

**LOVELY LAVENDER
THE UNIVERSAL HERB**



How to Eat, Heal, Grow and Work with Herbs

Vol II Herbal Amicus Series

© by Mary Ann Mehegan, Edited by Virginia Cornue



The “***Lovely Lavender – the Universal Herb***” is Vol. II of the *Herbal Amicus* series. Delicate and fragrant, the beauty of Lavender has enchanted humankind for millennia. However, Lavender is more than beautiful. It offers a multitude of healing and culinary uses and has a fascinating history.

“***Stinging Nettles – the Queen of Herbs***” (Vol I) of the series) is an exploration of another powerful and useful herb to humankind. Herbs have been helpful plant companions to humans for thousands of years. Their energy feeds, heals, soothes, uplifts, even beautifies us. *Herbal Amicus*: herbs our friends

Table of Contents

[Introduction](#)

[The Universal Herb](#)

[A Plant Ally](#)

[Talking to Plants](#)

[Historical Highlights](#)

[How to Grow Lavender](#)

[Botany and Chemistry](#)

[Health and Home: Uses](#)

[Aromatherapy](#)

[Lavender Sachets: How to Make](#)

[In the Kitchen](#)

[Cooking with Lavender](#)

[Celebrate!](#)

[Intuition and Plant Allies](#)

[Honor and Revere](#)

[The Mystery of Lavender](#)

[Buying and Storing Lavender](#)

[Sources: Where to Buy](#)

Introduction

We are lovers of herbs: to smell, heal with, meditate on, grow, and eat. We find even reading about herbs inspiring. We hope our simple and easy to read books will help you to use herbs in these ways too. *Lovely Lavender* is Vol. II in the *Herbal Amicus* series. [Stinging Nettles: Queen of Herbs](#) is Vol. I. We plan many more *Herbal Amicus* primers.



We view herbs as nature's gifts to humankind. They are "friends" in a sense or "allies", helping humans on many levels: feeding us, healing, helping us breathe, strengthening and soothing us spiritually. Plants are life itself, alchemists of life force.

Why have we named the series *Herbal Amicus*? Amicus is Latin for "friend of". Not only are we friends of herbs, but herbs are our friends. Herbs are your friends as well. Even more than friends, herbs are our allies, in other words, helpers in our journey in life our physical, mental and spiritual journey our hope is that the *Herbal Amicus* series will be your friend in your life's journey.

In this second book of the series, *Lovely Lavender* is recognized for its purple beauty, but Lavender is more than just a pretty flower. Lavender has extensive usages and multiple virtues, as well as a fascinating history. No plant with the exception of the rose, a storied herb, evokes such universal affection or stirs memory more deeply than Lavender.

Lavender's heavenly scent, essential oil and delicious flavors places it at the pinnacle of herbs. Folklore has given this tall, fragrant flower many names: Elf's Leaf, Nardus and Spikenard (in India).

Its properties are multifold: medicinal, culinary, cosmetic and inspirational. We hope you enjoy this Lavender primer and find it useful as well as uplifting.

With Love.

Virginia Cornue PhD

Mary Ann Melhegan

"Lavender with spikes of blue;
sweeter plant was never found
growing on our english ground."
Caryl Battersby



The Universal Herb

If there is an herb that could be called “universal,” it may be Lavender. You find Lavender on the kitchen table, in the herb garden, in the bedroom and the bathtub and at wedding ceremonies.

As a medicinal herb it has earned the name of “*the Swiss army knife*” of herbal medicine due to its remarkable range of uses. It is antibacterial, antifungal, and antiviral and also useful on minor (first degree) burns.



Lavender is a digestive aid, an acne treatment, migraine headache reliever and soothes our nervous systems.

Aside from the wide array of healing properties, Lavender is a delightful addition to baking and sauces. For cooking, the best Lavender variety is *Provence*. Lavender sugars, cookies, ice creams, cheesecakes, jams, honeys, cakes, loafs, pies, fruit crumbles, syrups and summer drinks all make this fragrant flower a popular addition in the more adventurous kitchen.

The most popular Lavender plant is *Lavandula angustifolia* or English Lavender.

Lavender has been associated with cleanliness. The name comes from the latin “*lavare*” which means “to wash”. It was

used to scent baths in ancient times. But it has also been used medicinally.



