



Thymely Bits

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'Tis the Season... Almost every culture in the world celebrates a major holiday sometime in the last quarter of the calendar year. Some of these include Thanksgiving, Yule, Winter Solstice, Christmas, Saturnalia, Hanukkah, Ramadan and Kwanzaa. Some people even create their own personal holiday celebration in addition to these formally recognized ones. Looking thoughtfully at other cultures, both modern and ancient can enlighten us as to how we might modify our existing family traditions or even start new ones. Friendship, food, gifts, candles and herbs are core elements in many of these holiday celebrations.

Featured Herb – Rosemary *Rosmarinus officinalis*
Rosemary has been called the “herb of remembrance” and has been used by many cultures throughout history to strengthen one’s memory. It was often used in formal ceremonies, such as weddings and funerals, to symbolize remembrance and fidelity. Rosemary is often associated with the sun and fire and therefore is a perfect herb to celebrate the Winter Solstice and the rebirth of the sun.

Plant type: Rosemary is a very tender perennial and will not over-winter outdoors in northern climates.

Growing: Rosemary is difficult to start from seed; it is easier to use cuttings or purchase the plants you want. It prefers a location in full sun and well-drained, alkaline soil. If planting in pots use a mix of 1/2 sphagnum moss and 1/2 perlite. As a companion plant, Rosemary grows well with sage, cabbage, beans and carrots. Rosemary leaves can be harvested anytime during the growing season. It can be potted and brought indoors for the winter but keeping it healthy can be difficult. The recommended method is to keep it in a cool room with plenty of light.

Mist the leaves occasionally and water when the top inch of soil feels dry to the touch.

Maintenance: Rosemary benefits from frequent pruning. In the spring, prune 1/3 of the bottom and side roots and repot in the same pot or slightly larger before setting outdoors. Outdoors, Rosemary is quite draught tolerant and will flop over if it’s watered too much.

History/Mythology: In Asia, people planted Rosemary on graves in the hope that their ancestors would remember the bond between them and continue to give guidance. In the Middle Ages Rosemary was used to drive away evil spirits and protect against the plague. Napoleon used Rosemary for its vitality restoring properties. Queen Elizabeth of Hungary used Rosemary in her famous toilet water called “Hungary Water” produced in 1370. In Poland, it was grown in the garden to show that a marriageable daughter lived in the house. Rosemary was also grown in the garden to attract elves and faery folk.

Culinary: Rosemary is excellent with meats, potatoes, vegetables and breads. It has a very pungent flavor so use it sparingly.

Cosmetic: A tea infusion is a good hair rinse for dark hair. The essential oil also stimulates hair growth. A rosemary bath is refreshing and soothing; the essential oil gets blood flowing under the skin thus stimulating the body.

Household: Add rosemary to household cleaning solutions to inhibit growth of fungi and bacteria.



Special Holiday Packs



3 bars of our hand-crafted, skin moisturizing soaps– wrapped and ready to give
Yule (green): 1 each bar of: Cedarwood, Cinnamon & Spice, Winter Solstice
Joy (red): 1 each bar of Awaken, Candleglow, Essential Lavender

\$10.00 + S&H

An extra bar of Awaken will be included with each holiday pack order.
Awaken is infused with 100% pure essential oil of Rosemary.

Garden Spirit

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