What it is: This rich emollient oil is pressed from the small nuts of the kukui or candlenut tree (*Aleurites moluccana*), the state tree of Hawaii.

What it does: Rich in linoleic and alpha-linoleic acids and essential fatty acids, with soothing emollient properties, kukui nut oil is especially healing for the skin. It is readily absorbed and is good for dry skin, eczema, and psoriasis. It is also often used in lip balms, body butters, and lubricants.

Macadamia nut oil

What it is: This richly scented emollient oil is expressed from the seeds of the macadamia nut.

What it does: Like jojoba oil, macadamia nut oil closely resembles human sebum, and because of this it is readily and easily absorbed into the skin. It is skin protective, healing, and soothing, and is especially recommended for healing damaged and scarred skin. It is also deliciously tasty and smells wonderfully nutty, and it makes a wonderful addition to edible body butters, lubricants, and lip balms. This is one of my favorite oils for both cooking and skin care formulas, perhaps because I have a slight addiction to the oil-rich nuts!

Olive oil

What it is: “Liquid gold of the Mediterranean!” Homer declared. The nutrient-rich oil pressed from olives is one of the most widely used and highly prized oils in the world. The oil is pressed from both unripe (green olive oil) and ripe (golden-colored olive oil) olives. Either can be used, but beware of quality! Olive oil comes in several grades: “extra virgin” denotes the first pressing and the highest-quality oil; “virgin” denotes the second pressing; the third pressing is labeled simply “olive oil” and is definitely not as good quality as extra virgin and virgin oils.

What it does: Delicious, nutrient-dense, and rich, good quality olive oil is heart healthy and good for most skin types. It tends to be thick and heavy and is better for dry and more mature skin. It’s difficult to mask the rich olive odor, which however delicious it may be on salads and culinary delights is not so pleasing in skin care products. Because of this, olive oil is often diluted with other oils for cosmetic purposes.

Rosehip seed oil

What it is: Pressed from the seeds or “hips” of roses, especially the *Rosa rubiginosa* and other wild roses found growing in various places around the world. Much of today’s commercial rosehip seed oil is coming from South American countries and is of good quality. However, it is very sensitive to heat and should be stored in the refrigerator.

What it does: A rich, pale red oil, rosehip seed oil has high levels of essential fatty acids and is exceptionally healing for damaged, dry, or prematurely aged skin. It is considered a superior skin care oil and is used for revitalizing tired or problem skin and aids in cell regeneration.



ABOVE: *Rose*

Sea buckthorn oil

What it is: This bright orange oil is pressed from the berries of *Hippophae rhamnoides*.

What it does: Sea buckthorn oil is rich in essential fatty acids, carotenes, and tocopherols, nutrients that nourish and feed the skin. It is highly prized for use in cases of damaged skin, scar tissue, prematurely aged skin, wrinkles, and burns.

Sesame seed oil

What it is: Pressed from oil-rich sesame seeds, this oil is a favorite in Ayurvedic practices and for healing massages. It is often referred to as the “queen of oils.”

What it does: Sesame seed oil is very nutritive, with high levels of antioxidants, vitamins A and E, and protein. This light, penetrating oil makes a nice base for many skin care products and is commonly used in creams, massage oil, and lip balms. It is often used in natural sunscreen recipes because of its sun-protective properties.

Shea butter

What it is: Extracted from the nuts of the karite tree (*Vitellaria paradoxa*, syn. *Butyrospermum parkii*), shea butter is a semisolid yellow oil. The scent is fairly strong in its pure form. For cosmetic purposes most people prefer the “refined” butter, which is a fractionated by-product made by pressing shea butter.

What it does: This rich butter is used for healing damaged or scarred skin, as well as dry skin and rough skin (such as on the elbows, knees, and heels). It is also a protective agent in harsh weather. Shea butter takes longer to harden than other butters, so when making products with it, allow a longer cooling period.

Herbs for Natural Beauty

Following is a small sampling of some of the most popular herbs used for natural skin care and skin care products. There are so many herbs to choose from! Start in your garden — see what’s growing there. Or browse herb catalogs to see what’s available. Next, look up the properties of the plants you’re thinking about using in a good herb reference book. Look for those plants that are best suited for your skin type and for the products you wish to make.

Calendula

Calendula officinalis

Part used: flowers

What it does: The bright yellow to orange flower of calendula is renowned for its skin-healing properties. Calendula has antimicrobial and anti-inflammatory properties, making it especially healing for wounds, burns, and damaged or problem skin. It is gentle enough for all skin types. The lovely, soothing, golden oil made from the petals is often used in lotions, creams, salves, and lip balms. A strong infusion is used for brightening golden and strawberry red highlights. Because of its gentleness, calendula is a favorite herb in infant and children skin care products.



ABOVE: *Calendula*

Chamomile

Matricaria recutita, Anthemis nobilis

Part used: flowers

What it does: Chamomile is among the most beloved and widely used herbs. Safe, gentle, and effective, chamomile has powerful anti-inflammatory properties and is commonly used to treat inflamed, irritated, or sensitive skin. It is good for all skin types but is especially indicated for sensitive skin. It's often combined with calendula and used in skin care products for infants and children. The flowers make a wonderful rinse for light hair, adding sheen and golden highlights when used over a period of time. Chamomile has mild nervine properties and is used in herbal baths for its relaxing and calming effects. *Note:* Some people have allergies to the Compositae family, to which chamomile belongs; avoid chamomile if you find that it gives you itchy eyes, sore throat, or skin irritation.

Comfrey

Symphytum officinale

Part used: leaves

What it does: A very soothing emollient herb, comfrey is renowned for its ability to rejuvenate the skin and support regeneration of skin tissue. It is excellent for irritated, inflamed, and damaged skin, but gentle enough for all skin types. Comfrey is rich in mucilaginous material and aids in moisturizing and “softening” the skin. It is excellent in skin care products for infants and children. *Note:* There is some concern about using comfrey on deep open wounds, as it’s possible to heal the outer skin before the deeper tissue has a chance to heal.

Elder

Sambucus canadensis, S. nigra

Part used: flowers

What it does: Elder flowers were the favorite cosmetic aid of many of our grandmothers and great-grandmothers, who used them in a wash to “brighten” the skin. Elder flower has soothing, anti-inflammatory, and mild astringent properties that make it excellent for damaged, irritated skin. But it is gentle enough for all skin types and is often included in skin care formulas for the elderly as well as for infants and children. Elder flower water makes a wonderful rinse for lighter hair colors.

Lavender

Lavandula spp.

Part used: flowers

What it does: One of our most familiar and favorite herbs, lavender adds its clean floral scent and calm, relaxing properties to hundreds, if not thousands, of different skin care products, herb formulas, and cleansing agents. Lavender's antiseptic and anti-inflammatory properties make it useful for burns, rashes, and irritated and damaged skin, and it is commonly used as a healing agent in creams, lotions, and salves. It has cell-regenerating properties and is used for reducing wrinkles, scarring, and stretch marks. It is also an excellent calming and relaxing herb and is popular in herbal baths. *Note:* There are many different varieties of lavender, but *Lavandula angustifolia* is generally considered the best quality for medicinal and cosmetic purposes.

Lemon balm

Melissa officinalis

Part used: leaves

What it does: With its fragrant lemon-like scent and wonderfully refreshing flavor, lemon balm is beloved by herbalists, cosmeticians, and beekeepers alike. It is a favorite nervine herb, being both relaxing and uplifting, and it is often used to brighten the spirits when a person is feeling down. It has powerful antimicrobial and antiviral properties and is one of our best aids for reducing outbreaks of herpes and other viruses. It is a light astringent and is especially nice to use in skin care products for people who have acne or other problem skin, but it is gentle enough for all skin types.

Rose

Rosa spp.

Parts used: flowers and hips

What it does: Quite truthfully, you need have no other herb for skin care products than the exquisite rose. Sappho christened it the “Queen of Flowers” in 600 bce, and it still holds its royal reign. Loved not only for its fragrance but also for its gently persuasive way with skin, rose seems to nourish, balance, reform, de-scar, and rejuvenate most skin types. It is lightly astringent, but not drying. It is a known cell regenerator and is especially helpful for damaged or mature and aging skin. Rose also lifts the spirits and is used for depression and grief. It also has a long association with love and romance and is used as an aphrodisiac.

Rosemary

Rosmarinus officinalis

Part used: leaves

What it does: A wonderful herb prized for both cosmetic and medicinal purposes, rosemary is astringent, antiseptic, cleansing, and normalizing for the skin. It aids circulation, has stimulating properties, and helps bring blood flow to the surface of the skin, helping to cleanse and nourish the skin from the inside out. Because of its astringent properties, it is especially useful for oily to normal skin types. Rosemary is also a popular hair rinse, adding highlights to darker shades of hair, and can be used for dandruff control. It is a powerful antioxidant and can combat free radical damage in the body, as well as oxidation in creams, lotions, and other skin care products.

Sage

Salvia officinalis

Part used: leaves

What it does: A favorite herb for herbal first aid and skin care products, sage has been valued since medieval times. With its astringent properties, it is especially valuable for those with oily or combination skin. Sage makes an effective deodorant and is used in body powders, natural deodorants, and bath salts and scrubs for its cleansing and “grounding” effect. Sage is excellent in hair rinses and tonics, especially for darker shades of hair, and is said to accelerate and encourage hair growth.



ABOVE: Sage

CHAPTER THREE

A Cornucopia of Natural Skin Care Recipes

Before you get started on these recipes, remember to have fun, enjoy the process, and *be creative!* These recipes are meant to be played with. Add the extra pinch of herb, a new scent, a touch of this or that. Just like a good cook follows an exact recipe only once, then adds her own spark of creativity and inspiration, so these formulas are meant to be tampered with and awakened with your own creative dreams.

A few words of advice about experimenting with these recipes:

- Always experiment in *small* batches so as not to waste a lot of precious ingredients. Make an ounce, not a pound; a pint, not a quart.
- Know what each ingredient *does* in the formula so that you can substitute something that works similarly. For instance, if you're substituting for beeswax in a formula, use another wax with similar hardening properties, but not a soft butter-like oil like coconut oil.
- Keep a collection of your own favorite recipes in a special book or keepsake box. These may be passed down to your grandchildren or be the base of your own book someday. And be sure to keep records of the exact amounts of each ingredient so that you can re-create favorite recipes and formulas.
- All herbs used in these recipes are dried, unless otherwise specified.

Cleansing Grains

A perfect soap replacement, cleansing grains are mild, nourishing, and suitable for all skin types, and can be used daily. A well-

blended cleansing grain formula lightly polishes the skin, removes dead cells, and nourishes and soothes, all without upsetting the normal protective coating of the skin. I've tried many cleansing grains on the market, and though some are quite nice, my own simple Miracle Grains recipe remains my favorite. I can mix and blend it to suit myself, it's inexpensive enough that I can use it as a total body scrub, and it's totally biodegradable and even quite tasty — I could eat it in a pinch!

Many of the commercial cleansing grains are far too harsh; they feel like sandpaper on the skin. Teenagers with acne or “troubled” skin often use these rough cleansers, thinking that somehow they can scrub that acne away. Not so! Blemished skin, especially, must be treated gently. Harsh cleansers will only further irritate the already inflamed condition. By contrast, the light Miracle Grains are perfect for blemished skin. They gently cleanse, distribute excess oil, remove dead cells, and improve circulation. I have had many people tell me over the years that my Miracle Grains have “saved” their skin!



ABOVE: *Lavender*

Miracle Grains

You can use these cleansing grains on your face, as described here, but also in the bath or shower to cleanse and scrub your entire body. If you're using them in the shower, store them in a plastic, not glass, container.

INGREDIENTS

- 1 cup oats, finely ground
- 2 cups white clay
- 1/4 cup almonds, finely ground
- 1/8 cup lavender flowers, finely ground
- 1/8 cup rose petals, finely ground

INSTRUCTIONS

- 1.** Combine all the ingredients and mix well. For convenience, store a weeks' worth of the grains in a container next to the sink, but keep the remainder in the refrigerator or other cool place to preserve their freshness. A shell makes a nice scoop. A spice jar with a shaker top also works well as a storage container.
- 2.** To use, mix 1–2 teaspoons of the cleansing grains with enough water to make a paste. Gently massage onto your face. Rinse off with warm water. Follow with a light facial astringent and

then a little face cream (see the recipes later in this chapter)
for a perfect morning cleanse!

Moist Miracle Grains

I prefer the dry cleansing grains for storage purposes and usually give them this way for gifts, but for my personal use I always make them moist. They're easier to use when made up already, plus they have the addition of a couple more yummy ingredients.

