

# **AFRICAN AMERICAN HERBALISM**

**A PRACTICAL GUIDE TO HEALING  
PLANTS AND FOLK TRADITIONS**

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## Florida Water

peel of 3 lemons	2 handfuls roses
peel of 3 limes	full stick of palo santo wood
peel of 3 oranges	3 star anise pods
handful fresh basil (I love to add tulsi, or holy basil)	handful calendula
3 or 4 springs fresh rosemary	handful five finger grass (to add in more money manifesting power)
9 bay leaves	enough vodka to finish covering plant material (at least 100 proof; you also can use Everclear or overproof rum)
handful dried jasmine	1 (8-ounce) bottle of your favorite rose water
3 to 6 cinnamon sticks	
9 or more cloves	
handful mugwort	
7 or so juniper berries	



1. Begin with an ancestor prayer and sacred incense to clear the air. Also play music to fit the mood you want to invoke with this potion.
2. With focused intent and prayers, place all your botanical ingredients (those ingredients that precede the vodka) into a glass container large enough to fit everything.
3. Cover with vodka (or rum, if using) until it is at least 1 inch above the materials.
4. Add in the rose water.
5. Allow the mixture to sit for three moon cycles or longer, shaking it up weekly to add your energy and more prayers (if you choose the new moon or full moon, wait till the moon comes around three times). You also can let it sit for a shorter time, following your intuition.
6. If desired, add crystals like citrine (for money), rose quartz (for love, especially self-love), or any stone you are drawn to. I put them near the mixture or on top of it.
7. Write a prayer or mantra and place it under the container to add a more focused intent while it is brewing.

## FOREST BATHING USING SOUND

1. Find your favorite space in the forest.
2. Sit with your back against a tree and begin taking deep belly breaths.
3. When your mind begins to settle, allow the sounds of the forest to come in; notice the smells, and how the wind, the earth beneath you, and the tree feel.
4. Place your hand on your heart and sing the favorite song of your soul; chant “I AM” or simply scream to release.
5. Gently rise and hug the tree, thanking it for the medicine while slowly walking away.

## ANCESTOR CONNECTION BATH

medium-size pot of water	1 dropper St. John's wort extract or 5 drops of the essential oil (optional)
¼ cup lavender buds	
1 cup fresh pine needles, plus more for incense	4 to 6 tablespoons Babassu oil or another tree-based oil
1 cup fresh cedar leaves	3 tablespoons cedar wood powder
1 teaspoon clay or fresh earth (dirt)	palo santo wood (optional)
1 to 2 cups Epsom salts or sea salt	



1. Bring the water to a boil and turn off the heat.
2. Add the lavender buds, fresh pine needles, and fresh cedar leaves.
3. Cover and let steep for 45 minutes to 2 hours.
4. Drain and add to bathwater.
5. To the bathwater, add the clay or mud, the Epsom or sea salt, and the St. John's wort or essential oil. Add the bath oil, if using. Burn the pine needles, cedar wood powder, or palo santo wood as an incense to add to the element of air. You can also light a candle to bring in the element of fire to your spiritual bath process.

## FULL BLOOM SPIRIT RECIPE

mugwort (to move stagnant energy in the body)	yarrow (to help energetically to heal the wounded healer)
holy basil (to help with trauma)	6 okra pods or a full dropper okra
comfrey (to heal cuts and pain physically or energetically)	flower essence (optional; to help clear the body of negative energy)
lavender (to give peace and grace to the healing process)	fresh white flowers
	½ to 1 (13.5-ounce) can coconut, goat, or cow milk



1. Boil water in a medium pot, turn off the burner, and place a small handful of each herb in the pot.
2. Allow it to infuse for 45 minutes to 2 hours. Use for 3 to 7 days.

## FEED YOUR ORI— A HEAD WASH FOR CLARITY

gingko (used for centuries as “brain food”; teaches us we can stand the test of time and increases energy to the brain)	garden basil or tulsi (holy basil; used for psychic or spiritual enhancement, purifying negative energies)
peppermint (clears and cleanses the mind; helps with focus)	lavender (to add grace and ease in your alignment)
rosemary (increases focus)	white flowers (to purify the energetic body and mind)
	3 splashes Florida water
	½ (13.5-ounce) can coconut milk



1. Boil a medium pot of water, turn off the burner, and place a small handful of each herb or a combination of a few of these herbs into the pot and cover.
2. Add in 3 splashes of Florida water and half a can of the coconut milk before using.
3. Strain and take into the shower or bath with you. Pour it over your head, pausing in between pours to massage into scalp. Do not rinse. Cover your head for sleeping. This can be divided into 3 head washes and done 3 days in a row for maximum benefits.



## MONEY-DRAWING AND ABUNDANCE BATH

enough water to fill a medium or large pot	handful calendula (brings abundance on all levels—joy, love, and money—and keeps it flowing)
handful bay leaves (used to purify or call in your heart's desire)	small handful lavender (so money comes with ease and grace)
handful goldenrod leaves and flowers (used to purify or call in your heart's desire)	3 splashes Florida water
handful collard greens, or you can eat a bowl of them after your bath (brings in abundance)	8 ounces coconut or cow's milk (optional)
	¼ cup honey (optional)



1. Boil a medium or large pot of water. Turn off the burner and place a small handful of each herb or a combination of a few of these herbs into the pot and cover. Let it sit for at least 45 minutes. If working with the moon or sun energy, allow it to sit overnight in the new moon light or steep all day in the sun.
2. Strain.
3. Add in 3 splashes of Florida water and 8 ounces of the coconut milk before using in the shower or bath.
4. If you use this in the shower, pour it over your head in three pours while focusing on abundance coming to you. If you are using it while bathing, add a citrine crystal along with 8 ounces of milk and ¼ cup of honey for extra magic to draw in abundance.
5. Do not rinse off the bath. Cover your head when you go to sleep or if you have to go into public.

