

Rose

Rosa rugosa

Family *Rosaceae* – Rose Family

Rosa: from the Greek word *rodon* (red)

rugosa: wrinkled

rugosa rose, beach rose, Japanese rose, Ramanas rose, Turkestan rose

Rosa rugosa cultivars and hybrids, other *Rosa* species, i.e., *Rosa gallica*, *Rosa canina* can be used similarly, so long as the flowers are fragrant. Varieties without scent will be less medicinally active.

Action Continuum: tonifying

Character: taste (hips) sour, sweet, cool, astringent; energetics are cool and dry

Part(s) used: flowers, hips

Primary Types of Preparations: hips used in cooking and baking, and used fresh or dried for tea; petals used dried for tea; fresh flower petal decoction and infused oil

Herbal Actions: refrigerant, antiseptic, nutritive, astringent, diaphoretic, nervine, cardiac tonic, anti-inflammatory

Primary Uses: Rose petals and hips are known to heal any number of ailments, especially those of excess heat as they have a very cooling, calming, and soothing nature. Roses can reduce fevers, inflammations, and eye irritations. They can deter infection in the digestive tract and lungs, and relieve cold and flu symptoms of runny nose, sore throat, and lung congestion. Rose's astringent qualities help dry up excessive bleeding, phlegm, and diarrhea. The high levels of vitamin C found in rose hips help prevent infection. Rose tones and cleanses the skin and clears acne. Roses have a long history of use as a cardiac tonic. Its calming nature soothes the nervous system, relieves insomnia, calms the heart, and generally lifts the spirits, relieving depression and anxiety. Rose heals the heart when it has been battered, repeatedly hurt, and there is an enormous amount of grief to be moved through.

Primary Known Medicinal Constituents: vitamin C (antiscorbutic), flavonoids (antimicrobial, antispasmodic), tannin (astringent)

Cautions: The seeds are hard and are surrounded by many small hairs which can irritate the digestive tract; remove before eating.

Body Systems Affected: digestive, respiratory, nervous, cardiovascular, skin

Status: Cultivated; naturalized on the coast of New England

Plant: erect, many branched, leafy shrub; four to six feet tall at maturity. Stems are densely covered with fine thorns.

Flower: dark pink to white; pleasantly scented; five sepals and five petals with numerous stamens; flowering May to September

Fruit: flowers give rise to tomato-like red hips which range in size from ½ inch to 1½ inch in diameter

Leaf: Compound leaves, alternate, odd-pinnate, 5-7 leaflets with a corrugated surface

Root: Spreads extensively through suckering

Habitat: sand dunes, seashores, gardens, roadsides

Rose History and Lore

The flowers, leaves, bark, root bark, and even the thorns have all been used in traditional medicine. Roses have long been used in love mixtures, owing to the flower's associations with the emotions. To the Romans, the rose was a sign of pleasure and they made lavish use of the blossoms as a decoration, to strew the floors, even floating in their wine. Roman brides and bridegrooms were crowned with roses. In medieval times, when a rose was hung from the ceiling it meant that all information exchanged under it was to be kept a secret. Hence, *sub rosa*, literally "under the rose," means "in greatest confidence." Rose petals sprinkled around the house calm personal stress and household upheavals. In the Scottish Lowlands the thoughtless picking of rose flowers and the breaking of small sticks was considered dangerous because it can call up the faeries from the Underworld, though others planted them in their gardens to attract fairies, and said they grow best when stolen!

Recipes

Rose Water

Pick rose blossoms on a sunny day when their scent is at its peak. Put into a stainless steel or enamel pot and cover with spring or distilled water. Cover and slowly heat to just below a simmer. Turn the heat as low as it will go, and continue heating for about ten minutes tightly covered. Turn off the heat and allow to sit, covered, overnight. In the morning, strain the fragrant rose water off. Add a quarter of the volume in alcohol as a preservative. Bottle and keep in a cool dark place. Use as a toning and refreshing body splash, as a wash to help heal acne, and as flavoring in pound cake!

Rose Hip Butter with Apple and Ginger

Remove the stems and scraggly blossom ends from each hip. Discard any that are overly blemished or show signs of bug infestation. Place the rest in a large stock pot. Do not use aluminum or iron pans as they strip vitamin C.

For every quart of rose hips, add 2 large apples or 3 smaller ones. Chop them roughly – you don't need to worry about removing the seeds or cores. Add to the pot with the hips.

Add 4-10 slices of fresh ginger root, adjusting for your spice preference.

Add enough water to the hips, apples and ginger to cover by an inch or two. Bring to a boil, then reduce to a simmer until the hips are softened and falling apart. You can speed this process along by mashing gently with a potato masher from time to time. Add more water if necessary.

Once everything is sufficiently mushy and broken down, turn off the heat and let cool slightly. Then, run the mixture through a food mill, chinois sieve, or champion juicer to separate out the seeds and hairs from the mixture. You should have a thin, apple sauce like concoction that has a very tart flavor at this point.

Measure the amount of liquid you have. For every cup, add 1/2 cup sugar to the blend (rapadura is a nice choice). Return to a clean pan with wide, thick bottom. Cook on medium-low heat, stirring occasionally to prevent burning. After about 10 minutes, start checking the consistency by spooning a little onto a cold plate. When the butter is thick and smooth and won't run when you tilt the plate, turn off the heat and let cool.

Rose Hip Nut Bread

Juice of 1 orange plus water to make 1 cup

½ cup raisins

¾ cup seeded and chopped wild rose hips

2 T. melted butter

1 tsp. vanilla

1 egg, beaten

1½ cups flour

1 cup sugar

1 tsp. baking powder

½ tsp. baking soda

¼ tsp. salt

½ cup nuts or sunflower seeds

In a large bowl, mix the orange juice, raisins, rose hips, butter, vanilla, and egg. Sift together and then add the dry ingredients. Mix until well blended but do not overmix or bread will be dry and heavy. Gently stir in nuts or sunflower seeds. Spoon batter into a well-greased 5 x 8-inch loaf pan and bake at 350 degrees F. for 45 minutes to 1 hour.

Resources/References:

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Rose Hip Nut Bread Recipe <http://homecooking.about.com/od/breadrecipes/r/blfruit10.htm>





