



The **PANTRY**  
**APOTHECARY**



*A simple collection of everyday recipes*

Skincare • Handmade Soap • Therapeutics



*For Annakiss,  
my little partner in potions*



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I'm most certainly no environmental activist; though I *am* concerned about environmental toxicity and the stuff of which I have even a smidgen of understanding and a reasonable hope of affecting change. I've realized that, if I'm serious about regaining my health and vitality, I can't continue to ignore the insidious assault on my person by way of common personal-care items—antiperspirants, body wash, shampoo, toothpaste, lotions and such—allowing various degree of toxins direct route to blood stream and organs; essentially *inviting* them in. And don't even get me started on the cold and flu remedies aging on the shelf or the hoard of home-cleaning products cluttering the space underneath my kitchen sink.

So, I've found a better way. Several, in fact.

Firstly, I did a little homework to educate myself on what those extensive and utterly ũn'prə-noun'sə-bəl words on the ingredient lists are and precisely what negative effects come part and parcel. One way I've found to do this is with the [EWG Skin Deep® Cosmetics Database](#).

Secondly, I found that natural products can be purchased from the makers—just visit a farmers' market or connect on the internet through, say, Etsy. Also, many quality products are available these days both online and in specialty shops and health food stores, if we'll seek them out.

And finally, I decided to DIY my own skin care products, wellness remedies, and even a few home cleaning products. Because it's fun! Because I find it more fun than shopping, in fact. Because I like knowing that if my grandkid takes a bite out of my deodorant, I won't be dialing 911 or making a trip to the ER.

Seriously, though. I feel good about being able to make all this stuff myself. And yes, it's fun, into the bargain!

My main motivation in creating this document, however, is precisely that—the creating! And my second motivation has everything to do with paring my collection of recipes down to the ones I actually use and sorting them into some semblance of order.

That said, I do hope that *someone* (that's YOU, if you're still with me thus far) will be inspired, make a plan, and affect something in the way of your own healthy changes.

And have some fun, while you're at it!

♡ Ruth

*PS. Throughout this document, I've inserted links to the amazing people I've been following and learning from.*

*As the original creators of the recipes, they provide far more detailed instructions and knowledge on their websites than I include here.*

*Do have a look!*

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# Moisturizers

## LOTION BARS

*Pop these in a baggie or small tin and carry 'em in the car, purse, pocket . . .*

*Original recipe is from [NoFussNatural.com](http://NoFussNatural.com)*

- 3 oz. beeswax
- 2.4 oz. cocoa butter
- 3 oz. coconut oil
- 0.5 oz. (1 Tbsp) liquid oil (olive, avocado, or any liquid or herb-infused oil of choice, really)
- 20 drops peppermint essential oil (optional)

Gently heat the oils, just to melt. Stir in essential oils, if using. Pour into molds (a silicone muffin pan works great) and let them set.

To use, simply allow the warmth of your hands to soften the bar.

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Making lip balm is super easy! Gently melt the oils, butters, and beeswax in a double-boiler (or similar apparatus), stir in essential oils, and pour into small pots or lip balm tubes. Voilà!

## COCOA-MINT LIP BALM

*Original recipe is from [NoFussNatural.com](http://NoFussNatural.com)*

- 1 oz. coconut oil
- 1 oz. beeswax
- 1 oz. cocoa butter\*
- 1/4 tsp peppermint essential oil

\*using 1/2 oz. cocoa butter and 1/2 oz. shea butter will give a slightly softer product.

## FACE & BODY MOISTURIZER

*My own formula—A rich and non-greasy hydration for mature skin*

- 2 oz. rose hydrosol
- 2 oz. aloe vera
- 0.15 oz. vegetable glycerine
- 1/2 tsp hyaluronic acid powder
- 1/2 tsp ascorbic acid powder
  
- 0.35 oz. emulsifying wax
- 0.25 oz. jojoba oil
- 0.5 oz. rosehip seed oil
  
- 4 drops vitamin E oil
- 6 drops geranium essential oil (optional, but beneficial)
- 0.15 oz. Leucidal® liquid SF (preservative)

Create a double-boiler with 2 pint-size mason jars and a pot that's big enough to hold them both at the same time. Add water to the pot.