Honey serves as a natural preservative for the grains, as well as adding its wonderful moisturizing quality. Though the honey sounds like it would make the grains very sticky, it doesn't. The addition of a hydrosol to premoisten the grains adds even more herbal properties.

I usually mix only enough moist grains for a week or two to prevent spoilage from occurring. If the grains do spoil, then it's because the ratio of honey to water (hydrosol) was off. The water is intended to give the grains a smoother consistency. Don't use too much.

INGREDIENTS

- 1/2 cup **Miracle Grains**
- 1/4 cup honey (if thick or hard, melt to make it easier to mix)
- 1 tablespoon (more or less) rose water (see **Handmade Rose Water**), a hydrosol of your choice, or distilled water

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Combine the dry Miracle Grains with the honey and just enough rose water to form a soft paste with the consistency of cooked

oatmeal. Stir well. Store in a container near the sink.

- 2.** To use, scoop out $\frac{1}{4}$ – $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon and gently massage onto your face (this is easier if you wet your face first). Rinse off with warm water. Follow with a light facial astringent and then a little face cream (see the recipes later in this chapter) for a perfect morning cleanse!

Playing with the Miracle Grains Recipe

There are many items you can add to the basic formulas for Miracle Grains, such as seaweed, vitamins A and E, and other combinations of herbs. You may wish to add a few drops of essential oil, such as lavender, grapefruit, or orange, to enhance the scent and the effect of the grains; add only a drop or two. For additional texture, you might add finely ground coconut flakes, poppy seeds, blue or yellow corn meal, or cocoa nibs, using up to $\frac{1}{8}$ cup per recipe batch.

Don't be afraid to be creative with these recipes. You may design a truly unique and wonderful formula personalized for your skin type.

Grinding the Ingredients for Miracle Grains

When grinding ingredients for Miracle Grains, you may wish to grind the oats very finely. The almonds also should be ground well, but leave them with just a touch of "grit." Powder the roses and lavender as much as possible, although they will always have a bit of coarseness left. This is desirable, as it serves as the cleansing "grain" in the grains.

I have found that electric coffee grinders work best for grinding small amounts of herbs, flowers, and spices. However, do not use the grinder you use for coffee; your herbs will smell like coffee, and your coffee will forever smell and taste like herbs. Blenders, if high powered, work well but won't grind as finely as a coffee mill does.

Facial Steams

A facial steam does for the face what a sauna or sweat lodge does for the body: It draws fresh blood to the surface of the skin, opens the pores, and draws impurities from the deeper levels to the surface of the skin, where they are released. The herbs add their healing properties and, because of the heat and steam, are absorbed deeply into the skin. A fresh flow of blood to the skin leaves you with a glowing, radiant complexion.

Following are two of my favorite formulas for herbal facial steams. It's fun and easy to make your own recipes as well. When blending your own formulas, use herbs that have been traditionally used for the care of the skin. Flowers are always lovely to include for their color and texture as well as medicinal properties they add; it is so lovely to be steaming your skin over a "soup pot" simmering with roses, marigolds, and chamomile and lavender blossoms.

To do an herbal facial steam, bring a pot of water to a boil, add the herbs, simmer for a few minutes, and then remove the pot to a table. Sit at the table in front of the pot, drape a large, thick towel over both your head and the pot, and place your face over the steaming herb water. It will get very hot under the towel. To regulate the heat, raise or lower your head or lift a corner of the towel to let in a little cool air. You can come out occasionally to catch a breath of cool air if necessary. For the steam to be most

effective, steam for 8 to 10 minutes. When done, pat your skin dry, and then, to close your pores, spritz with a light astringent, rose water or another hydrosol, or cool water.

Herbal Facial Steam

Use either of the two herb formulas listed below, depending on your skin type.

FOR DRY TO NORMAL SKIN

- 3 parts comfrey leaf
- 2 parts calendula flowers
- 2 parts chamomile blossoms
- 2 parts rose petals
- 1 part lavender flowers

FOR NORMAL TO OILY SKIN

- 3 parts comfrey leaf
- 2 parts calendula flowers
- 1 part raspberry leaf
- 1 part sage leaf
- $\frac{1}{4}$ part rosemary leaf

INSTRUCTIONS

- 1.** Mix all the herbs together, adjusting the amounts to suit your skin type, and store in a dry, airtight glass container.

- 2.** To use, bring 2–3 quarts of water to a boil in a large pot. Add a healthy handful of the herb mixture and let simmer with the lid on for just a couple of minutes.
- 3.** Remove the pot to a table, and steam your face for 8–10 minutes. Then pat your skin dry, and spritz with a light astringent, rose water or another hydrosol, or cool water. This mini-sauna does wonders for the skin.

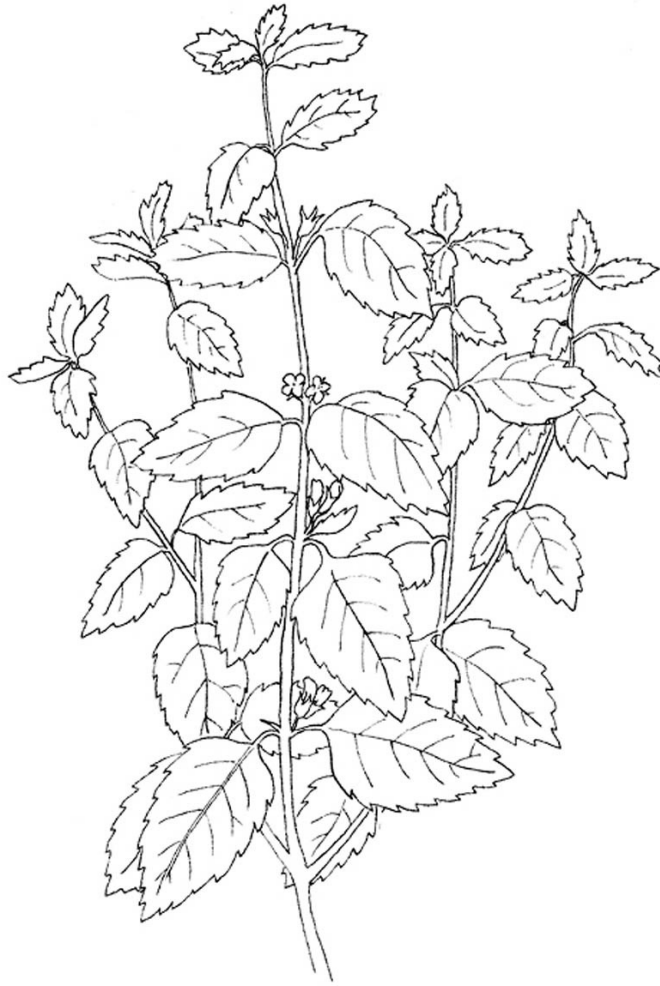


ABOVE: *Raspberry*

Toners and Hydrosols

Astringent toners and hydrosols are all firming, toning, and tightening for the skin. They are recommended for use after facial steams, masks, and cleansing to close and tighten the pores. In addition, they tone the skin and help prepare it for moisturizing. Toners and hydrosols are also used to remove excess oil from the skin. While they are especially appropriate for oily skin, all skin types can benefit from their pore-firming effects.

Herbal toners and hydrosols take advantage of plants that have high levels of tannins, which have an astringent-like action. In medicinal preparations, these plants are used for healing wounds and for drying up excess moisture in the body (such as mucus in the lungs, vaginal infections, and so on).



ABOVE: *Lemon balm*

Queen of Hungary's Water

This wonderful astringent wash has been hailed as the first herbal product ever to be produced and marketed. Legend has it that a young and very handsome gypsy man used it to heal the queen of Hungary from a mysterious disease, and he was rewarded well for his efforts. The story, like the water itself, has lingered, and centuries later you can still find Queen of Hungary's water packaged in exotic little bottles and sold in high-class department stores for a fancy price (I'm sure our ancient gypsy friend would be quite pleased!). But better yet, you can make it easily and simply for the cost of a few herbs and an inexpensive bottle of vinegar.

INGREDIENTS

- 6 parts lemon balm leaf
- 4 parts chamomile flowers
- 4 parts rose petals
- 3 parts calendula flowers
- 3 parts comfrey leaf
- 1 part lemon peel
- 1 part rosemary leaf
- 1 part sage leaf
- vinegar (apple cider or wine vinegar)
- rose water (see **Handmade Rose Water**) or witch hazel extract
- lavender or rose essential oil (optional)

INSTRUCTIONS

- 1.** Place all the herbs in a widemouthed glass jar. Add enough vinegar to cover the herbs by 2–3 inches. Place the lid on the jar and let sit in a warm spot for 2–3 weeks.
- 2.** Strain out the herbs, reserving the liquid. For each cup of liquid, add $\frac{1}{2}$ –1 cup of rose water or witch hazel extract. If desired, you can add a drop or two of essential oil. Store the liquid in a glass container with a lid; it will keep indefinitely without refrigeration.
- 3.** To use as a facial toner, soak a cotton ball with the liquid and wipe it gently over your face, as a final rinse after cleansing.

To use as a hair conditioner, dilute $\frac{1}{4}$ cup of Queen of Hungary's water in 1 quart of warm water. Rinse out any shampoo, then pour the conditioning rinse over your hair. Follow with a final rinse of pure water. *Note:* when using it as a hair rinse, it is better to make Queen of Hungary's water in pure apple cider vinegar and not to dilute it with rose water or witch hazel extract.

To use as a refreshing after-shower rinse and/or as a deodorizer, fill a spritzer bottle half to three-quarters full with Queen of Hungary's water, and top up with pure water or hydrosols. Add a drop or two of lavender or citrus essential oil if you wish. Spritz on your body as desired.

Bay Rum Aftershave and Astringent

Enticed by the bracing scent of the popular bay rum aftershave my father used, I was sure I could make a better product myself. And I think I did! This wonderful all-natural toner can be used as an aftershave to tighten and firm pores and also as an after-bath spray and facial spritzer and toner.

You can use bay laurel in this recipe, but I prefer California bay because it is so abundant and strongly scented. And though fresh leaves are really best to use, you can use dried leaves if they still smell intensely pungent. I've listed my favorite spice mix here, but you can adjust the spices (and the amounts) to suit yourself.

INGREDIENTS

- fresh California bay leaves (enough to fill a quart jar three-quarters full)
- 1 tablespoon whole cloves
- 1 tablespoon ground or grated allspice or nutmeg
- 1 tablespoon freshly grated ginger, or $\frac{1}{2}$ tablespoon dried ground ginger
- 1 quart rum
- bay essential oil (optional)

INSTRUCTIONS

- 1.** Pack a widemouthed glass jar with the bay leaves, leaving some room at the top. Add the spices. Add enough rum to cover the herbs by 2–3 inches. Put on the lid, and let sit for 3–4 weeks in a warm place.
- 2.** Strain out the herbs, reserving the liquid. Store the liquid in a glass container with a lid; it will keep indefinitely. You may add a drop or two of essential oil of bay to strengthen the scent, especially if you used dried bay leaves. You can use the astringent as is, or, if you wish, you can dilute it with water or a hydrosol.

Homemade Rose Water, Method #1

This recipe is the more traditional way to prepare rose water. Though it's a little more involved, it's fun to do and the results are generally outstanding. You can make a quart of excellent-quality rose water in about 40 minutes. But keep an eye on the clock. If you simmer the water too long, you produce an excess of distilled water and the rose essence will become overly diluted.

You'll need a large pot with a rounded lid that can be inverted on top of the pot; the speckled blue canning pots are ideal. You'll also need a brick and a heat-proof stainless steel or glass quart bowl. Be sure to use roses that have not been sprayed with insecticides.

INGREDIENTS

- 2–3 quarts fresh rose petals
- water
- ice cubes or crushed ice

INSTRUCTIONS

- 1.** Set a large pot on your stovetop. Place a brick in the pot, centered on its bottom. Set a heat-proof stainless steel or glass quart bowl on top of the brick. Place the roses in the pot, around the brick (not in the bowl; the bowl remains empty for now). Add enough flowers to reach the top of the brick. Pour in

just enough water to cover the roses; the water level should rise to just above the brick.

- 2.** Place the lid upside down on the pot, so that the lid makes a shallow inverted bowl topside. Turn on the heat and bring the water to a rolling boil, then lower the heat to keep the water at a slow, steady simmer. As soon as the water begins to boil, toss 2 or 3 trays of ice cubes (or a bag of crushed ice) on top of the inverted lid. The rising steam hits the cold lid, condenses, and rolls down to the center, dropping, plop, into the bowl. You've now created a home still!
- 3.** Every 20 minutes, quickly lift the lid to see how much rose water you have distilled. Take a spoonful of the rose water and taste it. It's time to stop when you have between a pint and a quart of water that smells and tastes strongly of roses.
- 4.** Turn off the heat, let cool, and then remove the bowl of rose water. Transfer the rose water to a glass container and store in a cool, dark location, where it will keep for up to a year.

