



Welcome to...

Penny Price Academy of Aromatherapy

Saturday Club

Herbs and Woods





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July 2026

What is a Herb?

A herb is defined as any seed-producing plant that lacks persistent woody tissue (like a tree or shrub) and dies down at the end of a growing season. Square stem!

E.g. Basil, Melissa, Peppermint.

Some plants that we think of in aromatherapy or in culinary use as 'herbs' are botanically classified as 'subshrubs' because they retain woody stems that persist year round.

E.g. Rosemary, Hyssop, Lavender, Sage, Oregano, Thyme.





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Herb Plant Families

In aromatherapy what we commonly classify as 'the herb oils', are predominantly from the following botanical plant families:

- **Lamiaceae** (mint or deadnettle)
- **Asteraceae** (daisy, aster or sunflower)
- **Apiaceae** (coriander, dill, fennel)





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Herbs of the Lamiaceae Family

Oils from this family are known for having strong, penetrating aromas:

Peppermint, Spearmint, Cornmint,
Hyssop, Melissa, Patchouli,
Lavender, Spike Lavender, Lavandin,
Catnip, Basil, Sweet Marjoram,
Savory, Oregano, Clary Sage, Sage,
Sweet Thyme, Thyme thymol

The essential oils are extracted from the flowering tops and leaves of the plant, because when in flower, the plant has the highest percentage of essential oils.





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Properties of Essential Oils of the Lamiaceae family

This is a diverse range of plants chemically. Their profiles are spread across all the chemical groups - terpenes, alcohols, esters, phenols, ketones, aldehydes, lactones and oxides. They are generally stimulating, antiseptic and balancing.

Some are strongly anti-microbial, anti-viral, nerve strengthening and mind clearing due to their phenols, ketones, aldehydes and oxides – Basil, Sage, Thyme ct. thymol, Oregano, Melissa, Peppermint and Spearmint.

Others are gentle, calming, hormone balancing, anti-spasmodic, pain relieving and skin healing due to their alcohols and esters – Sweet Thyme, Lavender, Clary Sage, Sweet Marjoram.





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Properties of Essential Oils of the Lamiaceae family

Analgesic – reduces aches and pains

Lavender, Sweet Marjoram, Rosemary, Peppermint

Antiseptic/Antibacterial/Antiviral

Lavender, Rosemary, Thyme, Oregano, Catnip, Basil,
Sweet Marjoram, Peppermint

Cephalic – clears the mind, stimulates mental activity

Basil, Rosemary, Thyme, Peppermint

Nervine – strengthens the nervous system

Rosemary, Melissa, Sweet Marjoram, Lavender, Catnip

Anti-spasmodic – calms digestive spasms, headaches,
muscular cramps

Peppermint, Clary Sage, Lavender, Sweet Marjoram,
Basil, Catnip





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Thyme ct Linalool

(*Thymus vulgaris* ct linalool)

The essential oil of thyme ct linalool is very gentle – its composition is fairly similar to that of Lavender.

It is an excellent anti-infective oil that can address a wide spectrum of fungal, bacterial and viral infections. It is recommended for chronic, not acute infections. It has been shown to help with chronic coughs and is a bronchial restorative.

Thyme oil is a digestive stimulant and carminative. It is said to promote appetite, ease abdominal distention and relieve flatulence.





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Thyme ct Linalool

(*Thymus vulgaris* ct *linalool*)

Thyme essential oil has progesterone balancing effects; it benefits the body by improving progesterone production.

Many women in midlife become low in progesterone as they approach menopause. Low progesterone is associated with insomnia, mood swings, weight gain and hot flushes.

Mojay describes this oil as fortifying and uplifting, he states that 'thyme oil can be used for poor self-confidence, apathy and fear.'





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Catnip (*Nepeta cataria*)

A chemical in catnip called nepetalactone attracts felines as well as repelling mosquitos and outdoor pests.

It acts as a nervine and sedative, soothing the mind and promoting peaceful sleep. Diffuse 4-5 drops of Catnip in the bedroom.

Catnip can help treat and prevent a range of digestion-related problems - indigestion, gas, acid reflux, bloating, diarrhoea and sluggish liver.

The oil is also antispasmodic, so can alleviate digestive cramps as well as menstrual cramps and general muscular cramps.





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A Herbal Blend for Mental Fatigue

For mental fatigue make up a nasal inhaler
(6-10 total drops of essential oils) or a roller ball
(3-6 total drops of essential oils to 10 mls of carrier oil).