Provence, France is now the world's largest Lavender producing region. The Romans first brought it into the area. By the 20th century shepherds collected it to sell to perfumeries of Grasse. Just before World War I, perfumers and the French government saw Lavender production as a means of keeping people from leaving the area so they cleared the almonds orchards and planted Lavender





A Plant Ally

Lavender is an herb which has served humanity for centuries, perhaps millenia. It can be considered an “ally” to humankind.

What Are Plant Allies? An “ally” is something that supports, or helps. It is a mutual relationship. It’s a “relative” or “kin”. A Plant Ally is a plant that assists you. Plants have long been our friends, teachers, and spiritual guides.

Plants are life itself: our breath, our food. Plants are **alchemists of life force** – breaking it down to be usable for humans.



With a Plant Ally you join forces, studying it throughout its life cycle, appreciating all its parts and uses. Your Ally teaches you how to observe, examine and learn about the natural world.

Plants want to give their healing gifts. You have only to be willing to open yourself sufficiently to receive these healing gifts. The degree to which you know a plant is dependent upon the degree to which you know yourself as a sensory, dimensional being sufficiently to receive these healing gifts. If you want magic in your healing you must first be willing to find the magic in yourself.

Lavender is a power plant ally, offering its protection to our immune system, its healing powers, its lovely fragrance to uplift our spirits and its blooming flowers to grace our lives.



Talking to Plants

Listening to Them

Many herbalists advise us to utilize our "6th sense" or body sense to learn about a plant. True power, they state, cannot be accessed via the cognitive or "thinking" mind. This is the sphere of the healer and Shaman but anyone can work at this consciousness, also known as body intelligence.

A fascinating true story about plant communication can be found in the book "*Wizard of the Upper Amazon*". by Manuel Cordova Rios.



Manuel was a 15 year old Portuguese cook working with a rubber company in the heart of the remote Amazon in 1907. He was kidnapped by an Amazon Indian tribe and brought into their culture. Deep in the tropical forest he ingested sacred plants such as *Ayahuasca* with the tribe. (*Ayahuasca* is a hallucinogenic brew made from the bark and stems of a tropical South American vine of the genus *Banisteriopsis*, especially *B. caapi*, mixed with other psychotropic plants, used especially in shamanistic rituals by certain Amazonian Indian peoples).

During these sessions, in which the men entered a "dream state", he recounts how the plants "would speak to them", advising their medicinal uses. This is very foreign to western cultures.

Additionally, the "Huni Kui", the tribe with whom Manuel lived, firmly believed the chants used with the plants were an integral part of the power. Manuel underwent a complete shamanic initiation and became a well known healer.



Historical Highlights

The lands surrounding the Mediterranean are the original natural habitat of this multifaceted plant and where it grows wild. Hence, it is probable that it was commonly used by the people of this area in ancient times.

Lavender has traveled from its original homeland to all parts of the world. It was collected and sold by traders, carried with conquerors, and came home with voyagers since the time of ancient Egypt.

The Egyptians used Lavender in the process of preparing mummies and perfuming, as did the Phoenicians and the Arabs.

When the tomb of Tutankhamen was opened, jars filled with unguents containing something resembling Lavender were found. These unguents were used only by the royal families and high priests in cosmetics, massage oils, and medicines.

Christians believed that “spikenard”, or Lavender, could provide protection from evil, which is why many early Christians hung crosses of Lavender over the doors to their homes. The Romans were also fond of Lavender



and used it in cooking, in smoking blends, and as an aromatic oil for bathing and purifying their rooms.

It is likely that the use of the Lavender plant and its domestic cultivation was first initiated by the Arabian people on the Arabian Peninsula.

Lavender was used to scent water used for bathing by the Greeks and Romans.

In the 1600s the history of Lavender took a further turn as the Lavender herb first made its appearance on the American continent. Back in Europe, during the great bubonic plague, glove makers scented leather with Lavender oil, and avoided the deadly infection. Lavender is effective as an insect repellent, and as the plague was insect borne, Lavender served as a protective remedy.



Lavender was used widely for its medicinal purposes during World War I to bathe the wounds of soldiers with Lavender washes.

As is evident from the above, Lavender has become a staple herb in the kitchens, medicine chests and apothecaries for thousands of years.

Due to its multidimensional uses, the Lavender plant also became a valuable trade commodity commanding huge sums. In contemporary times, French distillers still pay exorbitant prices for certain varieties of Lavender oil for their perfumery products.

