



Herbalicious DIY presented by Robin Haglund
Homegrown & Foraged from Nature to Handmade & Healing at Home

Distilling Nature's Essences

Hydrosols:

Hydrosols are water-based “steamed” herbal extractions containing a small amount of essential oil. They are also called botanical or flower waters. Hydrosols can be made with fresh herbs or with dried herbs or a combo. Some herbs work best only fresh because they lose a lot of their fragrance in the drying process.

Hydrosols require significantly less of an herb than is required to distill herbs for essential oils. Hydrosols create only a tiny bit of essential oil along with quite a bit of luscious herbal water. In large batch productions, the essential oil may be separated from the water. In most DIY situations keeping water & oil mixed probably is ideal. Hydrosols can be made using a stovetop alembic/still (homemade or purchased) or with tools found in most kitchens. Learning hand-in-hand is recommended the first time!

Because hydrosols are water-based, you may wish to test your product for contamination, use preservatives &/or store it in the refrigerator to extend its life. Most DIY hydrosols are not meant for internal consumption.

A few favorite botanicals to grow for hydrosols: rose, lavender, lemon balm, mint, cedar, Douglas or grand fir, violet, sage, citrus, yarrow, witch hazel, scented geraniums, rosemary, coriander, citronella

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Herbal Lubrication

Infused botanical oils:

Many botanicals can be extracted in carrier oil such as sunflower, olive, coconut, apricot kernel, cacao butter & others. Some botanicals are best extracted *with* heat (decoction) – sometimes in sunlight; sometimes in the dark. Some botanicals are easily extracted *without* adding heat & are extracted over time (infusion). Botanical oils are usually meant for internal use only. Made this way, they are not essential oils.

In most situations using fresh herbs in oil will add too much water to the extraction leading to a rancid product. But, some botanicals can & maybe should be used fresh or wilted to extract in oil. Rules are made to break!

A few favorite botanicals to grow & extract into oil: calendula, lavender, rosemary, yarrow, plantain, cottonwood, arnica, chamomile, eucalyptus, rose hips, rose petals, citronella, mugwort

Garden Variety Salve-ations

Botanical salves, balms, ointments & unguents:

Botanical salves (& others in this group) can be made from many herbs. They may be single botanical salves or may combine multiple herbs in a single salve. They are often made with some kind of herbal-infused oil (such as those listed above) or fat (lard, cacao butter) & wax (bee, candelilla, soy, etc...) heated to melt and blended with the oil or fat. Be careful to keep water out of the mix!

Botanical Sippables

Herbs in alcohol, vinegar, syrups, water, honey & more:

Many botanicals can be extracted for internal consumption. Many may be medicinal, such as FireCider vinegars, elderberry honey, herbal teas, and alcohol or glycerite tinctures. Some sippables are simply extracted for deliciousness & recreation. But, keep in mind *deliciousness*, even in a simple herbal tea, may be powerful medicine. Some that seem innocuous may be contraindicated for some of the population, especially those who are pregnant, nursing, have compromised immune systems, allergies or other challenges. Always know your botanical's full properties, dosages & possible toxins before consuming!

A few favorite botanicals to grow for sippables: rose, lemon balm, lemon verbena, passionflower, linden, pine, Douglas fir, peppermint, chamomile, horseradish, thyme, citrus, dandelion, nasturtium, plum, black elderflower/berry, garlic, ginger, Elecampane, walnut, Schisandra, yarrow, hawthorn

Wash Those Weeds Right into Your Hair!

Herbal Hair Rinses:

Herbal hair rinses can replace the need to buy shampoos, conditioners & even styling products. Herbs have been shown to impart strengthening, brightening, stimulating, moisturizing, smoothing and more to our scalps and hair. Vinegar cleans the scalp and hair and may help reduce product build up.

Adjusting to using hair rinses after a lifetime of shampoo may take time. Be prepared for a week or more of challenging hair days in the beginning. And, you may find you want to change up the botanicals in your blend seasonally or as you learn which herbs work best for your body.

Both dried and fresh botanicals work well in hair rinses. Many prefer to use apple cider vinegar, but you can keep costs in check by trying distilled white vinegar instead. (Some have grain allergies to distilled white vinegar.) ALWAYS be sure to dilute hair rinse vinegar before using it so you don't fry your hair. Keep vinegar rinses on your outsides only. Vinegar is an acid that can burn eyes, noses & more!

A few favorite botanicals to grow for hair rinses: rose, lemon balm, horsetail, nettle, rosemary, marshmallow, nasturtium, chamomile, calendula, lavender, sage, mock orange

***** Please always fully research all plant & plant extracts before using for any internal or external application. Never consume or apply any part of any plant or any extract of any plant until you are certain of your identification & understanding of the plant. Plant medicine can be powerful, even toxic. *****

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