## GRIEF RELEASE BATH

enough water to fill a large pot  
handful mimosa leaf and flower  
    albizia julibrissin (helps  
        move deep grief)  
    handful lavender (helps  
        bring grace into the healing  
        process; soothes the mind)  
    handful rose petals (fresh or  
dried; helps heal the sacred heart  
space and provides protection  
during the healing process)

small handful mugwort (helps  
move stagnant energy in the body)  
handful lemon balm (brings in  
sweetness, calms, and helps  
heal the energetic heart)  
handful rue or hyssop (used  
to energetically purify  
and protect; optional)  
handful comfrey (helps  
mend energetic wounds)  
3 splashes Florida water  
8 ounces coconut or cow's milk



1. Boil a large pot of water, turn off the burner, and place a small handful of each herb or a combination of a few of these herbs into the pot and cover. Let it steep for 45 minutes to 3 hours. If working with the moon energies, allow it to sit overnight in the full moon light for extra energetic release.
2. Strain the herbs out keep bathtub drain from clogging.
3. Add in 3 splashes of Florida water and 8 ounces of the coconut or cow's milk.
4. Pour mixture into your bath and soak in the power of the plants.

## PURIFICATION BATH

enough water to fill a large pot

6 okra pods (to help purge  
the body of negative and  
stagnant energy)

handful mugwort (helps  
move stagnant energy in  
the body; optional)

handful lavender (teaches  
us healing does not have  
to be hard and soothes the  
mind, body, and soul)

handful hyssop (for purifying  
and protection; optional)

handful rue (for spiritual cleanses  
and protection; optional)

3 splashes Florida water



1. Fill a large pot with water that you have prayed over, asking for the healing needed. Add the okra pods and boil for 20 minutes.
2. Turn off the heat, add in the rest of the plants and flowers, as well as the Florida water, and cover the pot. Let steep for at 1 hour to overnight in the full moon light.
3. You can place a piece of black tourmaline crystal into the pot to “infuse” the energy of the crystal, or place it with you in the bathwater.
4. Strain out the plant material and just add this liquid into the bath or pour it over yourself in the shower.

## TRAUMA BLEND AND PERSONAL PROTECTION BATH

enough water to fill a medium to large pot	handful mugwort (for moving negative and stagnant energy)
handful black or English walnuts (for cutting ties with things not serving us and for breaking bonds of relationships when a partner is ready to move forward)	3 star anise pods (for protection)
handful holy basil (for PTSD)	handful roses (for self-love, healing the heart space, and protection while healing from trauma)
handful lavender (for relaxation, opening the way for an easier path to healing)	handful fresh white flowers (for purifying the spirit and bringing gentleness during the healing process)
1 to 2 splashes Florida water (for protecting and purifying the body, mind, and spirit)	black tourmaline crystal, rose quartz, or both (for amplifying the power of the plants; optional)
½ teaspoon fresh earth or clay (for grounding)	



1. Fill a large pot with water that you have prayed over, asking for the healing needed. I collected fresh spring water for this one. Add the walnuts and bring the water to a boil.
2. Turn off the heat, add in the rest of the plants and flowers, as well as the Florida water, and cover the pot. I let it steep for at least an hour or sometimes overnight in the moonlight.
3. Add the small amount of fresh earth or clay, then place the black tourmaline and rose quartz crystal into the pot, if using, to “infuse” the energy of the crystal, or place them with you in the bathwater.
4. You can strain out the plant material and just add this liquid into the bath or pour it over yourself in the shower. I prefer using the traditional approach of rubbing the plant material all over your body and then pouring the bathwater over yourself.

## SPIRITUAL BATH FOR CHILDREN

water  
handful lemon balm  
handful lavender  
handful roses

handful calendula  
1 teaspoon holy basil or a  
few leaves fresh basil



1. Fill a medium pot with water and bring to a slight boil.
2. Turn off the stove.
3. Add in each herb and cover.
4. Allow the mixture to steep for at least 30 minutes.
5. Strain.
6. Add to bathwater or let cool to a comfortable temperature and pour it over the child.
7. After the bath, let the child sip lemon balm tea before bed.

## **SPIRITUAL BATHING TECHNIQUES FOR THE HOME**

1. Add Florida water to your mop water or into a small bucket of water, then wipe down your windows and doors.
2. Sweeping is an ancient technique used in many countries to move negative energy outward toward the door; if you are trying to draw in money or other positive things, sweep toward the center of the room.
3. Burn herbs like eucalyptus, pine, mugwort, lavender, cedar, cypress, or your chosen favorite (I love to find other alternatives to sage) as an incense each morning and/or evening. Do this at least weekly to move the negative energy out of the room. Open doors and windows to let out any negative energy in the house.

## SELF-LOVE SUGAR SCRUB

1 tablespoon dried rose petals  
(to hydrate the skin, increase circulation, and bring love with protection while healing)

1 teaspoon dried calendula petals, destemmed (to soothe skin and energetically help abundance flow in all areas—love, joy, money, and so on)

1 tablespoon lavender buds  
(to soothe skin and bring in more peace and grace)

½ tablespoon dried hyssop  
(purifies the energetic body; soothing to the skin)

½ cup or more of comfrey, plantain leaf, calendula, or herbal rose-infused oil

1 tablespoon St. John's wort oil (soothes, has antibacterial properties to help with acne, aids with wound healing, and hydrates the skin; optional)

½ cup raw fine sugar (hydrating and soothing to the skin)

1 to 2 tablespoons honey  
(antibacterial, soothing, and hydrating; optional)

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1. Place herbs into a blender or coffee grinder to just chop a little (I like to see them in my scrub).
  2. Blend herbs, skin serum oil, St. John's wort oil (if using), sugar, and honey (if using), and mix well.
  3. Place mixture into a labeled clean jar (I also add in a small rose quartz to charge it with the heart-healing love stone).
  4. When applying this scrub to yourself in the shower, say a personal self-love mantra like: "I AM whole, I AM beautiful, I AM abundant."