Distilling Other Kinds of Hydrosols

The simple home still used in method #1 can be used to make other hydrosols, but it works best with plant material that is naturally high in essential oils, such as mints, citrus peel (preferably organic), and lavender. Don't expect that every really fragrant flower will make a richly scented hydrosol. It doesn't always. But with a little experimenting, you'll be making excellent flower and herb hydrosols before the summer's over!

Homemade Rose Water, Method #2

Though rose water is generally made by distillation, this method of infusion is simple and effective, and it ensures a perfect rose water every time. Be sure you use fresh roses that have just begun to open; they are in their prime and will yield the strongest water. The more fragrant the roses, the stronger the scent of the rose water will be. Be sure to use only roses that have not been sprayed with insecticides.

INGREDIENTS

- 3 parts witch hazel extract, vodka, or gin
- 1 part distilled water
- fresh rose buds or petals (enough to fill a quart jar three-quarters full)

INSTRUCTIONS

- 1.** Mix the witch hazel extract with the distilled water. Pack a widemouthed quart jar with the roses, leaving some room at the top. Add enough of the diluted witch hazel to cover the roses by 2–3 inches. Cover tightly, and let sit for 2–3 weeks in a warm, shaded area.

2. Strain out the roses, reserving the liquid. Transfer the rose water to a glass container and store in a cool, dark location, where it will keep for up to a year.

Spritzers and Sprays

Making herbal spritzers and sprays is so simple. They are a great “first herb project” for children and teens. They are wonderfully useful too, and can be used for a variety of purposes. Keep a bottle handy in the car when traveling; it’ll cool and refresh you quicker than air conditioning. My grandmother used to keep a jar filled with mint water in the car; when it got hot, she would use it to wet a washcloth and wipe our faces and exposed skin to cool us down.

Add a drop or two of Rescue Remedy to a lavender/lemon balm spritzer and use it to promote a calm mind-set during stressful situations. Add a drop or two of spruce or cedarwood essential oil to a spritzer and use it to refresh and disinfect. A spritzer of rose water (see **Handmade Rose Water**) is the perfect light astringent after facials and facial steams. I keep a white sage spritzer near the front entrance to my house and spritz whenever grounding and cleansing are needed. And I keep a bottle of “Love Everlasting” spritzer by my bedside — guess what for!

Homemade Spritzer

To make a spritzer, you will need a spray bottle (one that sprays a fine mist is best). There is endless variety in what you can add, but most spritzers are simply distilled water and a few drops of essential oil to enhance the water. It's amazing, though, how much a spritzer can cost in a fancy department store. "Make and save" is my motto!

INGREDIENTS

- 4 ounces distilled water or hydrosol
- 5–10 drops essential oil
- 1–2 tablespoons **Queen of Hungary's Water**, **Bay Rum Aftershave and Astringent**, apple cider vinegar, or **Handmade Rose Water**, depending on the intended use of the spritzer (optional)
- 1 teaspoon honey or vegetable glycerin, for moisture (optional)

INSTRUCTIONS

Combine the water and essential oil in a spritzer bottle, and shake vigorously before using. It will keep for a week or two. (To preserve the spritzer for a longer time period, add 1 tablespoon of vodka or brandy.)

The Perfect Cream

I first started making this face cream over 40 years ago at a time when there were few, if any, all-natural creams on the market. There weren't any recipes available, either, so I just played and experimented in my kitchen and after many tries, and the help of students and friends, I finally came up with a recipe that looked, smelled, and felt like a fine-quality cream. I've been happily making this now "famous" face cream and sharing it with others for the past several decades. I used to brag about how good my skin looked because I used this cream, but everyone's skin looks good in their 20s! Now in my mid-60s, I still get compliments about my radiant skin, and I'm convinced it's because of this face cream (well, I'm sure eating well and living a satisfying life helps just as much!).

I'm happy to share this wonderful recipe with you. It's fairly easy to make, relatively inexpensive, and rich and deeply nourishing, and it can be personalized by substituting different oils and hydrosols to fit your skin type. Though considered a face cream, the rest of your body will benefit from it as well, and because it's not nearly as expensive as those high-quality face creams advertised to eliminate every wrinkle and worry, you can indulge and lavish on your entire body.

Getting the Right Proportions

What is essential to the success of the cream are temperature and the proper proportions of water to oil (group 1 to group 2). All ingredients should be at room temperature when you begin. The proportions should be roughly 1 part waters (group 1) to 1 part oils (group 2). The oils should break down as approximately 2 parts liquid oil (such as almond and apricot

kernel) and 1 part solid oil (such as cocoa butter, coconut oil, beeswax, and lanolin. There can be some variation with proportions, but sticking as close as possible to the proportions cited here will ensure success in making the cream.

Rosemary's Perfect Cream

This basic formula, though excellent as is, can be further embellished with your own innovative spirit. There is a lot of room for creative input. Feel free.

The recipe calls for distilled water. You can use tap water, but it often has contaminants (molds or bacteria) that may develop on the cream when left at room temperature.

GROUP 1: WATERS

- $\frac{2}{3}$ cup distilled water, rose water (see **Handmade Rose Water**), or another hydrosol
- $\frac{1}{3}$ cup aloe vera gel
- 1–2 drops essential oil of choice
- 500–1,000 IUs vitamin A (optional)
- 500–1,000 IUs vitamin E (optional)

GROUP 2: OILS

- $\frac{3}{4}$ cup carrier oil (such as apricot kernel, almond, or grapeseed); I like to combine two or three oils for their different qualities
- $\frac{1}{3}$ cup solid or semisolid oil (such as coconut oil, shea butter, and/or cocoa butter)
- $\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon lanolin (optional)
- $\frac{1}{2}$ –1 ounce grated beeswax (or other solid wax), for thickening

INSTRUCTIONS

- 1.** Combine the elements of group 1 — the distilled water or hydrosol, aloe vera gel, essential oil, and vitamins A and E (if using) — in a glass measuring cup. Whisk together. Set aside.
- 2.** In a double boiler over very low heat, combine the elements of group 2 — the carrier oil, solid or semisolid oil, lanolin (if using), and beeswax. Heat just enough to melt the solids. Stir well, and then set aside and let cool to room temperature. This takes a couple of hours. I often melt these oils and waxes the night before and then let them sit overnight. (You can hurry the process by placing the cooling mixture in the refrigerator, but keep an eye on it so it doesn't get too cold. It needs to be room temperature when you begin to emulsify.)
- 3.** When the oil mixture has cooled to room temperature, pour it into a blender. Be sure the lid is on tightly, and then turn on the blender at its highest speed (a high-speed blender works best). Slowly, in a thin, steady drizzle, pour in the waters mixture, aiming the stream of liquid into the center vortex of the whirling oil mixture. Be sure to do this steadily and slowly, so that the water molecules can emulsify and blend with the oil molecules.
- 4.** When you have added most of the water mixture to the oils and the cream has begun to thicken, *listen* to the blender and *watch* the cream. When the blender coughs and chokes, and the cream looks thick and white, like buttercream frosting, turn off the blender. If there is water remaining in the glass cup, you can slowly try to add a little more, beating it in by hand with a spoon, but *don't overbeat!* The cream will thicken as it sets.
- 5.** When it has cooled, package your cream in clean, dry glass jars. The cream, even though it has no preservatives in it, will

last for several months if stored in a cool location; it doesn't need to be refrigerated.

Tips for Making Rosemary's Perfect Cream

The aloe vera gel will make the cream heavier (not as light or fluffy) than if you were to use only water, but aloe also makes it very moisturizing and healing to the skin. For this formula, don't use fresh aloe from your homegrown plants. Though fresh aloe is excellent for your skin, it doesn't keep well. Use a commercial preparation or aloe gel that has been mixed with citric acid as a preservative. (And, as a reminder, don't use this cream, or any aloe-based preparation, on a staph or strep infection, as aloe will "seal in" the infection.)

Though this recipe appears easy, it is also a bit challenging, as you are attempting to blend (emulsify) water and oil. Follow the recipe closely. If it doesn't turn out the first time, don't be discouraged. Let it sit in the blender until the liquid and oils separate (usually just a few hours or overnight); then pour off the liquid and try again. If it doesn't come together on the first try, it generally seems to blend on the second. Or just leave it as is — pour it into a bottle and simply shake well before using.

The cream should never grow mold on it or go bad. If it does, you'll find it's generally because of one or more of the following:

- **Contamination from recycled lids.** If you reuse a container, be sure to remove the inner cardboard ring in the lid. It's a perfect host for bacteria. And be sure the container is washed and thoroughly dried before you fill it with cream.
- **Food ingredients.** Many foods support mold or bacterial growth. For instance, if you decided you wanted strawberry cream and

blended fresh strawberries into your cream base, you'd develop mold on your "Strawberry Cream Delight" within days. It's fine to use fresh foods and herbs in the cream; just make only enough for a few days and keep the cream refrigerated.

- **Improper storage.** Don't store the cream in too warm a location. It's best to store any extra in a cool pantry.

Using the Cream

Unlike many commercial creams that only coat the surface of the skin, this cream actually penetrates the epidermal layer and moisturizes the dermal layer of the skin. The water elements (water or hydrosol, aloe gel, essential oil, and vitamins) serve to moisturize the skin cells, while the oils seal in the moisture and serve as a protective skin barrier. Because it is extremely concentrated, a little goes a long way. Place a small amount ($\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon or less) on the end of your finger, and gently massage it into your face. There will be a temporary feeling of oiliness that will disappear within a few minutes, as the cream is quickly absorbed. Though I recommend just a small amount on your face, you can be generous on the rest of your body.

The only real "rule" about this cream is that it never can be used with any negative thoughts about the body it's being used on. Whenever you're massaging and smoothing it over the creases and wrinkles of your face, and the contours of your body, do so with love. This is part of the cream's magic and partly why it works so well.

Tweaking the Formula

You can personalize the recipe for Rosemary's Perfect Cream in so many ways. Some of my favorite additions include the following:

- Fresh ingredients, such as fresh strawberries for Strawberry Cream Delight.
- Avocado, for a rich thick cream for mature skin
- Vitamins and minerals, to enrich the cream
- Skin-healing essential oils, such as carrot seed and helichrysum
- Balms and resins, such as frankincense and balm of Gilead, for their preservative properties
- Alkanet root, for a rose-colored cream (not too much, though, or you'll have a bright red cream)
- Chaga and other healing herbs, for their medicinal properties (infuse the herbs in oil, **here**, and use the infused oil as the carrier oil in the cream)

There are so many ways you can adapt this basic cream recipe. However, a word of caution: Whenever you're experimenting with a new ingredient, do so in small batches to see how it will turn out. Once you've found a formula you like, you can begin making bigger batches.

Facial Serums and Elixirs

Facial serums, or elixirs, are the current rage in the cosmetics industry and are enthusiastically advertised and usually vastly overpriced (one has to pay for all that advertising, after all). If you look closely at the ingredients list of commercially prepared serums, you'll see that they are expensive combinations of chemicals that we shouldn't really put on our face. The promises these companies make for their products are highly exaggerated and unrealistic. But it's very tempting, you must admit, to try these serums "at any cost," especially when that face staring back at you each morning in the mirror looks a little less youthful than it did when you were 20. But don't! You can make your own serums that are truly good for your skin — and easy on your wallet as well.

While no magical serum will take your skin backward in time, a healthy lifestyle regime that includes living foods, an abundance of fun and joyful exercise, and a good skin care program can keep you radiant and glowing from the inside out, so that your skin reflects your inner health and vitality. Facial serums can be an important part of a skin care program and can help regenerate and rejuvenate tired or damaged skin. Think of them as rich, concentrated food (or a healthy dessert!) for the skin.

Most serums include healing essential oils in a base of moisturizing and nutritive carrier oil, such as argan, jojoba, or macadamia oil. You can use herb-infused carrier oils (think calendula, comfrey, and lavender) to increase the healing properties of your serum. Experiment with different essential oils and try different carrier oil blends to see which are best for your skin. Here are two of my favorite recipes.