In one jar, combine the hydrosol, aloe vera, and glycerine. Heat gently to 100°F, then dissolve the hyaluronic acid and ascorbic acid powders in this, using a tiny whisk or a fork to completely incorporate the powder.

In the second jar, heat the emulsifying wax, jojoba oil, and rosehip seed oil till the wax is melted and the contents reaches 100°F.

With both mixtures at 100°F (or within 10 degrees of each other), slowly add the water mixture to the oil mixture while whisking to emulsify. Give it a brief whisk at 5-minute intervals, while it cools to room temperature.

Add the vitamin E, essential oil, and preservative; combine thoroughly. Transfer to a pump or squeeze bottle, to avoid contaminating product with your fingers. Makes about 4 ounces.

Apply as needed to face, neck, décolletage—just everywhere!



## FACIAL SERUM

*As an extra-hydrating boost for mature skin, gently work a small amount of serum into face and neck, prior to moisturizing. Use morning, nighttime, or both.*

- 1/2 Tbsp rosehip seed oil
- 1 1/2 tsp hemp seed oil
- 3 drops vitamin E oil
- 3 drops essential oil (optional)

Combine all ingredients in a small pump or dropper bottle.

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## SOOTHING COFFEE EYE BALM

- 1 Tbsp coffee-infused oil
- 1/2 Tbsp rosehip seed oil
- 1 tsp shea butter
- 1/2 Tbsp beeswax pastilles

Melt everything in a double-boiler or similar apparatus. Stir to incorporate. Pour the liquid into tiny glass jars and allow to cool and set.

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## MAKING COFFEE-INFUSED OIL

*This oil is perfect for eye balms, body scrubs, body butters, lip balms, and more. The original recipe is from [NoFussNatural.com](http://NoFussNatural.com)*

- 3 Tbsp fresh coarsely-ground coffee
- 8 oz. sweet almond oil

Combine coffee grounds and oil in a pint jar with a lid, allowing it to infuse for 2 to 4 weeks. For a quick infusion, use the double-boiler method and heat the oil/coffee grounds (don't boil!) for 2 to 4 hours. Strain through a coffee filter.

## FACIAL TONER (PUTTIN' ON THE SPRITZ!)

*A good toner goes a long way to cleanse, soften, and moisturize the skin. A really good toner (like this one!), goes the extra mile.*

- 4 oz. pure witch hazel & aloe toner (alcohol free)
- 1/4 tsp hyaluronic acid powder
- 1/4 tsp ascorbic acid powder (vitamin C)

Combine everything in a spritz bottle; shake, to dissolve the powders. Spritz liberally on clean face and neck (or apply using a cotton pad), then allow to dry before applying moisturizer (you may find this toner moisturizing enough all on its own!)

Hyaluronic acid has many benefits for the skin, but in this application, it hydrates by drawing moisture from the air. The ascorbic acid, a powerful antioxidant, has about a gazillion benefits, and not least is protecting and even repairing sun-damaged skin. Don't take chances—take vitamin C!

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## WHIPPED BODY BUTTER

*Original recipe is from [mommypotamus.com](http://mommypotamus.com)*

- 1 cup coconut oil
- 1/4 cup cocoa butter
- 1/4 cup shea butter
- 2 tsp arrowroot powder (or tapioca starch)
- 1 tsp vitamin E oil
- Up to 50 drops essential oil (optional, but I think frankincense is lovely!)

Using a double boiler or similar apparatus, heat oils gently until everything is liquid. Cool in the fridge, so it firms up a bit—just enough to hold a thumb print. Add the arrowroot powder, vitamin E oil, and essential oil.

Use an electric mixer to whip it; it should turn white and fluffy and smell amazing! Transfer to an airtight container and store away from any heat source, to maintain texture.

# Handmade Soaps

I love handmade soap—and I love how available it is to buy locally. So, I surprised myself when, at the close of 2020, I made my first batch of cold-process. The year had been one of epic progress in this wellness journey, and it seemed only right that I should finish with a project of some magnitude.