For physical fatigue try adding a total of 3 drops of essential oil to 10 mls of plain shower gel.

Basil - brain stimulant which can be used for mental fatigue, poor memory and in situations when concentration is required.

Thyme (linalol) or **Catnip** – Tonic to the nervous system – for nervous fatigue.

Rosemary - stimulating, good for the memory.





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Herbs of the Asteraceae Family

This group of 'herbs' contains essential oils -Roman Chamomile, German Chamomile, Helichrysum and Yarrow amongst others plus Arnica, Echinacea and Calendula infused oil and Sunflower carrier oil.

The essential oils are extracted from the flowering tops of the plant by steam distillation.

Known for their calming and soothing properties – especially for skin and digestion -anti-inflammatory, anti-allergenic and skin healing. They have an affinity with liver and gall bladder so are good for detoxification.





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Properties of Essential Oils of the Asteraceae Family

Anti-inflammatory

German and Roman Chamomile, Yarrow, Helichrysum, Calendula

Anti-spasmodic – soothes spasms – intestines/uterus

Roman Chamomile, Yarrow,

Sedative – calms the nervous system

Roman Chamomile

Skin healing - wounds, scars, rash, eczema, itching

Roman Chamomile, German Chamomile, Helichrysum, Yarrow, Calendula, Echinacea, Sunflower

Circulatory – Decongests blood – bruising

Yarrow, Helichrysum, Arnica,

Detoxifying – stimulating to digestive organs

Helichrysum, Chamomile German





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Yarrow

(Achillea millefolium)

Yarrow was originally known as Soldier's Wound Wort - used to heal wounds in battle.

It is antiseptic, astringent and anti-inflammatory (chamazulene) and can help with wounds, irritated skin and infections.

It's soothing properties when applied in a carrier oil may help to soothe and reduce inflammation generally. Yarrow can help stomach cramps, gallbladder pain and irritable bowel.

Emotionally, Yarrow is a protective oil. Add to a relaxing bath during periods of stress and emotional turmoil.





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A Blend for Problem Skin

Add a total of 4-6 drops of the following essential oils to 20 mls cream base

Lavender True - anti-inflammatory, antiseptic, cell regenerator

Carrot - helpful for eczema, psoriasis and ulcerative conditions of the skin.

Chamomile Roman or German - soothing and anti-histaminic





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Herbs of the Apiaceae Family

This group of 'herbs' contains Coriander, Dill, Sweet Fennel, Carrot Seed, Cumin, Caraway, Anise amongst others.

The essential oils are extracted from the seeds of the plant by steam distillation. They have differing chemical profiles – terpenes, alcohols, ketones, phenols.

This family of herbs is invigorating and fortifying and have a strong affinity with the digestive system. Seed oils help stimulate the appetite, eliminate toxins and have hormone-like properties. They invigorate and free the mind.





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Properties of Essential Oils of the Apiaceae Family

Hormone-like – regulates/stimulates hormones

Carrot Seed, Dill, Sweet Fennel, Coriander

Digestive – alleviate digestive spasms, flatulence,
sluggish digestion

**Coriander, Dill, Sweet Fennel, Carrot Seed, Cumin,
Caraway, Anise**

Detoxifying – purifies and decongests

Carrot Seed (liver), Fennel Seed (lymph)

Regenerating – liver cells, skin cells

Carrot Seed





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Carrot Seed

(*Daucus carota*)

Battaglia states that carrot seed essential oil is a powerful hepatic, depurative and diuretic. It is also an 'excellent regenerator of liver cells.'

Carrot seed oil is a skin cell regenerator which will help to tone and tighten skin whilst repairing damage and signs of ageing. It is recommended for dull, lifeless and tired skin.

As a purifier it can be helpful for eczema, psoriasis and ulcerative conditions of the skin.

Carrot Seed oil is also said to boost the spirit, helping to calm an overactive mind and soothe emotional stress.





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A blend to help with digestive issues

Make up a blend using 10 mls of carrier oil or white lotion and to this add one drop each of:

To settle the stomach

Basil - antispasmodic and digestive, it can help indigestion, flatulence, nausea and IBS.

Chamomile - soothing and calming to the digestive system

Yarrow - can help with stomach cramps and gallbladder pain

To stimulate digestion

Coriander - a digestive stimulant and carminative.