Green Goddess Facial Magic

INGREDIENTS

- 1 tablespoon avocado oil
- 2 teaspoons rose hip oil
- 1 teaspoon argan or apricot kernel oil
- 1 teaspoon jojoba oil
- 10 drops carrot seed oil
- 5 drops orange or grapefruit essential oil
- 3 drops frankincense or sandalwood (cultivated, not wild-harvested) essential oil
- 3 drops rose geranium essential oil

INSTRUCTIONS

Combine all the ingredients and mix well. Store in a dark glass container in a cool, dark place. Refrigerate for extended shelf life.

Golden Elixir Facial Serum

INGREDIENTS

- 1 tablespoon jojoba oil
- 2 teaspoons rose hip oil
- 1 teaspoon apricot kernel oil
- 1 teaspoon macadamia nut oil
- 10 drops carrot seed essential oil
- 4 drops calendula or helichrysum essential oil
- 4 drops frankincense essential oil

INSTRUCTIONS

Combine all the ingredients and mix well. Store in a dark glass container in a cool, dark place. Refrigerate for extended shelf life.

Using Serums

Serums are best used in the evening, before bedtime, when the oil can deeply penetrate in the warmth of your bed while your dreams work their magic. After you've cleansed your face and removed any oil residue or makeup, mist your face lightly with a hydrosol or toner to firm and tone the pores. Leave the spray on (don't dry), as the added moisture is good for your skin. While your skin is still

moist, take a few drops of facial serum onto your fingertips, and massage into your neck and face with gentle upward strokes.

Skin Care Routine

Follow this skin care routine for radiant, glowing skin.

Daily

- Cleanse with cleansing grains.
- Close pores with an astringent, hydrosol, or toner.
- Massage in a light cream.
- Finish with a light mist of rose water or an astringent.

Evening

- Cleanse with warm water and/or cleansing grains.
- Mist face with hydrosol or toner.
- Apply facial serum and massage in gently.

Weekly

- Do a facial with honey or a clay suitable for your skin type.

Monthly

- Treat yourself and a friend — follow the entire five-step program for radiant skin!

A Five-Step Program for Perfect Skin

This treatment takes about 45 marvelous minutes and, for best results, should be done at least once or twice a month. By following this simple, inexpensive program, you can be assured of healthier, glowing skin within 2 to 3 months.

Step One: Miracle Grains

Lightly cleanse your face and neck with **Miracle Grains**. Use the grains to gently massage and stimulate the skin. The grains will massage off dry, dead skin cells, increase circulation to the surface of the skin, and provide a nourishing “meal” for your face. Rinse off the grains with warm water.

Step Two: Herbal Facial Steam

Select an **Herbal Facial Steam** formula that's best for your skin type. Do a facial steam, following the instructions that accompany your chosen recipe. A facial steam is the best possible method for deep pore cleansing, and each of the herbs used is rich in nutrients that nourish and tone the skin. The aromatic oils of the plants are released by the heat and absorbed by the skin. And best of all, it feels so good!

Immediately after you complete your facial steam, rinse your face with cold water and gently pat with **Queen of Hungary's Water**, rose

water, or another hydrosol. Gently pat dry. Your face will feel smooth and will glow with radiance.

Step Three: Facial

Facials are excellent for stimulating circulation to the skin by drawing fresh blood to the surface. They promote deep pore cleansing and help heal blemishes and acne. Facials also help tone and firm the skin.

There are several kinds of facials available. My favorites are made with a base of cosmetic clay, which is particularly suitable when you want a drawing, firming type of facial. Clay is very high in minerals and nourishes the skin. More importantly, these unique mineral deposits have seen a thousand sunrises and moonsets; they've been washed by powerful rainstorms and impregnated by lightning and thunder. We mix that clay with a little water and put it on our faces in the name of Cosmeos. Now that is pretty powerful medicine!

Which type of clay and facial ingredients you use will depend on your skin type:

- **For dry skin** choose a white cosmetic-grade clay. White clay, though lightly drawing, is very gentle to the skin. For a more nourishing facial, mix the clay with yogurt or avocado, or both.
- **For normal to oily skin** choose green, red, or yellow clay. These clays are much more drying than the white variety. They are very high in minerals and are excellent for problematic, blemish-prone skin. In natural therapeutics, these clays are often used to treat poison oak and poison ivy, bee stings, and insect bites.
- **For all skin types,** honey makes an excellent facial. It is a marvelous cosmetic aid for the skin. It brings fresh blood to the

surface, removes impurities, and smoothes and softens the skin. A natural humectant (it attracts moisture), honey both moisturizes and cleanses the skin. It's a bit messy to use, but well worth the results.

- **To make a clay facial,** mix the clay with just enough water to make a nice paste. The thicker the paste, the more drying the facial. Apply the paste to your face, and leave on until completely dry and then rinse off with warm water. It is tempting to rinse it off beforehand, especially as it starts to tighten, but you will not receive the full benefits from a clay facial if you rinse it off before it is completely dry. Be gentle to your skin while rinsing. Use soft, circular motions. Massage your skin; do not scrub it.
- **To make a honey facial,** make sure your skin is dry; it won't work if your skin is damp. And be sure all your hair is out of reach; it gets very sticky when full of honey. Scoop up a fingerful of honey, and gently massage, pat, and rub the honey into your skin. Let your senses tell you which strokes to use and your skin will be so invigorated and stimulated that it fairly glows. It will also become very pliable and rubber-like; it's fun and funny! Rinse the honey off with warm water. It comes off very easily, but be sure to rinse off completely or you will feel sticky for the rest of the day. The fresh flow of blood brought to the surface of the skin by the honey facial will create a deep, warm, lasting glow.

Personalized Clay Facials

For a more individualized clay facial, you can add many other therapeutic ingredients to the mask. Mashed ripe avocado, yogurt, banana, and a small amount of almond or grapeseed

oil are but a few suggestions. Each will add its own special healing touch.

Step Four: Toner

Immediately after rinsing off the facial, apply an astringent preparation to tone and close the pores. Use a cotton pad for application, or mist it onto your skin with a spritzer bottle. Choose from the following treatments:

- **For dry skin**, use rose water (see **Handmade Rose Water**), a very light, gentle, nondrying astringent.
- **For normal to oily skin**, use **Queen of Hungary's Water** or **Bay Rum Aftershave and Astringent**. Dilute the toner if it is too astringent or drying for your skin type.

Step Five: Massage and Cream

The finishing touch is a light, delicate facial massage using your specially formulated **Rosemary's Perfect Cream**. This is usually everyone's favorite part, especially when someone else does it for you and you can just sit back and enjoy. Rub a small amount of cream in your palms, and then gently massage the outer edges of the face with your hands, always stroking upward and outward. Follow the contours of the face, using your fingers to trace the structure. You can use gentle tapping motions, circular motions, and sweeping motions up and away from the face.

Or use a facial serum if you prefer. Mist your face with a hydrosol or distilled water, and then apply a few drops of serum, massaging it gently into the skin using upward strokes.

Water Is the Best Moisturizer

While oil (and any oil-based product) protects and nourishes our skin, water replenishes and restores it. Water is our greatest moisturizer; oil serves to seal in the water and protect the skin. If you tend toward heat and dryness (with dry skin and/or a rosy complexion), be sure to drink adequate amounts of water daily. As a general rule, figure out your weight in pounds, and then drink half that number of ounces of water daily. For instance, if you weigh 120 pounds, try to drink on average 60 ounces of water daily. This is only a guideline, however; each individual is different. But most people do not drink enough water to keep well lubricated, juicy, and hydrated.

Body Butters

Richer than lotions and creams, body butters are lubricating, nourishing, and protective to the skin. However, because body butters don't contain water, they aren't as moisturizing as creams and lotions. Use body butters to lubricate, soothe, seal in moisture, and protect the skin. Use lotions and creams to moisturize.

Body butters — at least those all-natural kinds you make yourself — can also be used as personal lubricants. They can be especially helpful for women during menopause, when dryness can be an issue for outer skin as well as vaginal walls. (Body butters are not latex-friendly though, so be aware.)

Simple to make, body butters are combinations of semisolid and solid oils. Try the following recipe, then personalize as you wish, adding other oils and essential oils that suit you best.

Basic Body Butter

Body butter hardens as it cools, so don't store in a narrow-necked bottle or you won't be able to get at it! Use a container with an opening large enough to get your fingers in.

INGREDIENTS

- 1 part unrefined coconut oil
- 1 part shea butter (or illipe or kokum butter; see **here**)
- 1 part cocoa butter
- 8–10 drops essential oil (I prefer 3 drops each of ylang ylang, grapefruit, and frankincense or patchouli)

INSTRUCTIONS

- 1.** Combine the coconut oil, shea butter, and cocoa butter in a double boiler over low heat, and warm until melted. Remove from the heat.
- 2.** Add the essential oil, and stir well. Pour into glass containers, let cool, and then cover. Store in a cool, dark location.

Edible Body Butter

For those fun nights . . .

INGREDIENTS

- 1 part coconut oil
- 1 part cocoa butter
- vegetable glycerin or honey
- unsweetened cocoa powder (optional)
- a few drop of essential oil of choice (optional)

INSTRUCTIONS

- 1.** Combine the coconut oil and cocoa butter in a double boiler over low heat, and warm until melted. Remove from the heat.
- 2.** For each $\frac{1}{2}$ cup of body butter, add 1 tablespoon of vegetable glycerin or honey. It won't mix in easily, so stir well. If you like, add a few drops of an edible essential oil such as orange or vanilla. And if you're a chocoholic, you can add 1 tablespoon of cocoa powder to your edible body butter. Pour into glass containers, let cool, and then cover. Store in a cool, dark location.

Body Butter Bars

My husband prefers these bars to body butters and creams. He says the oils seem to stay on his hands longer and he enjoys the convenience of being able to keep a bar in his toolbox and truck, easily available and ready to use. And the bars are fun and quick to make! They are an especially fun project to make with children.

Use molds that fit the hand well; rounded molds and molds with soft edges are easier to use than square or pointed-edge molds.

INGREDIENTS

- 1 part unrefined coconut oil
- 1 part shea butter (or illipe or kokum butter; see **here**)
- 1 part cocoa butter
- 1 part grated beeswax
- 8–10 drops essential oil of choice

INSTRUCTIONS

- 1.** Combine the coconut oil, shea butter, cocoa butter, and beeswax in a double boiler over low heat, and warm until melted. Remove from the heat.
- 2.** Add the essential oil, and stir well. Pour into silicone molds and let harden. (You can hasten the cooling process by placing the molds in the refrigerator or freezer.) When the bars are

hardened, pop them out of the molds and wrap in wax paper, or store in a tin. Though fairly hard, these will get soft in hot weather.

Herbal Body, Bath, and Massage Oils

You can easily make nourishing body, bath, and massage oils by infusing high-quality carrier oils with healing herbs. The combinations are infinite and can be personalized for your skin type. Here are a couple of my favorite formulas and the simple directions for making them. But experiment and have fun with your own blends of oils, herbs, and essential oils.

Herb-Infused Oil

Use either of the two herb formulas listed here, depending on your skin type. And of course you should feel free to play with the formulas, tailoring them to suit your own needs.

People are often disappointed to find that the herbal scents aren't as strong in the infused oil as they might wish. To enhance the scent, I add essential oil while mixing the dried herbs and then again at the end after straining the oil. This gives the oil a deeper, more "infused" scent.

FOR DRY TO NORMAL SKIN

- 2 parts rose petals
- 1 part calendula flowers
- 1 part chamomile flowers
- 1 part comfrey leaf
- 1 part lavender flowers
- essential oil of choice (optional)
- apricot, almond, and/or grapeseed oil

FOR NORMAL TO OILY SKIN

- 2 parts calendula flowers
- 2 parts comfrey leaf
- 1 part lavender flowers

- 1 part raspberry leaf
- 1 part sage leaf
- 1/2 part rosemary leaf
- essential oil of choice (optional)
- almond, avocado, and/or apricot oil

INSTRUCTIONS

- 1.** Combine all the herbs, including a few drops of essential oil, if you wish, and mix well. Place 1 to 2 ounces of the herb mixture in a widemouthed glass jar and pour in enough oil to cover the herbs by 2–3 inches. Cover with a tight-fitting lid. The herbs may rise to the top, but they will settle and sink in a few hours.
- 2.** Let the jar sit in a warm place for 2 weeks, shaking the mixture every day. (Alternatively, to make the oil quickly, you can slowly warm the mixture in a double boiler over low heat, and keep at a very low simmer for 30–45 minutes. Be careful not to overheat: oil goes quickly from warm to hot, and you don't want to deep-fry those herbs or ruin your oil!)
- 3.** Strain the herbs from the oil, using a fine sieve lined with muslin or cheesecloth. Add a few drops of essential oil, if desired, and mix well. Pour the strained oil into glass jars with tight-fitting lids. Store in a cool dark place, out of direct sunlight. For longer shelf life, store in refrigerator, but bring to room temperature, or warm slightly, before using.