While I discovered countless online tutorials on both method and art of cold-process soapmaking, [SoapQueen.com](http://SoapQueen.com) is my go-to. And, since I really need only a few simple recipes, I am able to create my own formulas, using [Brambleberry's Lye Calculator](#). Learn more, [here!](#)

## ROSE FACIAL SOAP

- 6.81 oz. coconut oil
  - 10.22 oz. olive oil
  - 4.26 oz. sweet almond oil
  - 1.7 oz. rosehip seed oil
  - 3.15 oz. sodium hydroxide (lye)
  - 7.04 oz. distilled water
- Add: 1/2 Tbsp rose powder  
scent: 1.0 oz. geranium essential oil

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## KITCHEN HAND SOAP

- 12.0 oz. coconut oil
  - 8.0 oz. olive oil
  - 5.0 oz. grapeseed oil
  - 3.66 oz. sodium hydroxide (lye)
  - 8.19 oz. distilled water
- Add: 1/2 Tbsp dry, finely ground coffee  
Scent: 1.0 oz. lemongrass and/or ginger essential oil

## LAVENDER HAND & BATH SOAP

- 12.0 oz. coconut oil
  - 8.0 oz. olive oil
  - 5.0 oz. grapeseed oil
  - 3.66 oz. sodium hydroxide (lye)
  - 8.19 oz. distilled water
- add: Up to 1 oz. lavender powder.  
scent: 1.0 oz. lavender essential oil
- 

## SHAMPOO & SHOWER SOAP

- 12.79 oz. coconut oil
  - 6.39 oz. rosemary infused olive oil
  - 0.82 oz. castor oil
  - 3.1 oz. sodium hydroxide (lye)
  - 6.93 oz. distilled water
- scent: 0.25 oz. rosemary essential oil  
0.25 oz. spearmint essential oil
- colour: up to 1 oz. calendula powder
- 

## COCONUT SHAMPOO SOAP

- 24 oz. coconut oil
  - 3.84 oz. sodium hydroxide (lye)
  - 8.6 oz. distilled water
- scent: 0.5 oz. peppermint essential oil



## BASIC INSTRUCTIONS FOR COLD-PROCESS SOAP MAKING

*Note that these instructions are, indeed, basic. They assume that the science and process of soapmaking have been learned previous.*

- Put on caution, long sleeves, safety goggles, and protective gloves.
- Use a kitchen scale to weigh ingredients.
- Heat/melt oils slowly, in a stainless-steel pot—to 115°F
- In a dedicated (as in, don't use it for food again, ever) stainless-steel pot, slowly and carefully add the lye powder\* to room-temperature distilled\*\* water. This mixture will become super hot very quickly and the fumes are terrible, so open the windows, set the pot in the sink, and crouch down below the counter level while gently stirring. Stir until the lye is completely dissolved. Cool to 115°F.
- When oils and water are both at 115°F (or the temperature indicated in a recipe), slowly add the lye/water\*\*\* to the oils. Then use an immersion blender, till trace—a pudding-like texture—is achieved.
- Add essential oils, natural colour, herbs, or exfoliants at this stage.
- Pour into molds, wrap in a large towel, and let set in a warm place for 48 hours.
- Unmold the soap, slice as desired, and cure in a single layer on a wire rack in a cool, dark place, for a full month. The waiting is really the most difficult part of the entire process!
- Buff with a cotton cloth and wrap for storage or to share with friends.

\*Always add the lye to the water—not the other way around!

\*\*Well water is fine, provided no chlorine or other chemicals have been added.

\*\*\*Always add the lye/water mixture to the oils—in that order!

## BASIC INSTRUCTIONS FOR HOT-PROCESS SOAP MAKING

The main difference between hot-process and cold-process is when saponification happens—when the lye pairs up with the oils to become soap, to put it simply. In hot-process, this happens during the cooking stage rather than during the one-month curing process, as in cold-process.