Rosemary - It can help 'get things moving' when constipated.

Carrot - hepatic, depurative and diuretic





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What is a Wood Oil?

Wood essential oil are the volatile aromatic compounds extracted from the **heartwood, bark or roots** of various tree species.

E.g. Amyris, Cedarwood, Sandalwood, White Camphor.

We can 'expand' wood oils to include those aromatic compounds distilled from needles, leaves, twigs or tree resins.

E.g. Pine, Juniper, Spruce, Fir, Cypress, Tea Tree, Eucalyptus, Frankincense amongst many others.

Today I am going to focus on those extracted from the dense central area of the tree trunk know as the **heartwood**.





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Heartwood Plant Families

Battaglia emphasises how precious heartwood oils are, as the tree takes decades to reach maturity and then is cut down to extract the essential oil (as well as for timber and furniture). He asks us to treat wood oils with the sacred respect they deserve. Essential oils distilled from the heartwood include:

- **Cupressaceae** (Cedar Virginian (not Atlas))
- **Pinaceae** (Cedar Atlas)
- **Santalaceae** (Sandalwood)
- **Rutaceae** (Amyris)
- **Lauraceae** (White Camphor)





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Properties of Heartwood Essential Oils

Heartwood oils are generally rich in sesquiterpenes and alcohols, which interact with the nervous system to ease stress and nervous exhaustion. They are warming, soothing and drying oils. Wood oils act as a balm to the respiratory system, and are especially indicated for a dry cough.

Their antiseptic and anti-inflammatory nature makes them useful in treating cystitis as well as skin conditions such as dermatitis, eczema and psoriasis.

Worwood describes the personality characteristics of heartwood oils as having qualities of confidence and knowing and being 'towers of strength in almost all situations'.





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Cedarwood

(*Cedrus atlantica*)

This is an excellent oil for treating catarrh and chronic bronchitis where it will kill bacteria and act as a decongestant. Cedarwood is also useful in treating cystitis and all urinary tract infections especially when characterised by cramping pain.

A clinical study was conducted in which cedarwood essential oil was used in aromatherapy massage for the treatment of alopecia areata. Although the results were variable, the group using the massage blend containing cedarwood showed a significant improvement of 44% .

Cedarwood can be used for general lethargy, nervous debility, and poor concentration.





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Cedarwood

(*Cedrus atlantica*)

Research results suggest that the sesquiterpenes in Cedarwood atlas oxygenate the pineal gland, which then releases melatonin. Melatonin triggers our circadian rhythm. Therefore it can help sleep and jetlag.

Cedarwood is an oil with a calming, strengthening and peaceful presence. It keeps those practicing sacred and healing work anchored to the earth. It helps bridge earthly stability with higher spiritual awareness and is helpful for releasing negatives thoughts and emotions and finding our power and strength.

Mojay suggests that cedarwood oil gives us the will to hold firm even against persistent external forces. "Cedarwood oil can therefore give us immovable strength in times of crisis..."





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Using Atlas Cedarwood in Spiritual Practice

An 'inner sanctuary' meditation blend:

Add 4-6 drops of essential oil to an electric diffuser, an aromastream or a tissue to create a sanctuary for meditation. Close your eyes and breathe in deeply.

Frankinsence – to reconnect with spirit

Clary Sage – for inspiration and clarity

Cedarwood/Sandalwood - for courage and optimism.

Purifying crystals and other spiritual tools and spaces:

Add a few drops of Atlas Cedarwood to a spray bottle filled with Frankinsence hydrolat and distilled water.

Lightly mist your crystals (not water soluble crystals!), meditation mat, therapy room to clear the energy.





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Recommended Reading

Salvatore Battaglia: The Complete Guide to Aromatherapy and Aromatree – A holistic guide to understanding and using aromatherapy

Patricia Davis: Aromatherapy An A – Z

Gabriel Mojay - Aromatherapy for Healing the Spirit: Restoring Emotional and Mental Balance with Essential Oils

Valerie Ann Worwood - The Fragrant Pharmacy and The Fragrant Heavens

Penny Price Blogs - <https://www.penny-price.com/blogs/>





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10% off for Saturday Clubbers!

- Thyme ct Linalool
- Catnip
- Yarrow
- Carrot Seed
- Cedarwood Atlas

Use Code:
HERBSWOODS

End date - Friday 07.08.26





Thank you...

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