ABOVE: *Comfrey*

Creamy Massage Oil

This preparation is halfway between a cream and a body oil. It is richer and thicker than a body oil, but not as thick as a cream. I prefer it for massage because it's not quite as oily and also because it's more nourishing for the skin.

You can add more coconut oil or cocoa butter, depending on the thickness you wish. For the essential oil, my favorite scent for the past few decades has been a sensuous mix of sandalwood and vanilla. The sandalwood lends an exotic, almost intoxicating base note. The vanilla is sweet and warming, reminiscent of cookies and milk in Grandma's kitchen, a safe and cozy place.

INGREDIENTS

- 1 cup **Herb-Infused Oil**
- 1/2 cup coconut oil
- 1/4 cup cocoa butter
- essential oil of choice

INSTRUCTIONS

- 1.** Combine the infused oil, coconut oil, and cocoa butter in a double boiler over low heat. Warm just until all the ingredients are melted together.
- 2.** Remove from the heat, add the essential oil, if desired, and mix well. Pour into glass containers, let cool, and then cover. Store

at room temperature.

Saving Sandalwood

Sandalwood has a long history of being used in the incense industry, for cosmetics and as a healing herb. But it doesn't always pay to be popular; sandalwood trees are in danger. They have been overharvested for so long for their wood and oil that they are now at risk of dying out. It is time for us to discontinue using the scent (frankincense, vetiver, and patchouli make good substitutes) or to use only sandalwood that has been grown sustainably, not harvested from wild sources. Also, let's find ways to help replenish the sandalwood forests. To find out how, see the resources for information on [United Plant Savers](#).

Body Powder

This is the nicest powder recipe I know of. Smooth and silky, it serves as a natural deodorizer because of its absorbent properties. It can be scented with any scent or combination of scents. And best of all, it's simple and inexpensive to make. This recipe is a favorite one for young children to make. They can make a nice mess, end up with a great product, and have lots of fun doing it.

INGREDIENTS

- 1–2 cups arrowroot powder or cornstarch (or a combination)
- 1/2–1 cup white cosmetic-grade (kaolin) clay
- essential oil of choice (optional)
- lavender and rose flowers (optional)

INSTRUCTIONS

- 1.** Combine the arrowroot powder and clay in a large bowl, and whisk together. Add the essential oil, if desired. (Because of this powder's absorbent properties, it will absorb far more essential oil than you imagine, so choose a less expensive oil, such as lavender, orange, grapefruit, spruce, and so on.)
- 2.** If you're using lavender and roses (or other herbs), grind them to a fine powder using a coffee mill or a seed and nut grinder. Sift, then grind again. They must be finely powdered or they will

create an unpleasant gritty feeling in the powder. When finely powdered, add to the mix and stir in well.

- 3.** Cover the powder with a porous cloth and let sit for several hours, allowing the oils to dry. When dry, whisk again to mix well. Package the powder in traditional shaker containers, spice jars with shaker tops, or fancy tins.

CHAPTER FOUR

Beauty and the Bath

Beauty begins in the bath. A centuries-old ritual, herbal bathing is not only a soothing cosmetic affair, it also has important therapeutic applications. I've used herbal baths with great success for people suffering from headaches, stress, and skin problems.

It's unfortunate that the bath has been replaced with the shower, another of those quick conveniences of modern times. Though certainly a fast way to freshen oneself, showers are no replacement for a long, luxurious soak. I've heard people reflect that they don't like the idea of soaking in their dirty bath water. (My husband is one of those people!) Heavens, rinse off first if you're so dirty! But don't forgo the pleasures of a bath.

Making a Special Bathing Place

Aside from lack of time, I think the reason people don't allow themselves the therapeutic benefits of bathing is the bathtub itself. Tubs have grown smaller and smaller over the years, while the human body keeps growing larger. There's nothing quite as comfortable as an old-fashioned claw-foot tub. Those old claw-foots make bathing a divine pleasure.

If you have a country place or even a garden in town that's well protected, you can create an outdoor bathing pavilion that's fit for the queen or king in you. Place a claw-foot tub in position; plant all manner of flowering vines around it. You can create an arbor over the tub to support the vines and a trellis of greenery surrounding the tub. If you prefer to gaze at the stars while bathing, leave the space above the tub open. Don't tell too many people it's there or you'll never get the chance to soak in the tub yourself.

Herbal Baths

Herbal baths can be extremely therapeutic. The addition of specific herbs, along with essential oils, sea salts, or oats, can be used to treat skin disorders, headaches, stress, anxiety, and congestion. There have been several well-known herbalists whose preferred method of treatment was via the bath; they treated all manner of illness — and were successful at it — with herbal baths. When bathing, the pores of the skin are open and receptive to the healing properties of the herbs. It's like soaking your entire body in a giant cup of herbal tea!

Stimulating Bath Blend

This blend awakens and energizes. You'll emerge from the tub feeling renewed and refreshed.

INGREDIENTS

- 3 parts peppermint leaf
- 2 parts calendula flowers
- 1 part bay or eucalyptus leaf
- 1 part rosemary leaf
- 1 part sage leaf

INSTRUCTIONS

Combine all the herbs, and mix well. Store in a glass container in a cool, dark location.

Relaxing Bath Blend

The ingredients in this bath blend encourage a peaceful state of mind. Use the blend whenever you need to relax.

INGREDIENTS

- 2 parts chamomile flowers
- 2 parts lavender flowers
- 2 parts rose petals
- 1 part linden flowers

INSTRUCTIONS

Combine all the herbs, and mix well. Store in a glass container in a cool, dark location.

Using an Herbal Bath Blend

Place a large handful or two of the herb mixture in a muslin bag, handkerchief, or large tea ball. (I prefer using a cloth bag for the herbs so that I can use the bag as a washcloth while bathing.) Tie the bag onto the nozzle of the tub. Turn the water on at its hottest setting and let it pour through the herb bag, making a strong herbal infusion. When the tub is about half full, adjust the water temperature to bring the bath to your desired heat level.

For an herbal shower, tie the herb bag onto the showerhead. When it is soaked through, untie it and use as your washcloth. It's not quite as effective as an herbal bath, but it will do in a pinch.

Bath Salts

A simple, delightful bathing tool, bath salts add valuable trace minerals to the bathwater, soften the water, help suspend soap particles, and gently cleanse the skin. Bath salts are made from a combination of mineral salts, mineral-rich clay, and herbs. Most people are surprised to learn that one of the major ingredients in bath salts is borax — yes, that cleansing agent found in the cleaning aisle of most grocery stores. But borax is quite a wonderful substance. It is a natural salt rich in minerals, found and mined only in a few places in the world. Borax is incredibly versatile and useful both in and outside the laundry room. When mixed with a few other items, it can be packaged in fancy jars and sold as cosmetics and skin care products.

Homemade Bath Salts

Presented in glass bottles or fancy tins with a rounded seashell as a scoop, these homemade bath salts make wonderful gifts.

INGREDIENTS

- 2 cups borax
- $\frac{1}{8}$ cup sea salt
- $\frac{1}{8}$ cup white clay
- seaweed or herbs of choice (optional)
- essential oil of choice (optional)

INSTRUCTIONS

- 1.** Combine the borax, salt, and clay. If you're using seaweed or herbs, finely powder them and then add to the mixture. (Alternatively, you can leave them cut and chopped and just use a strainer in the tub drain to keep the herbs from clogging up the plumbing.) Whisk all the ingredients together. Scent with essential oil. (The mix will absorb a lot of oil.)
- 2.** Cover the mixture with a clean, porous cloth and let sit several hours to dry. Whisk again to blend, and then package in bags, tins, or jars.
- 3.** To use, add 4–6 tablespoons of the salts to your bathwater. Allow the salts to fully dissolve before getting in.

Salt Scrubs

Salt scrubs, or glows, as they are often called, are one of my favorite exfoliating treatments. They are detoxifying, nourishing, and exfoliating, and they leave the skin feeling silky soft and completely renewed. For the remarkable benefits they give, they are so simple and easy to make. Often it seems the simplest things are the most effective.

Salt glow treatments are now popular at many famous and expensive spas. And though it's always a luxurious treat to experience a professional spa, you can do this treatment easily and inexpensively at home. Salt scrubs are usually done in the bathtub or shower at home, but be careful, as the oil will make the surface very slippery. I usually place a shower mat or towel on the bottom of the tub. You can also use the scrub outside of the shower standing on a towel to catch the excess salt, then step into the shower or tub to rinse off. It's also fun to do a scrub outside — that is, if you have a private yard (you don't want the neighbors to get too excited).

Basic Salt Glow

INGREDIENTS

- 2 cups fine sea salt
- 3 cups oil of choice (or use a combination, such as grapeseed, apricot kernel, and almond oils)
- 20–30 drops essential oil of choice (lavender and/or a citrus blend is always nice)

INSTRUCTIONS

- 1.** Place the salt in a widemouthed jar, and add enough oil to just cover the salt. Scent with the essential oil. Stir well.
- 2.** Make sure your skin is completely dry. Take a tablespoon or two of the salt mixture in your hands, and gently but firmly begin to massage it over your entire body, working upward from your feet. Use a circular motion to massage, moving in small circles over the entire body, including the thighs, stomach, breasts, and so on. (Be careful to avoid any scrapes, cuts, or “sensitive areas,” as the salt will sting!)
- 3.** When you have massaged your entire body, rinse thoroughly with warm water. You may need to use a little soap to remove excess oil. Finish with a dry towel rub. You don’t need to use a cream or body butter following a salt scrub. Your skin will feel lubricated, clean, and renewed.

Brown Sugar Scrub

Some people prefer this brown sugar scrub over a salt scrub. It's not as abrasive as salt, and it is gentler to the skin. Use organic brown sugar, if you can find it, as it's not been treated with chemicals and will be better for you and the environment.

INGREDIENTS

- 2 cups brown sugar
- 3 cups oil of choice (or use a combination, such as grapeseed, apricot kernel, and almond oils)
- 20–30 drops essential oil of choice (try the heavenly combination of grapefruit, cardamom, and ylang ylang)

INSTRUCTIONS

Prepare and use the brown sugar scrub just as you would the Basic Salt Glow on the opposite page.

The Perfect Pampering Bath

An herbal bath should be a beautiful ritual in which you reconnect with yourself while treating your body. Here are the steps you should follow for best effect.

- 1. Get ready.** Place a candle in your bathroom, light some incense, and put on your favorite music.

- 2. Fill the tub.** Using very hot water, add a generous portion of your favorite herbal bath blend (see **Herbal Baths**). Then add 4 tablespoons of your favorite bath salts (see **Homemade Bath Salts**). Your bathwater should be richly scented and permeated with the healing essences of the herbs.

- 3. Anoint yourself.** Use either a salt glow or brown sugar scrub (see recipes **here**). Or try a dry brush massage: Generously apply a massage oil (see recipes for **Herbal Body, Bath, and Massage Oils**) to your entire body, and use a natural hemp mitt or soft, natural-bristle body brush to vigorously rub your skin. This therapeutic skin treatment is popular in European-style spas and sanitariums. It is a marvelous cosmetic aid and a therapy for sluggish circulation and skin-related disorders.

- 4. Immerse your body.** After your “anointment,” you are now ready for immersion. Slowly submerge yourself in your herbal bathwater. Let the candlelight lure your dreams, and the soft music entice you. While soaking, use the bag of bath herbs as a gentle scrub. Massage it soothingly over your body. If worries about your to-do list keep intruding, usher them out! This is your time for rest and relaxation, beauty and peaceful joy.

- 5. Emerge from the tub.** After a time — which should seem like forever — when you feel fully ready to reenter the world, slowly step from the tub. Towel yourself dry, then anoint your entire body with cream (see recipe **Rosemary’s Perfect Cream**). Dust a bit of your heavenly **Body Powder** under your arms and everywhere else that feels good.



ABOVE: *Chamomile*

After-Bath Extras

After your body-pampering bath, you might wish to indulge your beautiful smile as well. Here are a few excellent alternatives to commercial toothpastes, mouthwashes, and lip balms. To ensure that you get your beauty sleep, try the divine dream balm that concludes this chapter.

Tooth Powder

It always seems a bit of a dilemma to brush the teeth with sweetened toothpaste when our dentists are forever telling us to cut back on sweets. This is my recipe for a simple, effective tooth powder that even my dentist enjoys.

It is important when making tooth powder that all ingredients be very finely powdered; coarse bits can damage the enamel on teeth. I usually run the powdered herbs through a fine sieve several times to remove any larger particles.