In the 1650's when the bubonic plague killed one third of the European population. There were three towns where no one ever died of the plague. In fact no one ever caught the plague.

Each town had a perfume factory and Lavender oil was the base used in those perfumes. The people in the town worked in the factory and they breathed in the volatile oils as well as handled Lavender oil each day. During this same time it was noted that no shoemaker ever died of the plague. Could there be any connection to the Lavender oil? Shoemakers made leather boots and shoes as well as leather gloves.

The tradition was to scent the gloves with Lavender oil. Anyone who handled the Lavender oil at least once per week had an immune system so strong that even the bubonic plague could not touch them.

Elizabethan England: Lavender flowers were used to perfume cupboards where linens were stored.



How to Grow Lavender

In the Garden:

Since Lavender doesn't like "wet feet," plant it in sandy soil or well drained soil and preferably in a raised bed. However, until the plant is established, you may need to water a little more often.

Lavender must have full sun.

Little or no fertilizer is recommended unless the plant fails to bloom.

Careful with mulch. Best to use crushed rocks instead of organic mulch.

Retaining too much moisture encourages rot.

In Containers

Use a soil mixture that drains well. Place containers in an area that gets full sun.

Water the soil and not the entire plant. Keeping the leaves wet will produce disease or rot.

Starting Lavender from Seed:

Plant Lavender seed indoors on a well drained or sandy potting mixture 6 to 8 weeks before the last frost. Keep in a sunny window. Water from the bottom. Do not let the soil become water logged. When weather stabilizes, transfer seedlings as per above.



Botany and Chemistry

As far as plants go, Lavender is almost a small bush. Its "type" is Herbaceous perennial Botanical Name of Lavender: *Lavandula angustifolia*, *Lavandula officinalis*. It is a member of the mint family.

Other Common Names for Lavender: Common Lavender, English Lavender, French Lavender, garden Lavender, spike Lavender, sweet Lavender, true Lavender. The plant has silver leaves that emit the characteristic Lavender scent when bruised. Lavender belongs to the Labiatae family, more commonly known as the mint family. The entire family, including mint, oregano, thyme, sage, and rosemary, is quite fragrant due to the volatile oils they contain.

The volatile oil in Lavender is made up of linalyl acetate, linalool, lanvandylyl acetate, borneol, camphor, limonene, cadinene, caryophyllene, and some other rather long named ingredients. Volatile oils, like volatile people, are not stable, they evaporate quickly.



The plant also contains coumarins including umbelliferone, herniarin, and dihydrocoumarin. Other chemicals in Lavender include triterpenes and flavonoids. The fragrant oil to which the odor of Lavender flowers is due is a valuable article of commerce, much used in perfumery, and to a lesser extent in medicine. The essential oil is only produced from the flowers and flower stalks.

Various species of Lavender are used in the preparation of the commercial essential oil, but the largest proportion is obtained from the flowers of *Lavandula vera*, the narrowleaved form, which grows abundantly in sunny, stony localities in the Mediterranean countries



Health & Home: Uses

It is often said, "***When in doubt use Lavender.***" Lavender will boost the immune system. It is gentle enough for babies. The ancient Greeks used Lavender to treat throat infections, and Lavender was grown in Medieval herb gardens.

Here are a few ways to use Lavender:

Burns Gently stroke on Lavender oil. Pain relief is almost immediate, and burn usually heals without scarring. For more serious burns, apply repeatedly until pain and redness subsides. (2nd degree burns may require medical attention).



Cuts Apply [Lavender oil](#) to soothe pain, prevent bacterial infection and aid scar free healing. Apply neat, do not dilute the oil.

Aching Muscles After an exhausting day at the office, jump into a Lavender bath to soothe aches & pains. Add Epsom salts and a few drops of [Lavender oil](#) to the bath and soak away the tension.

Acne Lavender inhibits the bacteria that cause the skin infection, helps to rebalance the over secretion of sebum, which the bacteria thrive on, and reduce scarring". Add a few drops of Lavender oil to a plain cream sold by chemists and use as a moisturizer or cleanser.