## SWEET GLOW HONEY LOVE FACIAL SCRUB

1 teaspoon dried plantain  
leaf (soothes skin)

1 teaspoon dried comfrey  
leaf (helps with wounds and  
sprains; leaves skin looking  
revived; helps with eczema,  
psoriasis, burns, and cuts)

1 teaspoon dried rose petals  
(hydrates, soothes, and  
helps with circulation)

1 teaspoon dried lavender  
(soothes skin)

1 teaspoon dried calendula  
(nourishes, soothes, hydrates,  
and brightens skin)

1 teaspoon dried holy basil  
(cooling and anti-inflammatory;  
helps with small wounds and  
acne; rich in vitamin C; helps  
boost skin cell metabolism)

1 tablespoon rice flour  
(for brightening)

2 to 3 tablespoons honey  
(hydrating; has antibacterial  
properties that help with acne)



1. Place all the herbs in a clean coffee grinder and grind until they are powdery fine (I like to use one coffee grinder specifically for herbs).
2. Add the rice flour and place the powdered herbs in a clean bowl.
3. Slowly pour in the honey, mixing it into the powder until the texture becomes smooth.
4. Place the mixture into a small, clean jar and label the jar.
5. Apply a small amount to your skin with a damp finger and smooth it onto your skin in an upward, circular motion.
6. Leave the scrub on for 5 to 10 minutes for a mask.
7. Rinse the scrub off well, apply rose water or toner, and apply facial oil serum.



## SELF-RENEWAL PURIFYING FACIAL MASK

1 tablespoon rolled oats or old-fashioned raw oats	1 tablespoon Bentonite clay (removes impurities, balances oil production, adds minerals such as calcium and magnesium, helps treat acne breakouts, helps soothe poison ivy and rashes)
½ tablespoon sea moss powder (hydrates, remineralizes, soothes, balances oil production, and gives a glow to skin)	1 tablespoon rice flour (gently exfoliates and brightens skin)
1 tablespoon plantain leaf (soothes skin)	1 to 2 tablespoons of rose water, warm water, or warm chamomile tea (hydrates, soothes, and brightens skin)
1 tablespoon dried rose petals (hydrates and soothes skin)	
1 tablespoon dried lavender (soothes skin)	



1. Place the oatmeal and herbs into a high-powered blender or coffee grinder and grind into a fine powder.
2. Place the powder into a clean bowl, add the clay and rice flour, and stir well.
3. To activate the mask, add the rose water, warm water, or warm chamomile tea for an extra-brightening effect.
4. Mix it until smooth and apply it with a mask brush or small, wide paintbrush.
5. Leave it on for 10 to 15 minutes and remove with a warm washcloth (this mask will stain a lighter-color cloth).

## SALVE MAKING MADE EASY

1 ounce beeswax (use shea  
butter for a vegan salve)

10 to 20 drops essential  
oil of choice (optional)

4 ounces herbal-infused  
oil(s) of your choice



1. Wrap the beeswax bar in an old towel. Place it on a sturdy surface like a cutting board and use a hammer to break up the bar into smaller chunks. I prefer the pellets because they are ready to be measured and melt more quickly.
2. Place the beeswax in a double boiler (I sometimes just use a larger pot less than half full of water and place a Pyrex bowl over that to create a double boiler) and slowly warm the beeswax over low heat until it melts. Do not rush the process.
3. Add in your premade herbal-infused oils and stir the mixture over low heat until it is well blended.
4. Remove from the heat.
5. Add the essential oil(s), if using, for extra aroma.
6. Quickly pour the warm mixture into prepared tins, or glass or plastic jars. You can also create fabulous lip balms by purchasing tubes or even smaller containers and putting the mixture in these containers.
7. Let the mixture cool completely; it will become solid.
8. Store in a cool location for 1 to 3 years.

## GRANNY'S ONION COUGH SYRUP

2 to 3 onions, sliced	1 tablespoon wild cherry bark (optional)
¼ to ½ cup raw sugar	1 tablespoon mullein (optional)
1 cinnamon stick (optional)	1 inch fresh ginger, grated or chopped (optional)
1 tablespoon sassafras (optional)	



1. Put everything in a medium pot.
2. Add enough water to cover the ingredients.
3. Put on a lid and bring the mixture to a light boil.
4. Reduce the temperature and simmer on low heat for 30 to 45 minutes.
5. Strain the mixture into a mason jar and store in the refrigerator for up to 5 days.
6. Take 1 to 2 tablespoons 3 to 4 times daily with a prayer for healing.

## ELDERBERRY SYRUP

3 cups water	2 tablespoons dried lemon balm
1½ cups dried or 2 cups fresh elderberries	1 cinnamon stick
½- to 1-inch fresh ginger, grated or roughly chopped (optional)	2-inch Reishi mushroom slice (optional)
2 tablespoons dried nettles (optional)	1 cup raw local honey (or your favorite sweetener)



1. Place the water, elderberries, ginger (if using), nettles (if using), lemon balm, cinnamon stick, and Reishi mushroom slice in a saucepan over medium heat.
2. Bring the mixture to a slight boil, reduce the heat to low, and simmer for 30 minutes.
3. Turn the heat off and allow the mixture to sit for an hour.
4. Use a potato masher to mash the berries to release the juice; strain the mixture through a fine sieve or use a doubled cheesecloth, retaining juice and discarding the pulp.
5. Let the juice cool slightly, add the honey, and stir well.
6. Store the syrup in your refrigerator for up to 6 months; make sure the lid is on tight and that you label the container with the date you made it and what it is.