Also, the cold-process soap sets up more slowly, allowing more time for playing with additives, essential oils, and fancy effects. Definitely use the cold-process method if you're wanting to make pretty decorative soaps. However, if your main focus is to have a healthy handmade soap in the shower and, like me, you've let your stash run precariously low, then the hot-process method will be your go-to.

The same recipes can be used, although the procedure is slightly different. Follow the same precautions and safety measures as for cold-process, while following the hot-process instructions outlined below.

- Measure the oil(s) and place in a crockpot on LOW heat, to melt solids and begin heating the oils.
- In a dedicated (as in, don't use it for food again, ever) stainless-steel pot, slowly and carefully add the lye powder\* to room-temperature distilled\*\* water. This mixture will become super hot very quickly and the fumes are terrible, so open the windows, set the pot in the sink, and crouch down below the counter level while gently stirring. Stir until the lye is completely dissolved. Let the lye water cool for 20-30 minutes, to hopefully avoid having to stir down any “volcanic” reactions during the cooking process.
- Slowly add the lye water to the oils in your slow cooker, while gently stirring.
- Stir, using an immersion blender, till trace—a pudding-like texture—is achieved.
- Place a snug-fitting lid on the crockpot, set the timer for 45 minutes, and allow it to cook on the LOW heat setting. Stay close and check it often, in case it

needs to be stirred down.

- When the soap is done, it will look more or less like mashed potatoes. Don't stress about whether or not the soap is finished cooking completely; letting it finish up in the mold is better than overcooked soap.
- Turn off the pot and allow the soap to cool briefly before stirring in any additives and/or essential oils. Don't wait too long, as the soap will begin to set quickly.
- Pour into a mold and allow to set for a full 24 hours. Unmold, cut into bars, and allow it to dry and harden up for a day or so. Then it's ready to use!



# Deodorants

## ARMPIT DETOX

*Not really a detox, per se; however, this mask will aid in removing buildup from harmful antiperspirants, it will lower the skin's pH level, and have your pits ready for the transition to a natural and healthy deodorant. Original recipe is from [NoFussNatural.com](http://NoFussNatural.com)*

- 1 Tbsp bentonite clay
- 1 tsp raw apple cider vinegar
- Enough water to make a paste (about 1 tsp)

Combine the clay and vinegar in a non-metal dish; stir with a non-metal spoon (metal will deactivate the bentonite clay).

Add water, a little at a time, to reach a paste-like spreadable consistency.

Apply to clean armpits; leave on for 10 or 15 minutes. It's most easily washed off in the shower.

This detox can be repeated as needed, or even daily for a few days, as you transition to a natural deodorant. You could also try simply swiping the armpit area with apple cider vinegar or witch hazel on a cotton ball, lowering the skin's pH and making it more difficult for odor-causing bacteria to survive.

**Caution:** If you experience discomfort, wash the mixture off immediately. For sensitive skin, replace the apple cider vinegar with water. Another option worth trying on sensitive skin is equal parts of bentonite clay and coconut oil.



## DEODORANT (SOLID)

*Original recipe is from [NoFussNatural.com](http://NoFussNatural.com)*

Combine and melt:

- 3 ½ Tbsp coconut oil
- 1 ½ Tbsp beeswax pastilles

Add, then stir thoroughly, to remove clumps:

- 3 Tbsp arrowroot powder
- 3 Tbsp baking soda
- 1/8 tsp castor oil
- 25 drops of essential oil (rosemary or lemongrass are great choices)

Warm again, briefly, till mixture is liquid enough to pour into deodorant tubes. This recipe should be enough to fill (approximately) 4 regular-size tubes.

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## DEODORANT (SPRAY)

*Easy peasy—and it WORKS!! Original recipe is from [WholeLifestyleNutrition.com](http://WholeLifestyleNutrition.com)*

- 1/4 cup ethanol alcohol (vodka or gin)
- 2 tsp distilled white vinegar
- Essential oils—80 drops (optional, but

Odor protection: 70-90 proof = light  
90-120 proof = medium  
120+ proof = strong

Combine ingredients in a fine mist sprayer. Shake well and apply a couple underarm spritzes. Allow it to dry before dressing.

