

Welcome to the DIY Herbalism series by Lauren Simko of Arete Herbs and Paula Billig of Paula's Wellness!

We are looking forward to meeting all of you at our first class. Now for some introductions:

You will see Lauren and sometimes her partner Adam flit in and out of class in their role as organizer and documentarian of some of our lessons and talks. Lauren will also serve as your administrative contact person, for payment issues and those sorts of questions. She is available at lauren@areteherbs.com

Paula will provide your regularly scheduled programming each month. Contact her with concerns about attendance, homework, and the like. She is available at info@paulaswellness.com

We want to answer your most pressing FAQs about what to expect, bring, do, and such:

How to Prepare

In this Pre-Class Prep email, you will see a page describing Your First Herbal Tea experiment. Do this!

Also attached is a list of helpful things to bring each month titled *What to Bring to Class*. Many of these can stay in your car for "just-in-case" situations, some will be used monthly, and don't forget snacks!

On day 1 you will get a packet of handouts, which you'll be adding to throughout the months. Please bring a 3 hole binder to put them in, and you may also want ruled or blank note paper as well, or a separate notebook. Bring pens/highlighters/markers/whatever you like to use when taking notes.

What to Wear

Dress for comfort and adaptability. We'll be moving about and working on projects in each class, as well as spending time outside and taking walks, so bring appropriate items like boots, hat, bug and tick repellent, long pants if you usually wear shorts, and the like.

Arrival and Parking

The address of the Arete Barn is: 17 Buffington Street, Kennett Square PA 19348

We'll be outside helping you park when you arrive.

Please arrive early to get settled and prepared. Class begins promptly at 9am or 2pm.

Required Text

DIY Herbalism has one required book, and several recommended ones. When possible, I've included the website to the author's direct sales page. Purchasing directly from the author gives them the maximum proceeds from each sale, helping them to continue their work. Paula has also listed all these books on her website: paulaswellness.com/library

Required Text: Body Into Balance by Maria Noel Groves

Maria has given us an amazing, body-centered guide to understanding how we work and how the herbs work with us. It's thorough, clear, beautiful, and easy to understand. Maria's website is wintergreenbotanicals.com and I suggest you subscribe to her monthly newsletter, full of valuable information, too.

Optional Further Reading

We will refer to these books often in class, but they are not required for your learning. They do, however, make up a very valuable beginning library for the herbally curious.

Rosemary Gladstar's Herbal Recipes for Vibrant Health by Rosemary Gladstar

Rosemary is one of the grandmothers of today's American Herbalism, helping to revive interest and knowledge since she was a girl in the 1960's. Several of our recipes were inspired from this book, and the simple, encouraging language will help you continue to experiment on your own. Her personal sales site is at scienceandartofherbalism.com

The Anatomy Coloring Book by Kapit and Elson

You will not have anatomy homework as such, so breathe easy. But understanding our structure and being able to identify and locate major physical landmarks will aid you in many more ways than just this class. Plus, it's coloring. This book is strongly recommended for the DIY Program.

Foraging and Feasting- A Field Guide and Wild Food Cookbook by Dina Falconi

An amazing, full color guide to all our most common weeds plus several less common ones. Plant drawings detail seasonal changes and are the most clear images I've seen in a field guide. Available at botanicalartspress.com

The Earthwise Herbal: A Complete Guide to Old World Medicinal Plants and A Complete Guide to New World Plants by Matthew Wood

These are 2 of those herbal books where you'll find interesting and useful information each time you look up a query in the index, but you'll find extraordinary and staggering things by starting at page 1 and just reading. His plant usages are helpful for beginners, and as you gain practice and expertise you will continue to discover new and startling revelations each time you browse through. A staple for your herbal library.

Additional Reading

These are further library staples to keep an eye out for as you (if you) begin collecting herb books.

Anything by:

Rosemary Gladstar

Jeanne Rose

Aviva Romm

Deb Soule

Adaptogens by David Winston

The Green Pharmacy by Jim Duke

Green Pharmacy– The History and Evolution of Western Herbal Medicine by Barbara Griggs

Organic Body Care Recipes by Stephanie Tourles

The Naturally Clean Home by Karyn Siegel-Maier

Making Plant Medicine by Richo Chech

Herbal Medicine Maker's Handbook by James Green

The Complete Woman's Herbal by Anne McIntyre

What to Bring to Class

Regular Use/Monthly Items

Your notes and handouts

Notebook and pens, etc

Homework: Herb of the Month experiment notes (for our first class, bring Your First Herbal Tea notes)

Drinking jar or mug

Personal medications, as needed

Extra jars or containers if you want to take home extras, leftover tea, etc

Occasional Kitchen Items

Some tools will be available in class, but to ease sharing you are welcome to bring your own. Each month you'll get an email detailing any specific items we'll be using, so you DON'T need to bring these every time. In general, you'll use:

- Mortar and pestle
- Sharp Chef's knife
- Pruning or harvesting shears
- Personal cutting board
- Extra jars with lids or other containers, for taking leftovers home if you wish
- Mason jars- these will always be supplied, although you are welcome to use any jars you have at home instead
 - Quarter-pint, half-pint, pint, and quart jars will be used in our projects
 - And you might want extra jars to bring home any leftovers
- Metal funnel, small
- Metal sieve, small
- Cheesecloth or other straining linens
- Dry and wet cup measures
- Spoon measures

Your First Herbal Tea

Have you ever dropped a tea bag of something other than black or green tea in hot water? Congratulations, you've made herbal tea! (Technically not "tea" exactly, but we'll get to that later.)

Now it's time to make tea like an herbalist.

Instructions

Step 1:

- Visit a grocery store's herbal tea aisle, or another shop with an herbal tea selection
- Select a tea with ONE ingredient- no blends, preferably organic
- Choose one that looks interesting. Maybe you've had it before, maybe you haven't!
- This will probably be in a tea bag but loose tea is fine if you know how to make it

Step 2:

- Make a cup of tea and drink it
- Mug + dried plant + hot water = tea!
- Make notes (see below)

Step 3:

- Experiment and come up with at least 2-4 other ways to make or use the tea or tea bag, besides just dropping it in a mug of hot water and drinking
- Make notes (see below)

Assignment:

EACH TIME you do an experiment, including the first time (steps 1 and 2), make notes. Record what you did and what you smell, see, taste, feel. What are your expectations, and actual experience? Did you have any thoughts, memories, wishes, or reflections?

Don't judge these experiences- no analyzing, assessing, or interpreting. Just jot down whatever comes into your head.

Bring your notes to our first class, along with your tea. (Or just the package, if you finish it.)