**Note:** I take 1 to 2 teaspoons daily for illness prevention.

## FIRE CIDER

½ cup grated fresh horseradish

1 to 2 medium onions, sliced

1 to 2 cloves garlic,  
crushed or chopped

¼ teaspoon (or more)  
cayenne pepper

1 jalapeno pepper

1 to 2 lemons, limes, or oranges,  
juiced; reserve the peel

½ cup grated or chopped  
fresh ginger

2 to 3 tablespoons dried  
hibiscus flowers (optional)

1 tablespoon ground turmeric,  
1 inch fresh turmeric, chopped,  
or 2 dried turmeric roots

1 bottle organic raw, unfiltered  
apple cider vinegar

¼ cup honey (or more to taste)



1. Place all the ingredients, except the vinegar and the honey, in a quart jar.
2. Pour in the apple cider vinegar, covering all the ingredients.
3. Cover the jar with a plastic lid, or put parchment paper over the top of the jar, and screw on the metal lid (the paper helps prevent the lid from rusting).
4. Shake well.
5. Store in a dark, cool, and dry space for a month, shaking the jar at least three times a week.
6. When it is ready, strain the ingredients using a doubled cheesecloth or fine strainer, pressing out all the liquid. Add the honey (to taste) and mix well (you can also substitute your favorite sweetener).
7. Take one shot daily.

**Note:** I prefer to cook with it. It is amazing over greens and many other things! I also make my salad dressings with it.

## EASY BONE BROTH

organic beef soup bones	4-inch slice dried Reishi mushroom
4 carrots, chopped	½ teaspoon black or white pepper, or both
3 celery stalks, chopped	½ to 1 teaspoon Tony Chachere's No Salt Seasoning Blend seasoning or your favorite spice blend
2 medium onions, skins on	2 to 3 tablespoons olive oil
2 bay leaves	1 to 2 (32-ounce) containers stock or broth (optional)
1 head garlic	1 tablespoon apple cider vinegar
handful dried nettles	
2 sprigs fresh rosemary	
5 sprigs fresh thyme	

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1. Preheat the oven to 450°F.
  2. On a baking sheet, arrange the beef bones, cut vegetables, garlic, and herbs. Season with the pepper and the seasoning blend; drizzle with a little olive oil; and mix (if you are using leftover rotisserie chicken bones, you do not have to roast those bones; just add them to the liquid).
  3. Roast this mixture for 30 minutes; then gently flip the mixture and roast for 15 to 20 more minutes.
  4. Remove the mixture from the pan and add to a stockpot or pots if you need to make a larger batch. I like to use my Instant Pot; it is quicker and less trouble (see the instructions for making bone broth in the Instant Pot or slow cooker on page 23). If you are using chicken bones, add the bones now.
  5. Cover the mixture with water; I like to add extra flavor, so I add 1 to 2 32-ounce containers of stock and fill the pot the rest of the way with water until the bones are fully submerged.
  6. Add 1 tablespoon of apple cider vinegar to help break the bones down.

## Instructions for the Instant Pot

1. Fill the container to 1 inch below “Max” line.
2. Make sure your sealing ring is in place on the lid. Lock the lid onto the Instant Pot and set the steam release knob to the “sealing” position.
3. Press the “manual” button and set your Instant Pot for high pressure for 120 minutes. (I find it easier to decrease the time because the timer resets at 120 after you decrease to zero.) It will take about 15 to 30 minutes for the Instant Pot to come to full pressure, then the display will show a countdown timer.
4. Once the two hours are up, allow the pressure to release naturally. It will take about 15 to 30 minutes.
5. Strain the broth through a doubled cheesecloth or a strainer and allow to cool. The broth will usually have a layer of fat on the top and will gelatinize when thoroughly cooled. Remove the fat with a spoon and discard (some people love to cook with the fat).

## Instructions for Stovetop

1. Add the broth ingredients to a stockpot and simmer over medium-high heat, then reduce the heat to as low as your stove will go. You want the broth to be just barely bubbling. Cover with the lid slightly ajar and cook for 24 hours for poultry bones and 48 hours for red-meat bones. You can place the whole pot (covered) in the fridge overnight and resume cooking the broth in the morning.
2. Strain the broth when it has finished cooking.
3. Store the broth in mason jars for up to 5 days in your refrigerator. Or divide it into small portions (for easy access) and freeze for up to 6 months.



## **Instructions for the Slow Cooker**

1. Cover the pot with the lid slightly ajar, and cook on low for 24 hours for poultry bones and on low for 48 hours for red meat bones. Due to possible fire hazard, use caution if you leave your Crock-Pot or slow cooker on overnight.

# VEGAN MEDICINAL MUSHROOM BROTH

3 carrots, chopped	handful dried nettles
3 celery stalks, chopped	2 sprigs fresh rosemary
1 large onion, skins on	4 sprigs fresh thyme
up to 1 head of garlic, smashed, with skins on	½ teaspoon black or white pepper (I use both)
olive oil	½ inch fresh turmeric root or ½ teaspoon ground turmeric
2 bay leaves	½ to 1 teaspoon Tony Chachere's No Salt Seasoning Blend seasoning (optional)
1 to 2 (32-ounce) containers vegetable broth or stock (enough to cover all the ingredients)	pinch cayenne (optional)
2 slices dried Reishi mushrooms or a combo of my favorite powerful fungi: Reishi ( <i>Ganoderma lucidum</i> / <i>tsugae</i> ), chaga ( <i>Inotus obliquus</i> ), and turkey tail ( <i>Trametes versicolor</i> )	1 to 2 (3-inch) sticks yellow root (optional)



1. Roast the cut vegetables and garlic, drizzled with olive oil, on a baking pan at 450°F for 30 minutes, turning the mixture halfway through the cooking time.
2. Put the vegetable mixture in a pot and add enough water or stock to cover all vegetables.
3. Add the medicinal mushrooms, herbs, yellow root, and seasonings.
4. Bring the mixture to a boil, cover with a lid, reduce the heat, and simmer for 3 hours.
5. Strain and store the broth in mason jars, or you can divide the broth into small portions and freeze it.
6. Once the broth cools, reheat it as needed.
7. You can also use an Instant Pot. Just set the timer for 1 hour on the “soup” setting and allow it to self vent.

