

THE TIME TRAVELLER'S HERBAL

By Amanda Edmiston



ABOUT AMANDA

Amanda Edmiston is a herbalist and storyteller based in Scotland. She first learnt about plants and recipes from her grandmother who still remembered traditional remedies and folklore. After studying law and then herbal medicine, Amanda found it natural to start bringing together stories, plants, and magical places, drawing on the Scottish storytelling tradition, but in her own unique way.

She has been showcasing her own work for over 10 years, performing and creating art in museums, libraries, forests, castles, schools and universities around the world under the banner Botanica Fabula.

KEY INFO

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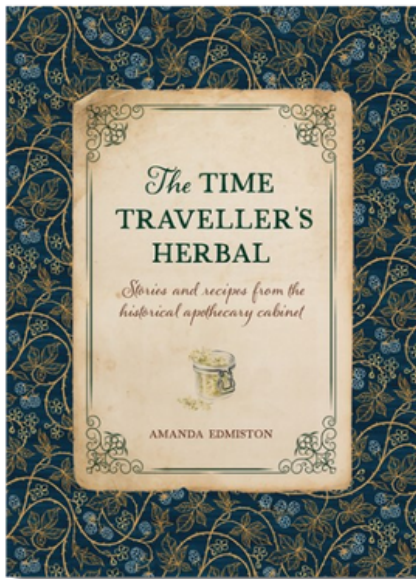
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About the book

THE TIME TRAVELLER'S HERBAL

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The herbalist has had many names throughout the ages - Cunning Woman, Wise Woman, even Witch - all hiding the truth of what they are... early pioneers of science, and fountains of traditional, nature-based knowledge.

All around us are plants and herbs that can be used to improve our wellbeing and encourage a more nature-focused approach to health. Steeped in history, the herbalist's art paved the way for modern science - but didn't necessarily need to have been replaced by it. In The Time Traveller's Herbal, the traditional remedies and recipes that were passed down through the ages are offered to the modern reader as a means to reconnect with the natural world, while reaping the benefits. Steeped in the stories through which these remedies have been passed down to us, our connection to the past is fully explored in a romantic and meandering journey through the plants and flowers that have healed and helped us through the ages. Travelling back through the mists of time, the ancient mysteries of the plants and flowers that have saved lives in a world without modern medicine are uncovered.

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A DAISY DUO

You may also find it useful, ahead of our journey to equip yourself with my favourite 'bump treatments', a handy herbal first aid kit item for travellers. When I was little my gran would tell me to eat a daisy when I bumped my knee and for years, I assumed this was just a distraction technique. Later I learnt that this was rooted in truth. The humble garden lawn daisy (*Bellis perennis*) is related not just to the soothing chamomiles but also to *Arnica montana*, the go-to remedy for those of us prone to accidents.



20 | A Charm

DAISY BLIMP SYRUP

100g (3½oz) daisy petals (both the yellow and white parts, but discard the green as this can be bitter and spoil the colour of your syrup). Gather before mowing the lawn (as long as chemicals aren't used).

150ml (5fl oz) filtered or spring water.

150g (5¼oz) sugar or six to eight tablespoons of honey (if using honey, a locally produced honey will have added benefits).

Measure 150ml (5fl oz) freshly boiled filtered water and pour over half the petals. Steep for up to an hour.

Strain water into a pan, squeezing daisies out well, and bring to a gentle boil. Add the remaining petals and simmer softly for 15 minutes.

Strain once more and add sugar or honey. Cook gently until fully dissolved and reduce until preferred consistency.

A squeeze of lemon juice will help preserve it a little longer. Will keep for up to six weeks in the fridge. Take a teaspoon every couple of hours after a bump for the first day, then a teaspoon twice a day until the bruising fades and remember if you have a bump on a walk, you can always just eat a daisy! The syrup also has a delicious floral note and can also be used to pour on porridge or pancakes.

NOTE: Throughout the text you will find some words in bold, this indicates that you can find them in the glossary. Our glossary has a mixture of elements: some definitions of the Scots and Gaelic words or herbal terms used in the text and some entries which offer a bit more information, some insights, about a person or topic mentioned in a story.

DAISY BLIMP BALM

A soothing salve to apply topically as soon as you bump a knee!

25g (1oz) daisy-infused oil (sunflower or rapeseed oil work best in my experience). Or use an amount equal to the quantity of wax (see below).

To infuse the oil, gather enough daisies to fill a jar twice, then allow leave to dry slightly. Fresh or thoroughly dried will work, but even allowing them to wilt well, over 24 hours reduces the water content sufficiently to make the eventual balm blending process easier.

Put the daisies in a glass jar and fill with oil, make sure all the flowers are covered. Place on a sun-drenched window to infuse for two weeks, then strain.

Once you have your infused oil take:

25g (1oz) beeswax, or an amount equal to the quantity of oil.

Melt the oil and beeswax gently over a low heat in a double boiler, or a bowl



resting on a small saucepan with a couple of cm (an inch) of water in the bottom (do not allow to boil dry!). Stir slowly and once thoroughly combined whisk lightly until it starts to set.

Leave to cool for a minute, then pour into small jars and allow to set.

The balm can last for six months to a year if kept cool, but do not allow it to get too warm as it will start to melt again!

Now you have the beginnings of a herbal first aid kit, we're ready to travel.

MORE ABOUT THE BOOK

Told over the centuries, starting in ancient Rome, the reader journeys through time sampling the botanical marvels that did everything from soothing the pain of fever to revealing the world of the faeries, and learns the stories that surround us in the natural world. A guide to the myths of a lost art, *The Time Traveller's Herbal* is the book every budding apothecary should reach for.

Including instructions for over 25 recipes and makes using commonly found, foraged or easily procured ingredients, author Amanda Edmiston weaves a story through the recipes about the craft of the herbalist, tapping into the traditional knowledge passed down through generations and reworking it for the modern reader.

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