INGREDIENTS

- 1/4 cup very fine white clay, sifted several times through a sieve
- 1 teaspoon finely ground sea salt
- 1 teaspoon non-aluminum baking soda
- 1 teaspoon finely ground myrrh powder, sifted several times through a sieve
- a few drops of essential oil (peppermint, spearmint, or anise), for freshness and flavor

INSTRUCTIONS

- 1.** Combine the clay, salt, baking soda, and myrrh powder, and run several times through a sifter or fine sieve, until you are certain all coarse bits have been removed. Add the essential oil, and sift again or whisk to mix. Store the powder in a container

with tight-fitting lid. I have a little ceramic pot I store the powder in, though a glass jar would work just fine.

2. To use, moisten your toothbrush and sprinkle a small amount of the powder on it. Brush well.

Note: To treat tooth and gum infections, add to the formula more myrrh (finely ground myrrh powder or myrrh essential oil), along with tea tree essential oil and a bit of organically grown, finely ground goldenseal.

Making Toothpaste

If you or your children prefer a sweeter toothpaste, add vegetable glycerin to the tooth powder. The glycerin turns it into a sweetened paste that will keep for months. You can store it in the same kind of glass container you keep the tooth powder in, but you can also sometimes find small tubes that work just like commercial toothpaste tubes. I've found them in camping supply stores as well as in some novelty shops. When you start making herbal products you are always on the lookout for interesting containers!

Spilanthes Mouthwash

Spilanthes isn't too well known in North America, but mention it in Asia, where it grows wild, and everyone is wild about it. It's one of the best natural tooth and gum aids available and will help prevent gum infections and tooth decay when used on a regular basis. It's also an important herb for the immune system, helping to fight infection and bolster immunity. The spilanthes mouthwash is, at its most basic, a tincture. Here's how to make it.

INGREDIENTS

- 2–3 ounces fresh or dried spilanthes buds (unopened flowers are best)
- 1 quart 80-proof vodka

INSTRUCTIONS

- 1.** Pack the spilanthes buds in a widemouthed glass quart jar. Pour in enough vodka to cover the buds by 2–3 inches. Put on the lid, and let sit in a warm spot for 3–4 weeks. The buds may float to the top of the jar initially, but they will settle to the bottom in a day or two as they absorb the liquid. If necessary, you can add more alcohol once the herbs settle to the bottom. Shake once or twice every day.
- 2.** Strain the herbs from the liquid, using a large strainer lined with muslin or cheesecloth. Compost the spent herbs, and

strain the liquid again to remove any fine particles. You now have spilanthes tincture! Store it in a glass container with a tight-fitting lid; it will keep for a year or two.

- 3.** To use as a mouthwash, add a dropperful of spilanthes tincture to $\frac{1}{4}$ cup of warm water, and use it as a rinse after brushing, or several times a day if you're prone to gum and tooth infections.

Note: For a minty-fresh mouthwash, dilute 2 ounces of spilanthes tincture with 2 ounces of distilled water. Add a couple of drops of peppermint or spearmint essential oil to the mix, and use this mix as a rinse after each brushing.

Luscious Lip Balm

No book of natural skin care recipes would be complete without instructions on how to make lip balm, a deliciously simple salve used to anoint and moisten those luscious lips.

This recipe makes 1 cup of lip balm, which is a lot of $\frac{1}{4}$ -ounce containers — enough to supply your entire neighborhood with lip balm for a lifetime! If you don't intend to give out lip balm as gifts, you might wish to cut this recipe in half.

INGREDIENTS

- $\frac{1}{8}$ ounce alkanet root, or any other emollient herb (optional)
- 1 cup carrier oil of choice (I prefer apricot kernel, almond, or grapeseed oil)
- $\frac{1}{4}$ cup grated or chopped beeswax
- 1 tablespoon honey
- a few drops of essential oil, for flavor (the citruses, mints, vanilla, and rose are among my favorites)

INSTRUCTIONS

- 1.** If you're using alkanet or another emollient herb, combine it with the oil in a double boiler over low heat, and bring to a slow simmer. Simmer the alkanet for about 15–20 minutes, or until the oil has turned a deep red/black color; the deeper the color now, the redder the lip balm will be. If you're using another

herb, simmer for 20–30 minutes. Strain the herbs from the oil using a large strainer lined with a double layer of cheesecloth or muslin.

- 2.** Add the beeswax, honey, and essential oil to the strained oil. A taste test here is appropriate; adjust the flavors as needed.
- 3.** Test for consistency by placing a tablespoon of the oil in the refrigerator and letting it sit for 5–10 minutes. You want the lip balm to be solid but spreadable. If the test batch is too hard, add a bit more oil to the mixture to soften it; if it is too soft, add more beeswax to harden it. Don't let the mixture cool too much while you're doing this, or you won't be able to pour it into containers. If it begins solidifying and clings to the edges of the pot, quickly reheat it.
- 4.** Pour the lip balm mixture into $\frac{1}{4}$ - or $\frac{1}{2}$ -ounce containers. Let cool completely before putting on the lids.

Alkanet Red

Alkanet, a lovely garden flower, is not necessary in the lip balm, but it adds a rich red color as well as its protective, emollient properties. A smaller amount of alkanet will soften the color to pink or a light watermelon red. You can use other emollient healing herbs in place of or in addition to the alkanet, of course; good candidates include chamomile, rose, comfrey, calendula, and St. John's wort.

Sleep with the Angels Dream Balm

A wonderful herbalist and gifted gardener came to visit me at my shop one day, bringing with him some potions he had made from herbs he had grown in his garden. He had been experimenting with growing and harvesting herbs by cycles of the moon. Perhaps that's why they were so potent. Amidst his potions were a few bottles of a dream balm recipe he had made. It was unbelievably effective and became my favorite formula for stimulating and arousing the dream state.

INGREDIENTS

- 1/4 ounce chamomile flowers
- 1/4 ounce hops
- 1/4 ounce lavender flowers
- 1/4 ounce mugwort leaf
- 1/4 ounce rose petals
- 1 cup almond oil (or any oil of your choice)
- 1/4 cup grated beeswax
- a few drops of essential oil (white sage, mugwort, cardamom, clary sage, lavender, chamomile, and vanilla are among my favorites)

INSTRUCTIONS

- 1.** Combine the herbs with the oil in a double boiler over low heat, and bring to a slow simmer. Simmer for 45–60 minutes over very low heat. Then strain the herbs from the oil using a large strainer lined with a double layer of cheesecloth or muslin.
- 2.** Return the strained oil to the double boiler pan and add the beeswax. Heat gently, stirring, until the beeswax is melted.
- 3.** Test for consistency by placing a tablespoon of balm in the refrigerator and letting it sit for 5–10 minutes. You want the balm to be solid but spreadable. If the test batch is too hard, add a little more oil to the mixture to soften it; if it is too soft, add more beeswax to harden it. Don't let the mixture cool too much while you're doing this, or you won't be able to pour it into your containers. If it begins solidifying and clings to the edges of the pot, quickly reheat it. When it reaches the desired consistency, quickly stir in enough essential oil to strongly scent the dream balm.
- 4.** Pour into glass containers. Let cool completely before putting on the lids. Label with stars and moons and spiral symbols — all gateways to dreamland!
- 5.** To use, gently massage a small amount of the dream balm over the temples, the nape of the neck, and behind the ears just before bedtime. (It can be used as a massage balm for other areas as well.) Curl up with an herbal dream pillow, sip some of your favorite “dreaming tea,” and drift off into dreamland.

CHAPTER FIVE

Hair Care and Coloring

No matter if your hair is long or short, light or dark, your hair is a garden alive. Hair grows in response to nutrients and the energetics of the world around it. It is an “antenna,” a connection to the energy forces of the world. Animals express themselves, in part, through their hair. Have you ever seen an angry or frightened cat, its hair literally standing on end, a clear statement to all who come near? Hair is also the one of the ways in which we can judge health or lack of it; when an animal — or human, for that matter — has a mane or coat that is dull and brittle, we know something is amiss.

In comics and children’s stories, people’s emotions are often depicted through their hair: flat against their face, standing on end, swirling around them electrified with energy. Samson knew where his strength lay. Unfortunately, so did Delilah!

Caring for Your Hair — Naturally

Since I was a child, my hair, too, has been my garden. I tend to wear it long and often down, loose, past my shoulders. The times I’ve cut it short and styled it in a half-honest attempt to look more “modern” or stylish, I always ended up feeling a bit lost and disconnected. Even though I enjoyed the bobbed hair and soft curls, I bided time until it grew again, a bit weed-like, down my back. Caring for this mass of hair has taught me much about natural hair treatments, which I’m delighted to pass on.

Tips for Healthy Hair

The biggest mistake that people make with their locks is to overwash them. Fortunately, there are good hair care products available these days. But even the best shampoo, if used too often, will tend to dry hair and wash away important natural oils. Have you ever noticed how many people over the age of 50 have shiny, healthy hair — hair you'd die for? Not many. In fact, very few. Though it may be part of the natural aging process to lose some of your crowning glory, it's not natural for it to lose its gleam and glow. What we see is hair that hasn't weathered well. Rather than aging, this lack of life is almost always due to the unhealthy practices of overwashing, blow drying, and using chemical products like sprays, perms, and gels.

Healthy hair care is basically very simple. Here are some tips for your daily routine:

- Eat a healthy, balanced diet. Hair especially thrives on a diet rich in protein, B vitamins, trace minerals, and calcium. The same good diet you eat for glowing skin will feed the garden of your hair.
- Use only gentle, non-detergent-based shampoos, and wash your hair infrequently, only once or twice per week, if even that often. At first this will feel uncomfortable. But the squeaky clean feeling we have been taught to achieve is, in essence, hair stripped of its natural protective oils.
- Keep two or three favorite shampoos available in your shower, and rotate them. Even the best shampoo used continuously will tend to create imbalance.
- Condition monthly with a natural herbal rinse.
- Massage your scalp thoroughly every few days, or at least once weekly. A good scalp massage can be almost as sensuous as a full-body massage, yet no special skills are needed. Use essential oils

such as rosemary to stimulate the scalp and encourage new hair growth.

- Brush as often and as long as you can each day. Be sure that your brush is kept clean; a good rule to follow is to wash it every other time you wash your hair. As with scalp massage, hair brushing is tremendously enjoyable when shared with children or a partner.

The Cleaner the Better?

When I was in my early twenties I spent a summer camping in the Olympic National Forest in the Pacific Northwest. I was young and wild, carefree, with only a pack on my back for my belongings. The rivers ran straight from the snow-covered Olympic peaks and were mighty cold. Though I swam often, the thought of washing my hair in glacier water was another matter. And, besides, I didn't want to degrade that crystal clear water with even biodegradable soap.

So I ended up not washing my hair for several weeks at a time. I noticed a peculiar sequence. About a week after washing, my hair would begin to feel oily and dirty, always a signal in the past that it was time to wash again. But I waited, and noticed that my hair would reabsorb its own oils. Instead of getting dirtier and greasier, it would "self-clean." The less I washed it, the less dirty and oily it got, and the healthier it was.

Though I've never gone another summer without washing my hair, I certainly learned from that experience. I wash my hair much less frequently than most people, and my hair, which is still thick, dark, and glossy, seems to get dirty less often than the hair of people who wash all the time.

Make-It-Yourself Herbal Shampoo

All of the ingredients can be found in natural food stores. If your hair is exceptionally oily, you may find it better to replace the jojoba oil with rosemary essential oil.

INGREDIENTS

- 1 ounce herb blend of choice (see the blends below and **here**)
- 8 ounces water
- 3–4 ounces liquid castile soap
- $\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon jojoba oil (or rosemary essential oil for oily hair)
- 20–30 drops essential oil of choice (see **chart**)

INSTRUCTIONS

- 1.** Combine the herbs with the water in a pan over low heat, and bring to a low simmer. Simmer for 15–20 minutes, then strain and let cool.
- 2.** Slowly add the castile soap to the herb infusion, then mix in the jojoba oil and essential oils. Store in a plastic container with a flip-top lid in the shower or bath. Shake well before using.

Goldie Locks Herb Blend

Use this formula for golden highlights.

- **2** parts calendula flowers
- **1** part chamomile flowers
- **1** part comfrey leaf

Dark of the Night Herb Blend

For dark highlights, try this formula.

- **2** parts sage leaf
- **1** part comfrey leaf
- **1** part rosemary leaf

Desert Bloom Herb Blend

This is an excellent formula for dry hair.

- **1** part calendula flower
- **1** part marsh mallow root
- **1** part nettle leaf

Rapunzel's Locks Herb Blend

Bothered by oily hair? Use this astringent recipe.