## HERB-INFUSED ACV HAIR RINSE

*Apple cider vinegar (aka ACV) will balance the scalp's pH while making hair smoother, shinier, and less prone to breakage and frizz. And infusing it with hair-healthy herbs takes it to the next level! Original recipe and video tutorial at [GardenTherapy.ca](http://GardenTherapy.ca).*

Nettle  
Rosemary  
Calendula  
Peppermint  
Chamomile  
Rose Petals  
Lavender  
Horsetail

These are all great herbs for hair and scalp, some easily home-grown and others foraged in the wild.

Half-fill a quart mason with one or more of the dried herbs, then pour apple cider vinegar over the herbs to fill the jar. Stir, cover with a plastic or plastic-lined lid, and let it infuse for at least 4 weeks. Strain the herbs out and add them to the compost pile.

To use: Make the rinse by adding 1 tablespoons of the ACV infusion to 1 cup of water (oily hair wants more; dry hair, less). Use a squeeze bottle to apply after shampooing, massaging it into scalp and hair. A final water rinse is optional, since the smell of vinegar dissipates quickly as hair dries.

Use this rinse once or twice a week, after shampooing.

## CONDITIONING MASK

*Every scalp and hair type will benefit from this once-a-week treatment.*

- Equal parts coconut oil and honey (a total of 1 Tbsp is probably plenty for most heads)

Melt the honey and coconut oil, stirring to blend. Allow to cool, then massage into wet hair, leaving it on for 30 to 40 minutes. Shampoo and rinse, as usual.

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## STYLING GEL

- Aloe Vera gel

That's right—a store-bought bottle of organic aloe vera gel!

I've tried a few recipes and nothing works as well; and certainly nothing could be easier!



# Oral Hygiene

## OIL PULLING

*Most of what I know about this practice, I've learned from [MyFitFarmLife.com](http://MyFitFarmLife.com); so, head over there for the details!*

- 1 Tbsp coconut oil
- A couple drops of essential oil (optional—peppermint, lemon, orange, or clove are good choices)

Slosh and squish it around in your mouth and through your teeth for 15 minutes, 3x/week. Remember not to swallow; and spit it in the garbage when you're done, rather than down the drain, where it might help to clog pipes!

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## PEPPERMINT TOOTH PASTE

*Original recipe is from [LiveSimply.me](http://LiveSimply.me)*

Combine, and mix thoroughly

- 6 Tbsp organic coconut oil, softened, but not liquid
- 1/4 cup baking soda

Add remaining ingredients, and mix till smooth

- 1/2 tsp salt
- 1 tsp bentonite clay
- 1 tsp Stevia
- 7 drops peppermint essential oil

Always use a non-metal spoon for stirring bentonite clay, as contact with metal will deactivate the clay.

Store the toothpaste in a jar with a lid and use a spoon or other applicator to scoop it out. Consistency will depend on room temperature.

## TOOTHBRUSH POWDER

*Original recipe is from [TheGrowNetwork.com](http://TheGrowNetwork.com). The activated charcoal is messy—or, perhaps I'm just messy with the activated charcoal. It can be omitted, however.*

Add all ingredients to a pint jar, with a lid:

- 1 Tbsp bentonite clay
- 1/4 tsp (or less) activated charcoal (optional)
- 1 tsp baking soda
- 1 tsp stevia
- Leaves from 1 peppermint tea bag, ground very fine

Thoroughly combine everything in a glass jar. To use, wet your clean toothbrush and dip the bristles into the powder. Avoid double-dipping.

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## MOUTHWASH

*Original recipe is from [MyFitFarmLife.com](http://MyFitFarmLife.com)*

Add all ingredients to a pint jar, with a lid:

- 1 cup distilled water
- 3 Tbsp colloidal silver
- 2 Tbsp Stevia
- Essential Oils
  - 2 drops each of peppermint, lemon, cinnamon bark, clove, spearmint, and eucalyptus

Shake well before use. Don't swallow, but make sure to do a deep gargle. Use within 10 days.