## VEGAN COLLARD GREENS WITH POTLICHER

2 pounds washed and cut collard, mustard, or turnip greens, or a combination	2 to 3 pinches black and/ or white pepper
2 onions, peeled and diced	1 to 2 pinches salt
6 cloves garlic, peeled and finely chopped	2 teaspoons liquid smoke (optional)
3 tablespoons olive oil	3 to 4 cups vegetable stock or medicinal mushroom broth
2 to 3 pinches red pepper flakes	hot sauce (optional)
4 to 5 pinches smoked paprika	dash of fire cider (optional)



1. Wash the collards thoroughly.
2. Roll up the leaves lengthwise and thinly slice them.
3. Sauté the onion and garlic in your stockpot with olive oil until you smell them, and they become translucent. Add the seasonings. (I keep adding seasoning throughout the cooking process until I get the flavor I want.)
4. Add in the sliced greens and cover with the stock or broth.
5. Bring the greens to a slight boil, cover, reduce the heat, and simmer for 1 to 3 hours, or until the greens reach the desired tenderness.
6. Add your favorite hot sauce and a dash of fire cider, if using.
7. Enjoy and make sure you get some of that juice called potlicker for extra medicinal love!

## POKE SALAD A.K.A. SALLET

poke greens (collect greens  
in the spring that are no  
higher than your knee)

3 to 4 slices bacon

1 small onion peeled,  
and sliced or diced

6 cloves garlic, minced

salt and pepper

smoked paprika

hot sauce

fire cider or vinegar (optional)



1. Pick poke when it is small enough to be tender. Parboil in enough water to cover the greens. Drain and rinse thoroughly; repeat this step one to two more times to reduce toxicity and until the greens are tender. Stain out as much water as you can. Doing this greatly reduces the amount of vitamin A in the leaves (this vitamin may be toxic at certain levels. Do not skip this step!)
2. Fry the bacon and save the grease to use later (use olive oil if vegan or vegetarian).
3. Sauté the onion and garlic.
4. Add the poke greens into the oil (with bacon, if using).
5. Add salt, pepper, and smoked paprika.
6. Sauté for 10 minutes and serve with hot sauce, and cider and vinegar, if using.

## GOLDENROD AND NETTLES: NOT EXACTLY YOUR GRANNY'S CORNBREAD

½ cup butter, melted	1 cup self-rising flour
2 large eggs	¼ cup fresh or dried nettles or small handful (optional)
1 cup buttermilk	¼ cup dry or ½ cup fresh goldenrod (if fresh, well chopped; remove stems, just use leaf and flowers; optional)
⅔ cup white sugar, maple syrup, or raw sugar	
1 cup cornmeal	

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1. Preheat the oven to 400°F and then add butter to a cast iron skillet; place in the oven for approximately 5 minutes until the butter is melted, then remove the skillet from the oven.
  2. While the skillet is heating, combine the eggs and buttermilk (or the vegan substitutes) in a bowl until blended.
  3. In a separate bowl, whisk together the sugar, cornmeal, and flour.
  4. Combine the dry and wet ingredients, then add the nettles and goldenrod. Pour in the hot butter that you heated in the skillet.
  5. Stir all the ingredients until well blended and few lumps remain.
  6. Coat your skillet with the butter remaining in the skillet or spray on cooking spray (this ensures that the cornbread will not stick to the skillet after baking). Then add the cornmeal batter to the pan.
  7. Bake in the preheated oven for 30 to 45 minutes, or until a toothpick inserted in the center of the cornbread comes out clean.
  8. Remove the skillet from the oven and allow the cornbread to cool for about 15 minutes and prepare for the grand flip.
  9. Loosen the cornbread around the sides in the skillet with a butter knife.
  10. Place a plate on top of the skillet and, holding the plate gently, turn over the skillet and you have a piece of crispy heaven on a plate!

## FRIED DANDELION FLOWER FRITTERS

2 cups dandelion flowers  
removing the green stem

1 cup all-purpose flour

1 cup fine corn meal

salt and pepper, to taste

¼ cup dried nettles or ½

cup fresh nettles leaves

finely chopped (optional)

¼ teaspoon vitex (optional)

½ to 1 tablespoon creole  
seasoning (optional)

diced, deseeded jalapeno  
pepper, to taste (optional)

¼ cup milk or vegan milk

1 egg

½ cup oil, or enough to  
coat 1 inch of pan



1. Start with harvesting your dandelion blossoms from an area that has not been sprayed with pesticides. Make sure you remove the stem and green parts, which give a bitter taste.
2. Gently rinse off your flowers under cool water and pat them dry with paper towels. Set them aside while you make the batter. You can save the dandelion leaves to sauté them or you can make a quick salad with them as a side dish. If you have an abundance of dandelions, you can also make a beautiful cordial by packing the flowers into a mason jar, adding sliced lemons and sugar, and covering the mixture with vodka or gin and letting it sit for 4 to 6 weeks.
3. In a medium bowl, combine 1 cup of all-purpose flour, 1 cup of fine cornmeal, salt to taste, and black pepper to taste. No one likes a boring batter, so get creative! You can add fresh herbs from your garden or dried herbs like oregano, parsley, basil, vitex, and nettles, or even add my creole seasoning (see page 36).
4. For an extra kick, add in jalapeno pepper (optional).
5. Add ¼ cup of milk to make a creamy, wet batter, and mix well.
6. Crack and whisk in 1 large egg (I add in a few dashes of hot sauce).