Anti Bacterial Lavender is a powerful antibacterial in dilutions of 5 per cent or less. One of the earliest recorded claims of Lavender oil's therapeutic qualities comes from the nineteenth century when tuberculosis and infection was rampant in France. It was found that the people working in the Lavender fields of Provence were far less likely to succumb to infection and respiratory ailments, such as tuberculosis which was virtually unknown in the area. This discovery led to the first clinical tests in 1887 which were to prove the antibacterial properties of Lavender essential oil.

Anxiety Relief Apply Lavender oil to your temples.

Bedbugs Lavender oil is a natural bed bug repellent. The taste or smell of the herb is a big turn off to these bugs. Use a Lavender Sachet or a diluted mix of lavender oil.

Earache Warm a bottle of Lavender oil in hot water for a minute or two, then gently massage a few drops into the skin around the ears and throat. For babies and small children, add 2 to 3 drops of the warmed oil to a little olive oil and massage in the same way.

Eczema Stroke infused Lavender oil (a few drops of Lavender oil & carrier oil) into dry, itchy skin—small children will find this especially comforting or add a few drops of Lavender oil to calamine lotion, shake before use.

Fatigue Add 5 drops of Lavender oil to a hot foot bath and relax while your feet soak in it. The soles of the feet are particularly porous, so Lavender reaches your bloodstream very quickly, exerting its stimulating and soothing effects on various systems of your body.

Fevers For babies or small children, sponge them down very gently with tepid water to which you have added a drop of Lavender oil. Take care not to let them get chilled. This works for adults too.

Giddy Spells, Faintness or Palpitations Make your own smelling salts—sea salt , Lavender oil, peppermint oil & basil oil.

Headache Spray mist of Lavender (Hydrosol, a combination of distilled water and Lavender) around your head. It is refreshing and soothing. Alternatively, make a compress of a piece of gauze or muslin soaked in icy cold water then sprinkled with a few drops of Lavender oil and apply to the forehead, or massage a few drops into the forehead, temples and nape of the neck.

Insomnia In a number of small studies, elderly psychiatric patients have been shown to sleep better and be more alert during the day when their sleep medication is replaced with Lavender oil either dropped on their pillows, or placed in a diffuser on the ward. To help to induce sleep, put 3 or 4 drops of Lavender oil on your pillow. For babies, add 1 drop of Lavender oil & geranium oil in carrier oil and massage into a babies back or a few drops in their bedtime bath.

Menstrual Cramps Massage a few drops of [Lavender oil](#) onto your lower abdomen or apply a Lavender sprinkled hot compress onto the area.

Moths, Midges & Mosquitos These annoying little insects all hate the smell of Lavender. To prevent bites, splash yourself with Lavender hydrosol before you go out at sunset or to bed, put 3 to 4 drops of oil on your pillow or soak cotton wool ball in the oil and leave it on a saucer in front of the window. Lavender oil is also a terrific remedy for insect bites, soothing itching & inflammation: dab it on to them neat as

soon as possible. To keep moths off your clothes, hang Lavender bags on your coat hangers or keep them among your sweaters and refresh them with a drop or two of Lavender oil from time to time.

Scabies This infestation by a tiny mite burrowing into your skin causes intense itching. Rub the whole body with undiluted Lavender oil. Then continue every day until better with a mixture of Lavender oil and alcohol. Change and wash bedding and clothes and sprinkle Lavender oil on the mattress.

Shingles Combine a mix of Lavender oil with, analgesic, antiviral & scar preventing essential oils neat or on compresses on the agonizing lesions of shingles. It usually produces a cure within 5 to 8 days.

Sinus Lavender is one of several essential oils that aromatherapists recommend for inhalations to relieve sinusitis, add two drops of Lavender and thyme oil to a bowl of steaming water and inhale slowly and deeply. Hold a towel over your head, while you breathe in steam.

Sunburn Spray Lavender hydrosol directly onto the skin.

Travel Combine Lavender, rosemary, neroli, frankincense and clary sage, and dab it onto your pulse points to help you keep a clear head during those endless hours in the air.