Note: Mouthwash and gargle needn't be anything complicated. We usually just use a mixture of baking soda, sea salt, and a couple drops of peppermint essential oil.

# Bath & Beyond

## SHAVING SOAP

*Get a clean, smooth shave without gunk in your razor or scum in your tub.*

*Original recipe is from [ModernHippieHouseWife.com](http://ModernHippieHouseWife.com)*

- 4 Tbsp liquid oil (olive, grape seed, sweet almond)
- 2 Tbsp honey
- 2 Tbsp liquid castile soap
- 5 drops essential oil (optional, but grapefruit is nice)

Combine all ingredients and rapidly whisk for several minutes, until all of the ingredients have fully emulsified. Transfer to a pump or squeeze bottle.

To use: it only takes a little—create a lather in your hands, then apply to skin.



## CLAY FACIAL

*So minty and refreshing! Original recipe is from [NoFussNatural.com](http://NoFussNatural.com)*

- 2 Tbsp finely ground oats, or oat flour
- 3 Tbsp kaolin clay
- 1 tsp calendula powder
- 1 tsp mint powder

Combine all ingredients and store in a small jar with a lid.

To use: mix 1 Tbsp of powder with enough liquid\* to make a paste. Apply to the face, avoiding the area around eyes; leave it on anywhere from 5 to 15 minutes, depending on how it feels—if your skin is on the dry side, you'll want to wash it off sooner rather than later. I like to remove it gently in the shower, as opposed to using a wash cloth.

Follow up with toner and moisturizer.

\*Choose your liquid: hydrosol, honey, cooled herbal tea, or even plain old water.

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## PEPPERMINT FOOT (AND HAND!) SCRUB

*At the end of the day—the day in the garden, that is—nothing says “thank you” to your feet and hands quite the way this sugar scrub does. Original recipe is from [GardenTherapy.ca](http://GardenTherapy.ca)*

- 8 oz. white sugar
- 4 oz. coconut oil, softened
- 1 mint tea bag
- 10 drops peppermint essential oil

Start with soft (not melted) coconut oil, adding all of the sugar and the contents of the tea bag. Mash together with a fork until everything is completely incorporated. Stir in the essential oil. Store in the fridge and use within 3 months.

To use: Massage into wet feet, then rinse and dry. I like to soak my sugar-massaged feet while I relax with a good book.

## OAT & LAVENDER TUB TEA

*Scrubs and bath additives can have a somewhat detoxifying effect on the body—and who among us wouldn't benefit from a bit of that? The following recipes are from [GardenTherapy.ca](http://GardenTherapy.ca)*

- 2 cups Epsom salts
- 2 heaping tablespoons dried lavender
- 15-20 drops lavender essential oil
- 1 cup oatmeal, ground
- 1 cup milk powder and/or baking soda

Put everything in a quart jar, combine thoroughly, then either add a lid for storage or divide amongst 8 extra-large (size 4) brown paper tea filters. The bags can be secured with a staple; just remember to remove the staple when you dispose of the used tea bag in the compost.

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## HIMALAYAN PINK SALT BODY SCRUB

- 8 oz fine pink Himalayan Sea salt
- 2 oz coconut oil
- 1 oz sweet almond oil
- Dried rose petals (optional)
- 10 drops rosemary essential oil
- 5 drops grapefruit essential oil
- 5 drops lavender essential oil

Mix everything together in a jar. If necessary, warm the coconut oil (not melted), so it will incorporate more easily. Rose petals can be sprinkled on top, to make a nice presentation for gift giving; I prefer to crush them fine and stir them into the scrub.

To use: Massage onto wet skin, then lower yourself into the warmest bath you can enjoyably manage. Soak and relax for at least 15 minutes, while sipping a tall glass of cold water. The tranquil effect may be similar to a relaxation massage at the spa, so best to make this a bedtime routine!