- **1** part witch hazel bark
- **1** part rosemary leaf
- **1** part yarrow leaf and flower



ABOVE: *Witch hazel*

Essential Oils for Hair Care

OIL	HAIR TYPE	EFFECT
Basil	Oily	Promotes growth
Chamomile	Fine to normal	Golden highlights
Clary sage	All types	Dandruff treatment
Lavender	Normal	Scalp treatment for itchiness, dandruff, and even lice!
Lemon	Oily	Golden highlights; treatment for dry scalp, dandruff, lice, and underactive sebaceous glands
Myrrh	Dry	Treatment for dry scalp, dandruff, lice, and underactive sebaceous glands
Patchouli	Oily	Dandruff treatment
Peppermint	Dry	Promotes hair growth
Rose	Fine	Scalp soother
Rosemary	Oily	Dandruff treatment; promotes hair growth
Tea tree	Oily	Treatment for dry scalp, dandruff, lice, and underactive sebaceous glands
Ylang ylang	Oily	Dandruff treatment

Hair Rinses and Conditioners

Most hair conditioners available on the market are used as detanglers and help to “tame” our wild locks. Unfortunately, most conditioners, including those found in health food stores, contain glycerin. Though a wonderful natural substance, glycerin coats the

hair shaft and, while making it feel smooth and shiny, draws dust and dirt from the air onto the hair, actually making it dirtier. I prefer using herbal or vinegar hair rinses to condition hair.

Vinegar Hair Rinse

I make this rinse by the quart or gallon, as it stores indefinitely. Vinegar is especially well suited for oily hair, though it can be effective for dry hair as well. Apple cider vinegar is usually the best vinegar for the hair, but wine vinegar is milder and more appropriate for dry hair. Vinegar rinses are also good for itchy scalp, dandruff, and dull hair, and they help restore the natural acid of the scalp.

Rinsing with warm and then cold water after use stimulates the scalp and leaves your hair with an even glossier sheen. If the smell of vinegar is not appealing to you, don't fret; the essential oils also help to lessen the strong odor, and the scent won't linger.

INGREDIENTS

- herb blend of choice (see **blend formulas** , or formulate your own)
- apple cider or wine vinegar
- a few drops of essential oil of choice (see **chart**)

INSTRUCTIONS

- 1.** Fill a quart jar halfway with your herbal blend. Add enough vinegar to completely cover the herbs by 3–4 inches. Cap tightly. Place the jar in a warm spot and let sit for 3–4 weeks, shaking daily.
- 2.** Strain out the herbs, using a large strainer lined with a double layer of cheesecloth. Add the essential oils. For use with oily

hair, dilute 1 part vinegar with 4 parts water. For dry hair, dilute 1 part vinegar with 6 parts water. You'll soon discover what dilution is good for your hair. Store the vinegar rinse in a plastic bottle in the bathtub or shower.

- 3.** To use, after shampooing and rinsing, pour the vinegar rinse slowly through your hair, massaging it into your scalp. Rinse with warm water and, if you can stand it, a final rinse with cold water!

Herbal Hair Rinse

The oldest hair rinses were made from fresh botanicals and pure water. It's curious to me how many people still prefer these simple and effective rinses in spite of all the fancy new products that are forever coming out in the marketplace.

INGREDIENTS

- 1–2 ounces herb blend of choice (see **blend formulas** , or formulate your own)
- 1 quart water
- a few drops of essential oil of choice (see **chart**)

INSTRUCTIONS

- 1.** Combine the herbs with the water in a pan over low heat, and bring to a low simmer. Simmer for 15–20 minutes, then strain and let cool.
- 2.** Add a drop or two of essential oil to the herbal infusion. Store the rinse in a plastic bottle in the bathtub or shower.
- 3.** To use, after shampooing and rinsing, slowly pour the rinse through your hair, massaging it into your scalp. There's no need to rinse it out; leave it in!

Hot Oil Conditioning Treatment

My favorite hair conditioner is this hot oil treatment. It is best for dry hair, though it can be used with oily hair as well. Your hair will feel a bit more oily than usual at first, but it will quickly absorb any extra oil. This is a wonderful treatment to do before going into a sauna or steam room.

INGREDIENTS

- a small amount jojoba, olive, or coconut oil
- herb blend of choice (optional; see **blend formulas** , or formulate your own)
- essential oils of choice (optional; see **chart**)

INSTRUCTIONS

- 1.** If you're using an herb blend, combine the oil and herbs to make an **Herb-Infused Oil**.
- 2.** Warm the oil in a double boiler over low heat to just around 100°F (38°C). Add the essential oils, if you're using them. I usually dampen my hair before the treatment, although most people don't. Long or thick hair will require 1–2 teaspoons of the oil mixture, while short or fine hair will require about 1/2–1 teaspoon of the oil, depending on the length and thickness. Begin by massaging the oil into your scalp, and then work down through the strands of the hair, covering all of the hair

completely. Put a shower cap or plastic bag over your hair, then cover the plastic with either a towel or a wool cap. If possible, sit in the sunshine or by a woodstove or fireplace; heat facilitates the conditioning process. Leave on for an hour or two.

- 3.** To finish, “dry shampoo” your hair: without wetting your hair first, take a small amount of shampoo and massage it into your scalp and down through to the ends of your hair. Rinse, and then shampoo and rinse as you normally would.

Color Your Life with Henna

No book on cosmetics and skin care would be complete without mentioning henna, one of the most marvelous and magical of skin and hair care herbs. While I was in high school, I began a love affair with henna that has endured ever since, and so I have more than a little to share on the subject.

Henna, or Egyptian privet (*Lawsonia inermis*), is a plant with a rich and varied history. Its use dates back to time immemorial; no one knows for sure where or when it was first used. However, records dating back more than five thousand years specify its use as a medicine, talisman, ceremonial substance, and cosmetic used to color hair and paint the body. Originally found in North Africa, Australia, and Asia, henna has spread and naturalized in many areas of the world, including the subtropical regions of the United States.

Medicinal Properties

Though we generally tend to think of it as a colorant, henna has a long list of medicinal properties and is still used in many parts of the world as an astringent for headaches, a gargle for sore throats, and to treat stomach upset and pain.

Though I've primarily used henna as an external coloring agent for hair, I've long suspected its powerful medicinal properties. I noticed early on that whenever I used henna on people, their energy changed and brightened; they seemed refreshed and renewed. People seemed to feel better after a henna treatment. It definitely relieved head tension and seemed to help people relax (except, perhaps, for their temporary anxiety waiting to see how bright their hair would turn once the henna was washed out).

I use henna as a transformational tool, not to cover natural hair color, but to enhance it — to change not the way people look, but the way they feel about themselves. I often take pounds of various shades of henna with me when I travel. You never know when transformation and magic may beg to happen. I'll never forget visiting with ethnobotanist and healer Dr. Rosita Arvigo at her home in Ix Chel, Belize. We had been traveling for several days through the jungles and were looking for a bit of comfort. Soon after we had the campfire going, and out came the henna. By evening's end Rosita's dark brown locks had been transformed to shades of burgundy and red. The henna got everybody going, so that soon the entire camp was covered with green goop, red hair, and laughter. Even some of the guys got in the spirit and had their hair done with henna. Unfortunately, one elderly gentleman with a mane of white hair was hennaed before I got to him, and he ended up with bright orange locks. Thankfully he had a good sense of humor!

Choosing the Right Henna

It is essential to get your henna from a good source. Poor-quality henna will not have the dramatic color range that a good-quality product will have. Undoubtedly there are several good companies that I don't know about, but I have found that the Rainbow brand of henna is consistently good.

All henna has a whisper or more of red in it. The basic shade of henna is red. But by carefully blending different parts of the plant that are harvested at different times, a whole range of colors is created. Colors range from neutral to blond to the reddest of reds to black. I further like to blend these shades to get more specific colors. Many recipes call for different ingredients such as clove powder, red wine, or black walnut hull. Sounds like fun, but I've found that just by selecting and blending the proper shades of henna, you can get incredibly beautiful rich colors. It does take a little knowledge, but I will share with you what I have discovered.

Henna does not leave "roots," unless you've chosen a color that contrasts starkly with your original hair color. When done correctly, henna will always initially be a full shade brighter than you want it to be. So don't be too shocked at the first glance! Henna will fade dramatically after one or two washings, and then it pretty much "fixes" itself and will fade gradually after 2 to 3 months.

I have found that people are a little wary about choosing a bright shade the first time they try henna, but they often wish they had. Trust your intuition — and your hairdresser — and be brave!

The Resurgence of Mehndi

I'm pleased to see that mehndi, the ancient art of body painting using henna, is returning. Until recently, I've only been able to look longingly at the photos I've seen in *National Geographic* of the traditional mehndi ceremonies, respected through the ages by native peoples. But this living art is becoming part of the new pop culture in America.

There are several good books on the art of mehndi, as well as resources for mehndi supplies and artists. These exquisite henna body paintings are ethereal, slowly disappearing after three to four weeks. But their presence on the body imparts significance greater than we suspect, and their effects last longer; designs that have special symbolism, coupled with the adornment of the body, create a happiness and confidence in the mind of the wearer.

Blond Hair

I don't recommend using henna on blond hair unless you want to go red. Even then, I would exercise caution. Since all henna — even the neutral and blond shades — has an undertone of red, blond hair and other light shades will pick up this red shade. And so-called blond henna doesn't necessarily make blond hair blonder. In fact, it often makes the hair redder or darker. So if your hair is a light shade of blond, do not expect henna to lighten your hair, even if the package says "blond henna."

Neutral henna or blond henna can be used to condition blond hair, but it will often darken it. And strawberry henna adds wonderful shades of gold, burnt red, and copper to blond hair. Again, henna will not make the hair lighter or "blonder"; it does not

contain bleaches of any sort and therefore will not strip the hair of its natural color.

Dark Blond to Light Brown Hair

You must select henna carefully for light shades of hair, because the hair will pick up the color readily. If you just want to highlight your own color, choose a shade that best describes your own hair. For example, if you have dark blond hair use blond henna. If you have light brown hair use light brown henna. A color selection that seems to be everyone's favorite, and the one I certainly like the best, is a mixture of different shades that creates a warm, coppery glow. I mix the following shades, but remember to adjust to your own shade of hair:

- 2 parts copper henna (use less copper to tame the color down)
- 1 part light brown henna
- 1 part neutral henna

Medium Brown to Dark Brown Hair

These shades are fun because you can be more daring and do so much more than you can with the more tentative, lighter shades of color. Look at the hair to determine the natural highlights, and select a shade of henna that accentuates the natural color. I find that shades of red mixed with different tones of brown are beautiful. If the hair color has a lot of gold and copper tones, use copper henna. Here are a couple of suggested formulas.

FOR REDDISH TONES:

- 1 part copper henna
- 1 part medium brown henna
- 1 part red henna

FOR COPPER TONES:

- 2 parts copper henna
- 1 part medium brown henna
- 1 part neutral henna to be conservative, or 2 parts red henna to be wild!

Dark Brown to Black Hair

Black hair is similar to blond hair from a henna point of view. It generally has so much of its own light that henna adds little coloring, but it does condition and adds body. However, for a person with dark brown hair, adding shades of bright red henna can be just stunning.

People always react with “I don’t want my hair to be orange!” I can certainly appreciate that sentiment, but never fear: Shades of dark brown hair will never turn orange but will blend with the red henna to create rich auburns, fiery copper tones, and many other stunning colors. There are several shades of red henna available, such as burgundy and wine. They all have red as a primary color but shimmer with different highlights. Play and have fun with the shades. Experiment to find which color or combination of colors most suits you.

You might wish to begin by using only one color, then try combining shades. Leave the henna on for 2 full hours if you have dark brown hair. You need not worry about it being too bright. It

won't be. Henna was made for dark brown hair. It colors it gorgeously. If anything, upon washing it out, you'll wish it were brighter!

Gray Hair

I will admit, hennaing silver or gray hair is tricky, but it can be done and turns out beautifully if done correctly. If done incorrectly, you could end up with shocking, carrot-orange hair! But done correctly, henna can transform even the duller silver hair into soft tones of golds and light strawberry reds. The trick is to mix the right color tones and to leave it on for only about 30 to 45 minutes. If your hair is predominantly (75 percent or more) silver/gray, use *only* subtle shades of henna, such as neutral henna mixed with a little light brown and a dash of copper. Leave on for about 30 minutes at first. The next time you do it, you can fine-tune the shades and decide if you wish to leave the henna on a bit longer. Here is a suggested color mixture for silver/gray hair that has not turned completely white and still has some of its original color:

- 2 parts neutral henna
- 2 parts light brown henna
- $\frac{1}{8}$ part copper henna

Note: Use less copper if you have more gray hair or prefer less coppery red tones. Substitute blond henna for the copper to create a more golden tone.