Source: [Celestial Healing Wellness Center](#)

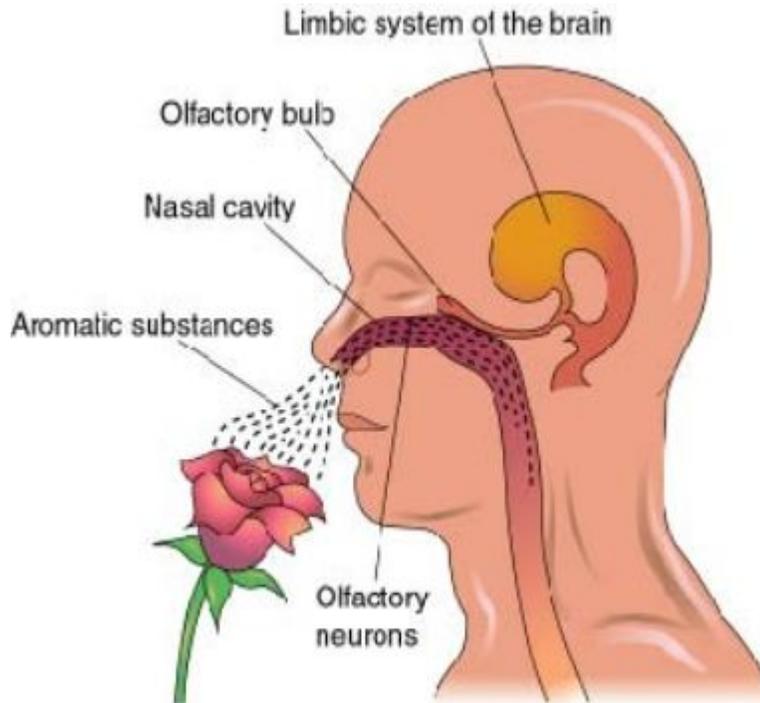
Lavender Body Scrub (exterior rub)

1 cup Epsom salts
1/2 almond oil or 1/2 grapeseed oil
1 tablespoon vitamin E oil
12 drops Lavender oil
2 tablespoons dried, crushed Lavender flowers

Directions:

Mix well.
Apply to wet skin
Massage on skin in circular movements.

Aromatherapy



Scent has a profound effect on the emotional levels. The limbic system processes both odor and emotions, therefore, aroma and emotions are connected.

Essential oil of Lavender is one of the safest and most widely used oils in aromatherapy. Lavender is said to balance volatile emotions and removes indecisiveness. Lavender can lift our spirits. It has been used to treat Seasonal Affective Disorder (SAD), and Post Traumatic Stress Syndrome.

Aromatherapy is the inhalation and topical application of essential oils (or the pure essence from plants). As alternative medicine, it enhances physical, mental, emotional and spiritual well being.

When a person inhales an essential oil, that scent is carried by olfactory nerve cells in the nose to the olfactory system. It then continues to the brain, namely the limbic system, the house of emotions and emotional behavior such as intimacy, passion and sex. Immediately, and depending on the oil, you may begin to feel more alert or more relaxed. You may feel excited and aroused. You may feel the release of negative emotions and/or the soothing of muscle tension. Mood enhancers like serotonin and endorphins get released.

Spray It!

Use a spray in your home, office and car to deal with bacteria. Dab a bit onto a tissue and put in your window or car AC vent.

Massage It!

Massage a couple of drops of Lavender into the soles of the feet, particularly the arches and big toe, to help the digestion, respiratory and hormonal systems. Reflexology with Lavender may help headache and migraine sufferers.

Tonic for Hormonal Irregularities

Massage it into muscles, tendons, ligaments, and joints to improve their health and reduce fatigue, tension and stress

Our sense of smell is 10,000 more powerful than any other sense and the recognition of smell is immediate. (Other senses like touch travel to the brain via the spinal cord.) Smell is also the strongest link to the subconscious mind and also to our collective unconscious mind where memories are stored.



Lavender has been used for centuries as a perfume and scent. It is especially popular as a Sachet to scent clothing, drawers, closets, bedding and other uses.

Lavender Sachets: How to Make



What is a sachet?

a small fabric bag containing fragrant plant material. They are used to scent drawers of clothes, linens, closets and more.

You can also suspend from door knobs. Lavender scented sachets keep clothes smelling washday fresh, repels moths and insects.

To make a Lavender sachet you will need dried Lavender flowers. You need to remove the flower buds from the stems.

Dry Lavender: cut bunches when in full bloom and then tie with rubber bands. Hang in a warm dry place. The flowers dry quickly (in a week or two).

You can buy premade Muslin bags or sew squares of fabric you have. You can also cut a heart pattern in the fabric.

