

What you seek
is seeking you.

Rumi



Spring Newsletter

Some seasonal insights from a herbalist & naturopath



Spring is associated with new beginnings and hope. The season bursts with energy and new growth, when nature is aiming for abundance in a seemingly reckless and chaotic way. Children have that kind of energy, in the Unani-Tibb tradition we say that children have a spring temperament. They easily find joy in the present moment, they run rather than walk. Their illnesses are often respiratory and skin based. Pollens as well as contaminants in the air can cause strong reactions and affect the elimination channels. Our skin and lungs play a large part in the body's ability to defend itself and detoxify, so take them both into the fresh air and let the light in.

Spring promises positivity which can become a driving force to be compassionate to ourselves while gently encouraging us to try new experiences, practices and simply seek joy. New beginnings can seem more possible to us at this time. The conscious choice to be content in the present moment is a constant source of renewal within us. The Christian month of lent is in Spring and it's all about changing the way we see things.

Fasting and detoxing is most effective in the Spring which is all about bringing the body and mind back into balance.



Seasonal Tips

Try a do-able detox discipline this spring, a few days of eating only fruit and vegetables, a day of fasting or a period of drinking water instead of other drinks.

Hayfever sufferers would benefit from a diet without dairy (except for yoghurt), no caffeine (although green tea is beneficial) or alcohol during the season.

When you go for a walk, take a carrier bag with you and forage for herbs to use as food or drink.

Don't be reckless with your energy and enthusiasm. Not all of nature's abundance in spring bears fruit in the autumn. So go carefully yet with a joyful bounce in your step!

Recipe

Wild Garlic & Nettle Polenta Slice

(or leek and spinach)

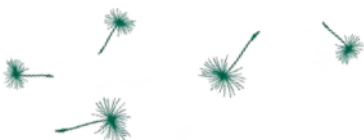
Chop a leek (and/or wild garlic) and sauté in olive oil, add the chopped fresh spinach, chard or nettle and cook for a further 10 mins adding a little water to cook it through.

Boil in a non-stick pan 700ml water and whisk in 200g of fine polenta flour. Add 1/2 tsp of Himalayan Pink salt and lots of ground black pepper and some stock powder if desired. Keep stirring as it thickens, add a little olive oil or butter to prevent it from sticking. Continue to stir for 5-10 minutes (this is hard work as it's very stiff). Turn off the heat and add the cooked veg to the polenta. If you want something richer then add some crumbled feta cheese or grated parmesan.

Spread the polenta in a baking tin and smooth it with a silicone spatula. This can be either cut into squares when it's cooled and fried in a pan with a tiny amount of olive oil or it can be baked for 20 mins at 180 C. Best eaten warm and can be crisped up in a frying pan at any time for a tasty snack.

Note for gut health: All grains are best soaked overnight, if you want to do this here, soak the polenta flour in the correct amount of water then bring it all together in a pan to boiling point but stirring all the time. The corn will now be more easily digested.

The past is past, and the present is what your life is, and you are capable of choosing what that will be. Mary Oliver



Herbal Tea

Nettle & Fresh Peppermint Tea

Nettles build up the blood with rich nutrients (iron, protein, bit C, potassium, silica and calcium) but also cleanse and clear the blood of stagnation caused by accumulated metabolic waste. A great Spring cleaner and good for clearing chronic skin conditions. The irritation action on the skin can actually help stiff, swollen arthritic joints and sore muscles as it stimulates local blood circulation. Nettles can be used in the treatment of hay fever and seasonal allergies, although this would need to be taken in relatively high doses very frequently so the tincture is often recommended.

How to make Nettle and Peppermint Tea

Pick a few nettle tops (with gloves on)

Pick a few peppermint leaves from the garden (or bought fresh)

Put your herbs in a mug or teapot and add boiling water

Infuse for 5 mins and leave covered so the essential oils don't evaporate



"A perfect, peaceful setting for a Spring Detox Workshop..."

A great balance of lots of different activities. Lots of information as well as interesting discussions. I particularly enjoyed the outdoor foraging, the explanation of the health benefits of the herbs and then making and drinking the herbal tea."

Feedback from one of the 20 participants on the workshop

Do keep in touch with your health concerns and progress Karen

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