# Summer Survival

## TINTED MINERAL SUNBLOCK

*Safe sun protection for adult use. Original recipe is from [ModernHippieHouseWife.com](http://ModernHippieHouseWife.com)*

- 2 Tbsp shea butter
- 2 Tbsp coconut oil
- 1/4 cup liquid oil—avocado, sweet almond, or grapeseed
- 1 ½ Tbsp beeswax
- 2 Tbsp zinc oxide
- 1 Tbsp cocoa powder (for tint—optional)

Heat the coconut oil, butter, and beeswax in a double-boiler (or similar apparatus), just until melted, then stir in the liquid oil.

Wearing a mask to avoid breathing in zinc particles, sift in the zinc oxide and cocoa. Stir thoroughly to incorporate the powders.

While still in a liquid state, pour it into a jar. Zinc is heavy and will want to sink to the bottom of the jar, so give it an occasional stir as it cools, to keep the zinc particles dispersed evenly in product.

To use: Mineral sunblock works on the surface of the skin, so avoid the temptation to rub it in completely. Re-apply after swimming.

Store in an airtight container in a cool place and use within 6 months. I use deodorant tubes for this—applies easily and keeps my hands clean.

## BUG REPELLENT

*Can't recall where I found this recipe, but it actually works—though not for everyone.*

- 1/4 cup water (boiling)
- 1 Tbsp Epsom salts
- 1/4 cup witch hazel
- 1 Tbsp aloe vera gel
- 1/4 tsp vitamin E oil
- 10 drops citronella essential oil
- 10 drops eucalyptus essential oil
- 20 drops lemon or mint essential oil

Measure boiling water into a Pyrex measuring cup or mason jar; add Epsom salts, stirring until the salt has completely dissolved.

Cool to room temperature, then add the remaining ingredients. Stir to combine. Pour into a fine-mist spray bottle.

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## INSECT BITE ROLL-ON REMEDY

*Carry this in every pocket, all summer long! Original recipe from [GardenTherapy.ca](http://GardenTherapy.ca)*

- 10ml glass aromatherapy roll-on bottle
- Pure witch hazel
- 3 drops lavender essential oil
- 2 drops tea tree essential oil

Add the essential oils to the bottle, then add witch hazel to fill, leaving enough space for the roller ball. Always shake well before use, to disperse oils.

# Winter Wellness

Cold and flu can get the better of us at any time of year, so I like to be prepared—in and out of season—with a few basics that I can make myself.

## VAPOUR RUB

*For chest, back, feet—and rub a little under your nose, too! Original recipe from [GardenTherapy.ca](http://GardenTherapy.ca)*

- 1/2 cup olive oil
- 1 cup coconut oil
- 3/4 cup grated beeswax
- 40 drops eucalyptus essential oil
- 35 drops mint essential oil
- 20 drops lavender essential oil
- 20 drops rosemary essential oil

Combine and melt the oils and beeswax; stir constantly and heat it only enough to melt. Stir in the essential oils and pour into suitable small containers (deodorant tubes work great). Allow to cool and set before adding lids.

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## SAGE TEA GARGLE

*To soothe a sore throat. Original recipe from [DrCrista.com](http://DrCrista.com)*

- A cup of boiling water
- 1 Tbsp fresh chopped sage OR 1 tsp dried sage

Using a tea strainer, steep the herb for 5 minutes. Let it cool enough to gargle comfortably. Gargle and swallow the entire cup of tea.

## ELDERBERRY SYRUP

*A healthier way to soothe a sore throat. Original recipe from [TheGrowNetwork.com](http://TheGrowNetwork.com)*

- 1 cup elderberries
- 1 tsp cinnamon
- 5 whole cloves
- 1 Tbsp powdered ginger
- 2 cups water
  
- 1/2 Tbsp citric acid (optional)

Combine first 5 ingredients in a pot and bring to a boil. Cover and simmer until reduced by half (about 20-30 minutes). Strain; then add 1 cup of honey. Cool for a bit before whisking in the citric acid, if using. Refrigerate.

Note: This recipe will make about 3 cups of syrup; if that's more than you expect to use over the course of the winter, try cutting the recipe in half. The syrup can also be frozen.