"Lavender, sweet Lavender; come and buy my Lavender,hide it in your trousseau, lady fair. Let its lovely fragrance flow over your from head to toe, lightening on your eyes, your cheek, your hair." ~ Cumberk & Clark, Flower Song Book 1929



In the Kitchen Cooking with Lavender



Lavender is extremely versatile in cooking, spicing, and also adds nice color and garnish to your favorite dish.

Many chefs recommend English Lavender (*angustifolia*) and Provence Lavender (*lavandula x intermedia*) for culinary use. These Lavenders have a nice flavor without the strong perfume taste.



Lemon Lavender Muffins

Lemon Lavender muffins are easy to make and are delicious. This recipe makes a dozen muffins.



Ingredients:

2/3 cup sugar
2 tablespoons dried Lavender
1 3/4 cups all-purpose flour
1 teaspoon baking powder
1/2 teaspoon baking soda
1/4 teaspoon salt
2/3 cup whole milk
3 tablespoons fresh lemon juice
2 teaspoons grated lemon peel
1 [egg](#)
6 tablespoons [unsalted butter, melted](#), cooled

TOPPING

1/2 cup sugar
1 teaspoon grated lemon peel
1/4 cup unsalted butter, melted

Directions:

Heat oven to 400°F. Grease bottoms of 12 muffin cups or line with baking cups. Place 2/3 cup sugar and Lavender in food processor; pulse 30 to 60 seconds (pulse longer for a more intense Lavender flavor).

Sift through strainer into medium bowl to remove any large pieces of Lavender. Whisk in flour, baking powder, baking soda and salt until well blended.

In small bowl, whisk together milk, lemon juice and 2 teaspoons lemon peel. (Milk will curdle and thicken slightly)

In another medium bowl, lightly beat egg; whisk in 6 tablespoons melted butter and milk mixture. Make well in center of flour mixture; pour in egg mixture. Stir just until blended. Divide evenly among muffin cups.

Bake 20 to 25 minutes or until browned and toothpick inserted in center comes out clean. Cool on wire rack 10 minutes. Remove from pan. In another small bowl, stir together 1/2 cup sugar and 1 teaspoon lemon peel. Dip tops of muffins in 1/4 cup melted butter; dip in sugar mixture.

Serve warm or at room temperature.

For an extra touch, sprinkle a few blossoms on the icing. Serve with a piping hot cup of Earl Grey tea. Drop a few blossoms in your teas as well. Yummy!

Mushroom and Lavender Rice Pilaf



Ingredients

1 tablespoon dried culinary Lavender ('Provence' is preferred)
2 teaspoons [mustard seeds](#)
1/2 teaspoon [fennel seed](#)
2 tablespoons [olive oil](#) (or combine 1 tablespoon olive oil and 1 tablespoon coconut oil)
1/4 lb [mushroom, diced small](#) (one variety or a mixture of mushrooms)
1 cup jasmine rice or
1 cup [basmati rice](#)
1/2 cup [shallot, peeled and diced](#)
1/4 lb [mushroom, diced small](#) (one variety or a mixture of mushrooms)
1/2 teaspoon [sea salt](#), to taste
1/4 teaspoon [cracked black pepper](#)
2 cups [vegetables broth](#) (or chicken broth)
1/2 cup [green onion](#)
[fresh cilantro](#), for garnish

Directions:

Place the Lavender, mustard seeds and fennel seeds in a spice grinder. PULSE until finely ground.

Warm the olive oil in a large skillet over medium heat. Stir in the rice and shallots; saute for 5 minutes. Add the mushrooms, sauteeing for about 5 minutes or until golden brown and the liquid from the mushrooms has started to evaporate.

Stir in the salt, pepper and Lavender mixture.

If using a rice cooker, transfer the rice mixture to the appliance. Stir in the broth. Cook for 30 minutes or until the rice is tender and the liquid has completely absorbed. If using the stove top, stir in the broth, cover the pot, bring to the boil,

then reduce to simmer and cook for about 20 minutes or until the liquid has evaporated.

Stir in half of the green onions.

Transfer the cooked rice to a serving platter and garnish with the remaining green onions and cilantro. If desired, you can garnish the top of the rice with fresh cilantro, too.

Remember: Cooking time varies depending on if you are cooking the rice on the stove top or in a rice cooker.

Delicious as a side dish with lamb.

Lavender Salad Dressing



Lavender is also delicious in savory dishes such as salads.