7. Fold in 2 cups of the dandelion flowers into the batter mixture.
8. Add 1 inch of oil to a hot cast iron skillet.
9. Scoop a tablespoon of the mixture. Working in small batches and making sure not to put too many or crowd the pan, fry the fritters in 1 inch of oil until crispy and golden brown. This takes about 5 minutes. Remove the fritters with a slotted spoon and place the deep-fried dandelion fritter onto a plate lined with paper towels to remove the excess oil.
10. Serve with an aioli (mix mayonnaise, hot sauce,  $\frac{1}{4}$  teaspoon horseradish, 3 crushed or minced garlic cloves, peeled and minced, lemon juice, salt, and pepper).

## GRANNY'S BISCUITS AND GRAVY, VEGAN VERSION

1 tablespoon apple cider vinegar

1 cup nondairy milk

2 cups unbleached all-purpose flour, plus more for dusting

1 tablespoon baking powder

½ teaspoon baking soda

¾ teaspoon sea salt

4 tablespoons cold nondairy, unsalted butter, plus extra for brushing to tops of the biscuits

~~~~~

1. Preheat the oven to 450°F and add apple cider vinegar to nondairy milk to make “vegan buttermilk.” Set aside.

2. In a large mixing bowl, whisk together the dry ingredients.

3. Add the cold butter and use your finger as a pastry cutter, or two forks, to combine the butter and dry ingredients until only small pieces remain and the mixture looks like sand. Work quickly so the butter does not get too warm.

4. Make a well in the dry ingredients and, using a wooden spoon, stir gently while pouring in the vegan “buttermilk,” ¼ cup at a time. You may not need all of it. Stir the mixture until just combined and stop when the mixture resembles a slightly tacky but moldable dough.

5. Turn the dough onto a lightly floured surface, dust the top with a bit of flour, and then very gently turn the dough over on itself 5 to 6 times, lightly kneading it. Add more flour, as needed, to prevent sticking.

6. Form the dough into a 1-inch-thick disk, handling it as little as possible.

7. Use a cookie cutter or a similarly shaped object with sharp edges (such as a cocktail shaker or a small wide-mouth mason jar) and push straight down through the dough, then twist slightly. Gently reform the dough and cut out several more biscuits—you should have 7 to 8 biscuits. Grease a baking sheet with butter or line it with parchment paper; place the biscuits in two rows, making sure they just touch—this will help them rise uniformly.



8. Melt the remaining nondairy butter and brush the tops of the biscuits with it (tip: you can gently press a small divot into the center of each biscuit by using two fingers). This will also help them rise evenly, so the middle will not form a dome.

9. Bake for 10 to 15 minutes, or until the biscuits are fluffy and slightly golden brown. Serve immediately.

## HERBED VEGAN SAUSAGE GRAVY

|                                                                                       |                                                                        |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| olive oil                                                                             | salt and pepper, to taste                                              |
| vegan sausage of choice,<br>crumbled (can substitute sautéed<br>mushrooms and onions) | ½ teaspoon poultry seasoning                                           |
| 3 tablespoons vegan butter                                                            | 4 to 5 leaves fresh (chopped<br>fine) or ½ teaspoon dried sage         |
| 4 tablespoons chickpea,<br>rice, or all-purpose flour                                 | 2 pinches vitex powder (optional)                                      |
|                                                                                       | 3 cups vegan milk of choice (may<br>need more if mixture is too thick) |



1. Add the oil to the pan and fry the crumbled sausage; remove the sausage from the pan and put it aside.
2. Add the butter and 1 tablespoon of the olive oil to the pan.
3. Add the flour and blend together with the seasonings to make the roux.
4. Slowly pour in the milk, a little at a time, while whisking the mixture vigorously (you do not want lumpy gravy).
5. Keep whisking until the roux begins to boil slightly and thickens; then add the sausage.
6. Reduce heat to a simmer and let the roux thicken.

## LEMON BALM DROP BISCUITS

|                                                         |                                                                                  |
|---------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1 cup vegan milk                                        | 2 pinches cinnamon                                                               |
| 1 cup lemon balm, tightly packed (1.5 ounces by weight) | 2 tablespoons sugar (can add more depending on how sweet you want your biscuits) |
| 2 cups unbleached, all-purpose flour                    | 1 pinch American ginseng (optional)                                              |
| 1 tablespoon baking powder                              | 1/3 cup salted, cold vegan butter (I prefer Miyoko's)                            |
| 2 pinches ginger                                        |                                                                                  |

### Key Lime Honey Butter

|                                    |                                                    |
|------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------|
| 2 tablespoons salted vegan butter  | zest of 2 key limes or half a lime's worth of zest |
| 1/2 teaspoon honey (omit if vegan) | 2 droppers mimosa elixir (optional)                |

- 
1. Preheat the oven to 425°F. Line a baking sheet with parchment paper or a silicone baking mat.
  2. In a blender, combine the milk and lemon balm. Puree. Set aside.
  3. In a large bowl, whisk together the flour, baking powder, ginger, cinnamon, sugar, and ginseng, if using.