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## HERBAL IMMUNE SUPPORT TEA

*Original recipe from [PracticalSelfReliance.com](http://PracticalSelfReliance.com)*

- 4 parts dried rosehips
- 2 parts dried elderberries
- 2 parts chopped echinacea
- 1 part cinnamon chips
- 1 part dried sage
- 1 or 2 [star anise](#) pods (optional, but so beneficial)

Using a teaspoon as one part, measure everything into a teapot (I use this [French press](#)), then sweeten with honey and drink throughout the day.

## TAMARI GARLIC

Check out all these [health benefits of garlic!](#) Original recipe is from [KamiMcBride.com](#)

- 4 cups peeled whole garlic cloves
- 4 cups organic [tamari](#)
- 2 cups liquid honey
- 1 star-anise pod

Put everything in a gallon jar; screw on the lid and shake it well. Let it sit (I keep it in the fridge) for at least a couple of months, then start eating the garlic and using the tamari in stir fries.

Eat a clove or two each day. Keep in mind that garlic is an immune boost and not simply a cold remedy—don't wait until you're sick before you eat it!



# Herbal Salves

## #ALLTHETHINGS HEALING BALM

*Use this for moisturizer, chap stick, owie salve, burn remedy, bug bite balm, and even on baby's bottom! Original recipe from [MommyPotamus.com](http://MommyPotamus.com)*

- 4 oz. herbal-infused oil (I use olive oil and a combination of calendula flower and plantain herb)
- 1/2 oz. grated beeswax, or 2 Tbsp beeswax pastilles
- 3 drops vitamin E oil
- 40 drops lavender essential oil

Gently melt the beeswax in a double-boiler or similar apparatus. Add the infused oil, allowing it to heat for a minute or so; stir to thoroughly incorporate oil and wax. Remove from heat and let cool a bit before stirring in the vitamin E and essential oil, and pouring into small tins or glass jars, to set.

Refrigerate, if you can; or store in another cool dark place. As with most homemade balms and remedies, they are best if used within six months.



## MAKING HERB-INFUSED OILS

There are basically a couple methods generally used for making oils infused with all the goodness of the herbs you grow and forage: heat-infused (necessary when using fresh herbs) and the folk solar method. I prefer to use dried herbs for either method, reducing the chance of rancid oil due to moisture in the plant material. Learn more from Ashley at [PracticalSelfReliance.com](http://PracticalSelfReliance.com).

- Fill a pint mason jar about 3/4 full of dried plant material.
- Using a neutral oil, such as olive or grapeseed, cover the plant material in the jar.
- Place the jar on a trivet in a crockpot with a couple inches of water—don't put the lid on the jar or the pot!
- Gently heat the water to 110-120 degrees Fahrenheit and then turn off the heat.
- Periodically turn on the heat to maintain this warm infusing environment for 24 to 48 hours. Don't let it overheat and cook the plant material, which will ruin your oil.
- Strain out the plant material and your oil is ready to use.

OR

- Fill a pint mason jar about 2/3 full of dried plant material.
- Using a neutral oil, such as olive or grapeseed, fill the jar within an inch of the rim.
- Add a tight-fitting lid and shake it well.
- Place the jar on a warm sunny windowsill, shaking it a couple times a day for at least 2 to 3 weeks.
- Strain out the plant material and your oil is ready to use.

## CAYENNE MUSCLE & JOINT SALVE

- 1/2 cup oil (coconut, olive, or a combination)
- 2 tsp cayenne powder
- 4 Tbsp beeswax pastilles
- 20 drops peppermint essential oil
- 20 drops rosemary essential oil
- 20 drops eucalyptus essential oil  
(substitute lavender essential oil for one of these, if preferable)

Infuse the cayenne pepper into the oil using a crockpot or a double boiler. Let the oil/cayenne steep for about an hour; turn off heat and let it sit for a couple hours longer.

Strain the oil through cheesecloth, into a clean jar; squeeze the cheesecloth to get out as much oil as possible. Place the jar back into the hot water and add the beeswax. Thoroughly melt and incorporate.

Remove from heat and stir in the essential oils. Pour into small jars or tins, allowing them to cool completely before adding lids.