Ingredients::

- 6 Tbsp. extra virgin olive oil
- 2 Tbsp balsamic vinegar
- 1 Tbsp lime juice
- 1 clove garlic, minced
- 1 teaspoon whole grain mustard
- 2 Tbsp honey
- 1 teaspoon dried Lavender blossoms

Directions

Blend all ingredients in a blender or whisk briskly by hand. Drizzle over salad greens and toss lightly.

Lavender Iced Tea

In spring, there's nothing better than a refreshing herbal iced tea in the afternoon.

Ingredients

2 Tbsp. Lavender flowers (1 tablespoon dry)
1 Tbsp. Lemon balm (1 teaspoon dry, or one lemon slice)
1 Tbsp. Mint (1 teaspoon dry, applemint is best, but spearmint works well too)
3 Tbsp. Honey

Directions

Pour six cups of boiling water on herbs and steep for ten to fifteen minutes. Cool to room temperature.

Add lemon slice after cooling if you're using it instead of lemon balm. Add honey and stir.

Honey Lavender Ice Cream

Ingredients

2 cups Whole Milk
1/4 cup Dried Lavender
1/3 cup Honey
5 Large Egg Yolks
1/4 cup Sugar
1 cup Heavy Cream

Directions

In a medium saucepan, combine milk, Lavender and honey. Bring to a gentle boil, cover and remove from heat. Let steep for 5 minutes. Strain mixture, reserving milk and discard Lavender. Combine yolks, and sugar in the bowl of an electric mixer. Beat on medium-high speed until very thick and pale yellow, 3 to 5 minutes. Meanwhile, return milk to a medium saucepan and bring to a simmer over medium to low heat.

Add half the milk to yolk mixture and whisk until blended. Stir mixture into remaining milk and cook over low heat, stirring constantly, until mixture is thick enough to coat the back of a wooden spoon.

Remove from heat and immediately stir in cream. Strain mixture into a medium mixing bowl set in an ice water bath and let stand until chilled, stirring from time to time. Freeze in an ice cream maker according to manufacturer's instructions.



Celebrate!

Lavender Weddings

Lavender flowers are becoming very popular again at weddings particularly in wedding bouquets. Lavender flowers smell wonderful and they symbolize purity, fidelity and fits right into the wedding theme nicely.

You may choose a Lavender bouquet solely of fresh Lavender stems or simply have your florist incorporate Lavender flowers into your wedding bouquet. Look online and you can see dozens of choices for Lavender bouquets.

Head wreaths of Lavender may be created for flower girls and then combine fresh Lavender buds with rose petals for them to sprinkle down the aisle.

Bunches of Lavender flowers can decorate the aisle seats. After the ceremony they can serve double duty as table centerpieces at the reception. Take to the reception site.

These can later be dried and turned into keepsake Lavender sachets. They could also easily be made into a Lavender wreath for the front door of your new home. Group them together once dried into a large bouquet and place them in a prominent area such as an entry way. Their scent will greet you every time you walk by. Unlike other flowers Lavender will keep a long time after your wedding is over.

Invitations may even be scented with Lavender. For extra special use make Lavender paper for your wedding invitations and scent those exquisite sheets with Lavender oil.



Complete your Lavender themed wedding by throwing dried Lavender flower buds instead of confetti at the bride and groom.

Dry your Lavender bouquet for a keepsake. Hang your bouquet upside down in a cool, dry, dark place.

Fresh Lavender flowers will be a wonderful addition to your wedding ceremony and wedding reception.

For the wedding reception use Lavender flowers as a cake topper or perhaps have one tier of your wedding cake a Lavender cake.

As you can see there are plenty of ways to use Lavender in your wedding ceremony. The smell will be fantastic and every time you smell Lavender you will be brought back to this glorious time in your life.



Intuition and Plant Allies



Intuition will guide you to your plant allies. Although somewhat disparaged by modern culture, intuition is actually an ancient gift of guidance.

Plants can teach us to accommodate to climactic and environmental changes. They update their own biochemical requirements and characteristics. They have much to offer us in this regard, possessing unique qualifications to teach us energetically and consciously about evolutionary possibilities and methods from a more ancient and flexible perspective.

We can access the more subtle gifts that the plant kingdom offers humanity as well. Indigenous peoples have always listened to plants and passed down stories and legends revering the adventures and heroism of local plant beings. In the past, when our ancestors lived closer to nature, they were often able to discern the true gifts of plants.