  4. Add the cold butter to the flour mixture and, using a pastry blender or fingers, mix together until the mixture resembles coarse cornmeal.
  5. Pour in the milk mixture and stir together until well combined.
  6. Drop the batter by large tablespoonfuls onto a baking sheet, about 3 inches apart.
  7. Bake in a preheated oven for 12 to 15 minutes or until lightly browned.
  8. To make the honey butter: While your biscuits are baking, add the vegan butter, honey, mimosa elixir, and lime zest into a small bowl. Whip until mixed. Then smother the biscuits in that honey butter.

## LUCRETIA'S KICKIN' CREOLE SEASONING

I like my seasoning spicy, but you can omit the cayenne or add it to taste. Use dried or fresh thyme or oregano (either spicy or regular) from your garden.

1 part = 1 tablespoon

|                                                 |                       |
|-------------------------------------------------|-----------------------|
| 2 parts smoked paprika                          | 1 part onion powder   |
| 2 parts regular paprika                         | ½ part fresh oregano  |
| ½ part black pepper                             | ½ part fresh thyme    |
| ½ part white pepper                             | ¼ part nettles powder |
| 2 to 3 heavy pinches cayenne                    | ¼ part vitex powder   |
| 2 parts roasted and/or<br>regular garlic powder |                       |



1. Put all the ingredients into a blender or your NutriBullet and pulse until well blended.
2. Add salt as needed in your cooking.
  - ✿ I sometimes add a handful of finely chopped kale, dandelion, or other greens during the cooking.
3. Complete your grits experience and top with sautéed shrimp, crumbled vegetarian sausage, cheese, or sautéed greens, or create a grits bowl bar!

## GRITS WITH GREENS

|                               |                                     |
|-------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| 1 cup white or yellow grits   | ½ cup finely chopped kale,          |
| 4 cups water                  | fresh nettles, dandelion greens,    |
| 1½ teaspoons salt and         | moringa, and/or collard greens      |
| pepper, or to taste           | (or ¼ cup dried nettles); I love to |
| 4 tablespoons unsalted butter | use a combination of greens.        |



1. Combine the grits, water, salt, pepper, and 4 tablespoons of butter in a large saucepan and bring to a boil.
2. Reduce the heat to low, cover the pan, and simmer, stirring occasionally, until the mixture is tender, about 30 minutes. If the grits become too thick, add more water or your favorite milk for a creamier texture.
3. Complete your grits experience and top with sautéed shrimp, crumbled vegetarian sausage, cheese, or sautéed greens, or create a grits bowl bar!

## VEGAN OKRA STEW

2 tablespoons olive or palm oil  
(you can use your herbal-infused  
oil mentioned in Chapter 5)

1 medium onion, peeled,  
diced, and sautéed

1 green or red pepper, seeded,  
diced, and sautéed

1 to 2 cups thinly sliced fresh  
collard greens, moringa leaves,  
spinach, or swiss chard

1 to 2 pinches cayenne,  
for extra heat

salt and pepper, to taste

1 bay leaf

4 to 6 cloves garlic,  
peeled and minced

2 (14.5-ounce) cans fire-  
roasted diced tomatoes

1 (6-ounce) can tomato paste

½ pound okra, rinsed and sliced in  
half or left whole with ends cut

1 small 10-ounce bag frozen corn

1 small bag frozen or 1 (15.5-ounce)  
can black-eyed peas, drained

2 tablespoons creole  
seasoning (see page 124)

handful chopped fresh or  
dried nettles, destemmed

1 container vegetable,  
chicken, or beef stock



1. In a medium pot, add the oil, onion, pepper, collards, and garlic, and sauté until softened.
2. Add the tomatoes, tomato paste, okra, corn, and black-eyed peas and stir the mixture.
3. Add the spices and nettles, and stir the mixture, adding more spices to taste.
4. Add stock or broth and stir until mixed; cover the pot and reduce the heat to a simmer and cook for 45 minutes.
5. Serve alone, over rice, with cornbread, or with fufu (doughlike fufu is made from boiled and pounded starchy foods like plantains, cassava, and yams).

## FIRE CIDER SWEET HEAT PICKLES

Prepare fire cider with the recipe on page 21.

|                                                                             |                                             |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------|
| 4 cups thickly sliced<br>pickling cucumbers (8 to<br>10 pickling cucumbers) | $\frac{3}{4}$ cup granulated sugar          |
| 1 cup peeled and sliced<br>onion (about 1 large)                            | 4 tablespoons pickling spice                |
| 2 tablespoons pickling salt                                                 | $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon red pepper flakes    |
| 1 cup apple cider vinegar<br>or fire cider                                  | 1 cayenne pepper, chopped<br>for extra heat |
|                                                                             | love as the final ingredient                |

- 
1. Wash 2 pint-size jars or a large pot for 15 minutes to sanitize, or use your dishwasher to skip this step. Combine the sliced cucumbers, onion, and pickling salt in a colander set in a large bowl. Refrigerate for 1 hour to remove excess liquid. Rinse the vegetables well and discard the liquid.
  2. Combine the vinegar or fire cider and sugar in a large pot. Heat over medium heat until the sugar is dissolved. Add the pickling spice, red pepper flakes, and chopped cayenne pepper. Increase the heat to high and bring the brine to a boil.
  3. Add the drained vegetables and stir to combine. Cook for 5 minutes or until all the vegetables in the brine are fully heated through. Using tongs, fill the sterilized jars with the vegetables. Slowly pour the hot brine over the vegetables in each jar, leaving  $\frac{1}{2}$  inch headspace.
