



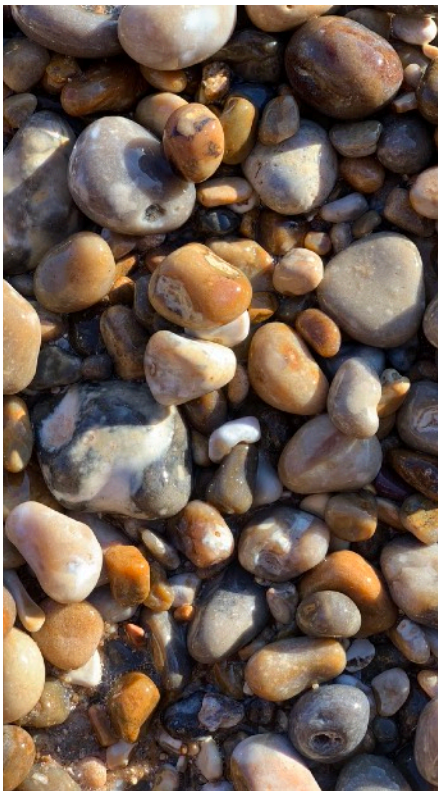
Those who contemplate the beauty of the earth find the reserves of strength that will endure as long as life lasts. There is something infinitely healing in the repeated refrains of nature - the assurance that dawn comes after night, and spring after winter.

-Rachel Carson



Winter Newsletter

Some seasonal insights from a herbalist & naturopath



Is winter really a dark season? Yes, the nights are longer and sunny days are rarer but when the sun shines it has a beautiful quality. Nature is visibly less active but it is still hard at work albeit hidden. The dark earth never rests, the work of renewal and pre-growth is happening. The decomposing process is a deeply nourishing one and there can be no spring without freshly made compost. It would seem that dark is necessary for this vital preparation. There's light in this darkness; not the light of the sun, moon and stars but a creative energy that inhabits all things, just like there is fire in the centre of mother earth herself. Letting the light shine outwards from within is a vital task for all living beings. I think we see it in jasmine flowers, the translucency of wet pebbles on a beach, the sparkle in snow, the vivid colour hidden in a daffodil bulb, the brilliance of the kingfisher, the glistening waves above a dark ocean. Winter is for pondering and dreaming, for nurturing new perspectives. This season is also sacred and mustn't be hurried. The gift of creativity is ours if we dare let go, dive deep and let the light out.

Seasonal Tips

I always say it, however wearing a hat outdoors saves valuable energy during these cold months but also strengthens the lungs as they cope with the colder air.

Forget the new year resolutions, this is not the time for new beginnings, nature's wisdom tells us spring is the time for that. So instead add a hibernation treat to your day; e.g. try a new herbal tea to help you sleep deeper, choose to stay at home in the evening rather than go out, make soup, read a book with a blanket, soak in a lavender & rosemary bath, light a candle while you eat.

Add ginger, black pepper and black seed (nigella sativa) to soups and savoury dishes and try adding astragalus root to soups and drinks. They all enhance the immune system and astragalus in particular will help us all to protect our lungs.

How big is your soup bowl? A double portion of hearty soup will fill you up and is more nourishing than a small one with lots of bread on the side!

Recipe

In winter it's important to eat nutritious and warm foods that are easy to digest. Any kind of soup is perfect for this time of year but adding root vegetables gives us more energy and comfort and at the same time connects us to the earth more - a little like hibernating. Quinoa provides protein as well as fibre: in the Andes they have this soup for breakfast and they also wean their babies with quinoa. It's one of the soup recipes on my website.

Andean Soup

- 1 onion or leek
- 1-3 cloves garlic
- 1 celery stick
- 1 large carrot
- 1 small courgette if in season
- 1 small sweet potato or ½ butternut squash
- ½ red pepper (optional)
- A handful of either peas or broad beans
- 1tsp turmeric
- 4tbsp red lentils
- 4tbsp quinoa
- chilli flakes (optional)
- 2 tsp of dried herbs (thyme, oregano or mixed herbs)
- 1 tsp stock powder
- Enough water to cover veg by 3 cm
- Sea salt and black pepper to taste

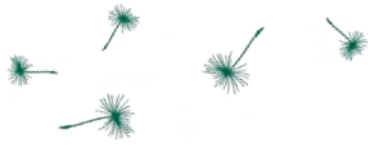


Astragalus Root, a traditional Chinese medicine available from me and elsewhere.



Cooking directions:

- All veg should be chopped into small pieces or chopped in a food processor.
- Sauté onion and garlic in olive oil for a few minutes then sauté all the other veg for 10 mins.
- Add water, stock, herbs and spices, lentils and quinoa (best rinsed through a sieve first)
- Simmer for 30-45 mins or 20 mins in a pressure cooker.
- If using astragalus root, boil 1 tbsp of chopped, dried root with 500ml water and simmer for 10 mins in a separate pan and add to the cooked soup before serving.
- Also delicious served with cubes of sheep's cheese on top.



Herbal Winter Chai

Many of us struggle with coughs, colds and sore throats during the winter months. For most constitutions, the regular use of ginger root is really valuable. It warms the whole body, fights off infections, adds digestive fire which can help poor digestion and sluggish circulation. Adding astragalus root enhances the immune system and saffron brings a ray of sunshine to our winter melancholy.

This makes 2 mugs - because it's nicer drank in company!

- 3 tsp redbush tea (loose or open a bag)
- 2 tsp fresh grated ginger root or 1 tsp dried ginger
- 3 tsp cinnamon
- 3-4 cloves
- 6-8 cardamon pods (slit open)
- Optional 2 tsp astragalus root
- 500 ml boiling water
- 200 ml milk of your choice
- Several strands of saffron
- Honey if required



- Place the tea, astragalus and spices in a pan and add the water
- Bring to the boil and simmer for 10 mins with a lid on (this reduces to 300 ml)
- Add the milk and bring back to simmer point or alternatively heat the milk separately and froth it up.
- Turn it off, add the saffron and let it sit for 5 mins.
- Strain into a mug and add honey if desired

Herbal Tea Offer

I'm giving away a 150g packet of 'Cleanse Tea' when you purchase one of my other herbal products. Offer finishes when all the tea is gone!

Keep in touch with your health concerns and progress. Herbal remedies and dietary advice work together to bring us into balance. They need seasonal changes to be most effective.



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