You may try meditating with Lavender, or sitting with Lavender as a fragrance and floral object to concentrate on.



Honor and Revere

As you find your plant ally and your ally grows closer to you, how will you revere and celebrate it (or them)? Will you honor your ally by using chemical free gardening practices? Will you clean your bodily system and environment through organic gardening and eating? Will you heal yourself with better nutrition and herbal use? What ceremonies will you create to honor your ally and the Green World? "She" reminds us of the beautiful mystery of life within us.



The Mystery of Lavender

What does Lavender teach us? How to be lovely & beautiful and strong.

There is a feminine quality Lavender. Some herbalists believe Lavender exudes the essence of Divine Mother energy. If you are willing to spend some time with this beloved plant spirit, she will whisper to you of the mysteries that lie deep within you. Women have searched for her & harvested her, used her to heal, nurture and protect their families and communities. Such women have cocreated with her by making salves, healing balms, elixirs and perfumes. I believe we all know her intimately from the past and this wisdom lies within us. All we have to do is connect with her; then what is organic and natural within us merges with her illuminating presence and the kinship we have with her intuitively begins to unfold. (Joan Clark, [All Things Healing blog](#))

What is it saying to you? What do you need from it? Finding your plant ally or allies can change your life and through your changes can change this planet from which so much has been taken and so little returned. Wishing you ease...and magic.



Buying and Storing Lavender



You may want to buy Lavender seeds, Lavender bouquets, or flowers for culinary or cooking purposes. Dried Lavender can sometimes be purchased at health food stores and some "gourmet" or specialty shops. In your own garden, harvest your Lavender in the morning, as soon as the dew is evaporated. Lavender needs to be harvested just before the flowers open, to ensure that the blooms don't fall off the stems when dried.

Caution: The online sources included in this primer are only suggestions and have not been verified as safe culinary suppliers. If you intend to cook and eat Lavender, make certain your Lavender is intended for consumption and verify with the vendor or online source.

Make sure not to purchase Lavender from a craft shop if you intend to cook with it, unless specified that it can be used for food. Lavender grown for nonfood use may contain high levels of toxic pesticides. You can also pick fresh Lavender from the wild or grow your own plants, picking them right as the flowers begin to bud when their volatile oils will have the highest concentration, drying them out for a week or two at home, and then you can strip the buds into an airtight glass container where they will store for six months. Safely enjoy the multiple pleasures of Lavender, the universal herb.



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Sources: Where to Buy

Seeds

Mountain Rose Herbs:

<http://www.mountainroseherbs.com/>

Seed Corner

<http://www.seedcorner.com/>

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Morning Sun Herb Farm

<http://morningsunherbfarm.com/>

Amazon: various vendors)

<http://www.Amazon.com>

Floral Encounters:

<http://www.floralencounters.com/Seeds/>

Culinary

The Spice House

<http://www.thespicehouse.com/spices/dried-lavender-flower-buds-food-grade>

Pantry Garden Herbs:

<http://pantrygardenherbs.com/>

Dried Lavender

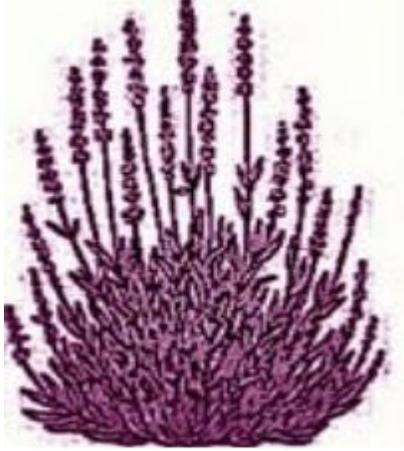
Starwest Botanicals <http://www.starwest-botanicals.com/>

The Herbal Nook <http://www.theherbalkook.com/Lavenderbulk.html>

Organic Direct Lavender Blossoms <http://tinyurl.com/organic-lav-buds>

Lavender Bouquets (dried)

Etsy <http://tinyurl.com/lav-bouquets-etsy-lav-buds>



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Published 2013 by CornueCopia LLC

Disclaimer: Great care must be exercised in harvesting any wild plant for consumption. Please ensure caution is used. Double check consumption safe Lavender when purchasing.