Tips for Great Henna

Not an instant dye nor a neat and easy process, henna requires time and patience. It also makes a bit of a mess. Whenever possible, I host henna parties outdoors with a hose hooked to the hot water faucet for rinsing. An all-natural substance, henna is good for the garden, but in quantity it is not so good for the bathroom drain!

These are the simplest and least messy steps that give the best results. If you're wondering why henna's popularity has persisted through the centuries in spite of its messiness and the hundreds of modern coloring agents, then surrender to its magic — at least just once.

How Often?

My personal recommendation is not to do henna more than once every 2 1/2 to 3 months. Women of India and the Arabic countries use henna far more often; however, they do not have the history of frequent shampooing, permanents, and blow drying, so their hair is in more pristine condition. If used too often by women of the West, it does tend to dry the hair.

How Much?

It is much better to mix too much henna than to run short. So mix a little extra — you can use it on your dog's tail or your husband's beard, or try mehndi, the ancient art of henna tattooing (see **here**). Short hair requires 2 to 3 ounces; long hair (more than shoulder length) requires 4 to 6 ounces.

Preparing the Hair

There's no need to shampoo hair before a henna treatment unless the hair is dirty. Try doing henna just before you're ready to wash your hair. The natural oils in your hair and scalp will help moisturize your hair and prevent dry, flyaway hair. However if you have gel, hairspray, or another styling agent on your hair, you may need to give it a quick wash.

If your hair tends to be dry, rub a small amount of olive oil or jojoba oil into it, especially the ends, before applying henna. Massage thoroughly through the hair, taking care not to make it too greasy. (I know, all of the other books and instructions about henna say *not* to put oil on your hair before henna. But trust me, it works and helps condition the hair.)

Dampen the hair before applying henna; it will make the application much easier. If applied correctly, henna will not dry the hair out but will condition and strengthen it. I have applied henna to hair that was in incredibly poor condition and seen it respond in a beautiful, healthy way.

The Perfect Paste

A perfect henna paste is neither too dry nor too wet. If it's too dry, it will be difficult to apply and will flake. It will also tend to dry the hair out. If it's too wet, it will run down your face and generally make a mess. So aim for the perfect mix, which is somewhat like a nicely cooked bowl of oatmeal — easy enough to put on, but not so loose that it will run.

Applying Henna, Step-by-Step

Follow these steps for fabulous hair color:

Step 1. With a wooden or plastic spoon, mix the henna with boiling water (or very hot water) to make a thickish paste, the consistency of oatmeal. Use a glass, ceramic, or plastic bowl. Getting the right consistency is tricky at first. Keep mixing with water until it's smooth and creamy. It takes far more water than you'd imagine.

Step 2. Dampen the hair thoroughly and towel dry. Put on plastic gloves, or you'll have bright orange hands for a couple of weeks. Massage a small amount of olive or jojoba oil into the hair, especially the ends.

Step 3. Divide the hair into sections, and cover each section completely with henna paste. If you don't get all the hair evenly covered, blond and gray shades will end up with a streaked appearance. Short hair is easy; long hair takes time. It goes faster if two people are working on it at the same time.

Step 4. When all the hair has been completely covered, take more henna and "grease" it thickly over the hair. Pat it on thickly! You'll *look* like a greaser and *feel* like you have a thick skull.

Step 5. If you have long hair, pin it up in a bun. Cover with a shower cap, plastic wrap, or a plastic bag. Then wrap with an old towel to hold it all in place.

Step 6. Check the time. For darker shades, leave the henna pack on a full 2 hours. For lighter shades, 30 minutes to 1 hour is usually sufficient, and for gray hair, only 30 minutes.

Washing Out the Henna

There's a trick to washing henna out of the hair. It will feel like you're washing out 15 pounds of mud and that it is never going to all come out. In the meantime, all that shampoo is undoing the fine conditioning you have just given your hair.

I have found that the very best way to get the henna out is to wash once just as you regularly do. If you normally follow with a detangling rinse, do so. Then, even though you can still feel henna in your hair, let your hair dry naturally. Once your hair is dry, brush it. Any henna left in the hair will brush right out. It is so much easier and better on your hair.

For the full effect, let your hair dry completely before racing to the mirror. Of course you'll do it anyway, but at least you'll be warned. You generally don't see much until after the hair dries. And then — watch out — you might be hooked! It will be beautiful, you'll feel divine, and you'll be another henna “junkie”!

Recommended Reading

There are many excellent books available on natural cosmetics and beauty. I've listed only a few of my favorites.

De Luca, Diana. *Botanica Erotica*. Healing Arts Press, 1998.

Fabius, Carine. *Mehndi: The Art of Henna Body Painting*. Three Rivers Press, 1998.

Falconi, Dina. *Earthly Bodies & Heavenly Hair*. Ceres Press, 1998.

Keville, Kathi, and Mindy Green. *Aromatherapy: A Complete Guide to the Healing Art*, 2nd ed. Crossing Press, 2009.

Mars, Brigitte. *Beauty by Nature*. Green Press, 2006.

Roome, Loretta. *Mehndi: The Timeless Art of Henna Painting*. St. Martin's, 1998.

Tourles, Stephanie. *Organic Body Care Recipes*. Storey Publishing, 2007.

Resources

Supplies

The following environment-and people-friendly businesses offer ingredients and products for making your own home cosmetics. Some offer their own lines of quality homemade cosmetics as well.

Brushy Mountain Bee Farm

800-233-7929

www.brushymountainbeefarm.com

Frontier Natural Products Co-op

800-669-3275

www.frontiercoop.com

Jean's Greens Herbal Tea Works & Herbal Essentials

518-479-0471

www.jeansgreens.com

Mountain Rose Herbs

800-879-3337

www.mountainroseherbs.com

SKS Bottle & Packaging, Inc.

518-880-6980

www.sks-bottle.com

Educational Resources

The following organizations can provide information on classes, seminars, and correspondence courses offered throughout the United States.

American Herb Association

530-265-9552

www.aha herb.com

American Herbalists Guild

617-520-4372

www.americanherbalistsguild.com

California School of Herbal Studies

707-887-7457

www.cshs.com

Herb Research Foundation

www.herbs.org

Northeast Herbal Association

<http://northeastherbal.org>

Sage Mountain Retreat Center and Botanical Sanctuary

802-479-9825

www.sagemountain.com

Other

United Plant Savers

802-476-6467

www.unitedplantsavers.org

A nonprofit organization dedicated to the conservation and cultivation of endangered North American medicinal plants. Provides conferences, journals, and other educational services to members.

Converting Recipe Measurements to Metric

Use the following formulas for converting US measurements to metric. Since the conversions are not exact, it's important to convert the measurements for all of the ingredients to maintain the same proportions as the original recipe.

Metric Conversion Chart

WHEN THE MEASUREMENT GIVEN IS	TO CONVERT IT TO	MULTIPLY IT BY
teaspoons	milliliters	4.93
tablespoons	milliliters	14.79
fluid ounces	milliliters	29.57
cups	milliliters	236.59
pints	milliliters	473.18
quarts	milliliters	946.36
gallons	liters	3.785
ounces	grams	28.35
pounds	kilograms	0.454
inches	centimeters	2.54

Other Books by Rosemary Gladstar

Herbs for Common Ailments

In this Storey Basics® guide, Rosemary Gladstar shows you how to use 56 common herbs to safely address a wide range of everyday ailments, from burns, wounds, and headaches, to congestion, indigestion, bruises, sore throats, coughs, fevers, and insomnia.

128 PAGES. AVAILABLE IN PAPERBACK.

[READ MORE AT STOREY.COM](#)

Herbs for Long-Lasting Health

It's not just about how *long* you live — it's about how *well* you live. This Storey Basics® guide shows you the path to vibrant health and wellness in middle age and beyond. The book features 22 herbs to support your nervous system, activate your metabolism, support bones and joints, and improve your ability to handle stress. You'll learn how to choose the right herbs for your needs and how to prepare and use them safely and effectively.

128 PAGES. AVAILABLE IN PAPERBACK.

[READ MORE AT STOREY.COM](#)

Herbs for Stress & Anxiety

Treat stress, anxiety, depression, and more with simple herbal remedies that strengthen and build a healthy nervous system. This Storey Basics® guide profiles 21 herbs proven to be effective at soothing and even preventing stress symptoms such as panic attacks, insomnia, depression, and headaches.

128 PAGES. AVAILABLE IN PAPERBACK

[READ MORE AT STOREY.COM](#)

Rosemary Gladstar's Herbal Recipes for Vibrant Health

This comprehensive recipe collection offers a potent prescription for energy, health, and vitality at every stage of life. Nurture yourself and those you love with nature's healing herbs and these 175 recipes.

408 PAGES. AVAILABLE IN PAPERBACK.

[READ MORE AT STOREY.COM](#)

Rosemary Gladstar's Medicinal Herbs: A Beginner's Guide

Renowned herbalist Rosemary Gladstar profiles 33 of the most common and versatile healing plants and then shows you exactly

how to grow, harvest, prepare, and use them. Stock your home medicine chest with safe, all-natural, low-cost herbal preparations, and enjoy better health!

224 PAGES. AVAILABLE IN PAPERBACK.

[READ MORE AT STOREY.COM](https://www.storey.com)

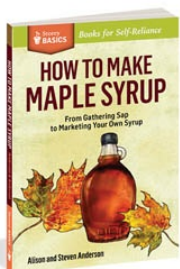
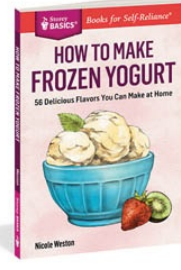
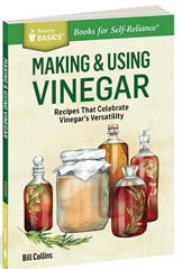
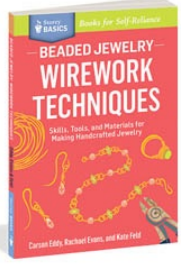
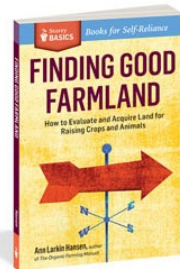
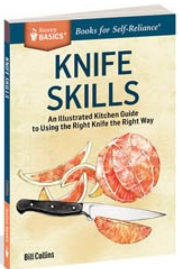
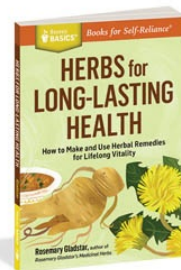
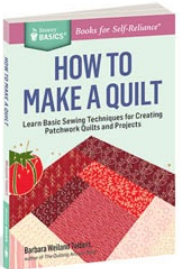
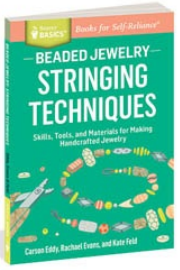
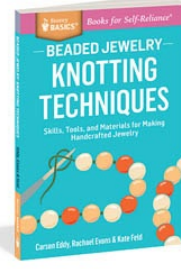
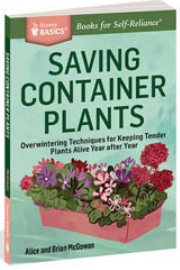
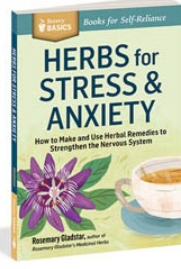
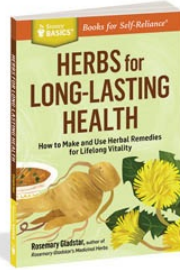
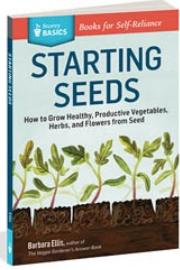
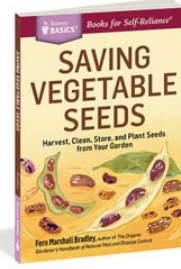
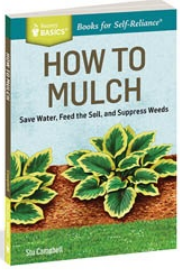
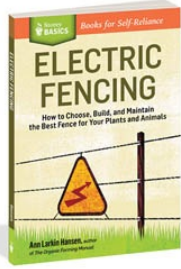
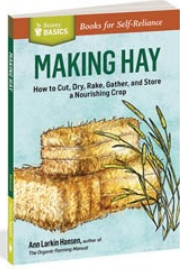
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