  4. Gently tap the jars on a towel-lined countertop to help loosen any bubbles before using a wooden chopstick to dislodge any remaining bubbles. Check the headspace again and add more brine if necessary.
  5. Wipe the rims, apply the lids and rings, and process in a hot-water bath for 10 minutes.
  6. Let these pickles cure on the counter for 48 hours to 14 days before eating. Remember to label the jars with the date!

## SPICED PEACH PIE JAM WITH SELF-HEAL HERBAL INFUSION

**Yield:** About 6 half-pint jars

3¾ cups chopped peaches  
(about 3 pounds)

¼ cup lemon juice

½ teaspoon cinnamon

¼ teaspoon nutmeg

1 teaspoon vanilla extract

1 package powdered pectin  
(I like Sure-Jell brand)

5 cups sugar

½ cup Self-Heal herbal  
infusion (optional)



1. Sterilize canning jars and prepare two-piece canning lids according to the manufacturer's directions.
2. To prepare fruit: Sort and wash fully ripe peaches. Remove the stems, skins, and pits. Crush the peaches.
3. A tip about processing peaches is to slice an "X" onto the top of each peach and dip them into boiling water. Let them sit for 3 minutes and carefully remove them from the water; let them cool slightly, making sure not to burn yourself; skins should slide off easily.
4. To make the jam: Measure chopped peaches into a heavy-bottomed pot. Add the lemon juice, spices, vanilla, Self-Heal herbal infusion, and pectin; stir well. Place on high heat and, stirring constantly; bring quickly to a full boil with bubbles over the entire surface. Add the sugar, continue stirring, and heat again to full boil. Boil hard for 1 minute, stirring constantly. Remove from the heat and skim off the foam.
5. Put the hot jam immediately into hot, sterile jars, leaving ¼-inch head-space. Wipe the rims of the jars with a dampened, clean paper towel; adjust the 2-piece metal canning lids. Process in a boiling water canner pot for 10 to 15 minutes (see note below for times according to jar size).



## SAVORY PEACH PRESERVES WITH DETOXIFYING CHAI SPICE

5 large peaches  
½ cup rice wine vinegar  
or apple cider vinegar

½ cup sugar (coconut, date,  
honey, or any sweetener  
alternative will do)  
your favorite chai tea blend

---

If you don't have chai tea, you can use these herbs and spices:

1 teaspoon coriander seed  
1 teaspoon black peppercorn  
3 to 4 cardamom pods  
1 teaspoon clove  
3 bay leaves  
1 tablespoon nettle

1 (3-inch) dried or fresh  
dandelion root, chopped fine  
cinnamon  
1 to 2 red chiles (pinch of  
cayenne or red pepper flakes,  
to taste; you can omit if  
you do not like the heat)

- 
1. Roughly chop the peaches. Put them in a pot.
  2. Add in the remaining ingredients, cover the pot, and cook on medium-high heat for 5 to 7 minutes until the peaches soften; stir the mixture often.
  3. Lower heat to a simmer and cook for 25 minutes. Watch it so it does not burn.
  4. Ladle into jars; it will keep in the fridge for 1 month.

# LOVE JAM

3 cups freshly picked violet  
flowers, loosely packed (optional)

handful dried red rose petals

handful tulsi (holy basil)

½ handful lemon balm

3 cups muscadine juice (see  
recipe on page 137) or store-  
bought concord grape juice

3 cups apple juice

3 cups sugar (I prefer raw  
sugar or turbinado sugar)

1 pink box low-sugar pectin



1. Place the violets, rose petals, tulsi, and lemon balm into a quart mason jar.
2. Pour the muscadine juice into the herbal mixture and let it sit for 1 to 3 hours to infuse (longer time equals more flavor).
3. Add the apple juice (which has a high level of pectin and assists in jelling when you use less sugar).
4. Check exact measurements for final liquid total: 6 cups total of juices and infusion.
5. Add the liquid into heavy-bottomed pot.
6. Add the sugar to the mixture and bring it to a slight boil, melting all the sugar.
7. Add the pectin (if using regular pectin instead of the lower-sugar version, follow the recipe exactly as listed on the box in order to use the correct amount of sugar).
8. Turn up the heat until you get a steady boil, even when you stir the mixture.
9. Stir constantly until the magical process of jelling occurs (the mixture will thicken and coat the back of the spoon when done).
10. I like to stir in a few dried crushed rose petals at the end.
11. Ladle the jelly into jars, leaving ½ inch headspace.

12. Wipe the glass jars clean and then attach the metal lids.
13. Gently place the jars into a large pot of boiling water, one jar at a time, and make sure the water completely covers them; let them sit for 10 minutes.
14. Have on hand a folded towel or solid surface, like a cutting board on which to cool the jars. You should start to hear a light “ping” or “pop”—these sounds let you know that the jars have sealed properly. I get excited when I hear those sounds!

## MUSCADINE JUICE

3 cups water or enough  
to cover the grapes

2 pounds muscadine grapes



1. Boil the grapes until you see them break down, approximately 30 minutes, mashing them occasionally with a potato masher.
2. Strain the mixture by allowing it to sit in a fine sieve over a heat-proof bowl and letting gravity drain the liquid out of the grapes; then strain the mixture in a cheesecloth and carefully pour the hot grape juice in a mason jar.

**Note:** You can skip this step of making your own juice and instead buy a 64-ounce container of Concord grape juice (use 3 cups), or you can omit the apple juice and use 6 cups of the grape juice.

Do you want to learn more about canning? Enjoy this resource from the National Center for Home Food Preservation, <https://nchfp.uga.edu>.

## FAMILY BAIN

1 cup fresh or dried  
bitter melon vine

½ cup fresh or dried parsley

1 teaspoon salt

1 cup fresh or dried holy basil



1. Start by mixing the dry ingredients together in the large bowl. Add the mixture to the jars and label them with their ingredients and the date crafted. Add a couple of tablespoons to each bath whenever you feel called.

2. You can do this bath at any time. The bath is to cleanse your energy and your spirit.