

Making a Glycerite

Glycerite:

- A glycerite is the mixture of medical substances with glycerin.
- Glycerin is the sweet principle of oils obtained through hydrolysis*.
- When used as the menstruum in an herbal preparation it acts as a solvent and preservative.
- It is effective for tincturing herbs with tannins* because it reduces the precipitation of tannins and alkaloids*.
- Glycerin can absorb water through the air, making obtaining pure glycerin next to impossible. When buying “pure glycerin,” expect at least 5% water.
- For our glycerite, we will be using a 1:4 ratio of herb (chamomile) weight to menstruum volume and using a menstruum of 60% glycerin and 40% water.

*Hydrolysis: The chemical breakdown of a compound due to reaction with water.

*Tannin: A yellowish or brownish bitter-tasting organic substance present in some galls, barks, and other plant tissues, consisting of derivatives of gallic acid, used in leather production and ink manufacture

*Alkaloid: Any of a class of nitrogenous organic compounds of plant origin that have pronounced physiological actions on humans.

Internal actions and properties of German Chamomile (*Matricaria recuita*):

- Improves digestion after meal.
- Calms nervousness: anti-anxiety, promotes deep sleep.
- Relieves spasms of involuntary muscles. (Anti-spasmodic)
- Relieves flatulence (Carminative)
- Anti-inflammatory
- Relieves pain. (Analgesic)
- Prevents the growth of disease-causing microorganisms (Antiseptic)
- When used externally, promotes cellular growth; heals cuts, burns, and wounds. (Vulnerary)



Chamomile is a sweetly scented annual with many branched stems & finely divided leaves about an inch across. It produces daisy-like flowers from early summer to autumn across Western Asia & Europe. It is hardy, the flowers are the part of the plant that is used medicinally.

The Process

1. Grind herb to a moderately coarse powder.
2. Place the powdered herb into a large jar that can be tightly closed.
3. Mix menstruum contents thoroughly before adding herb.
4. Add prepared menstruum to powdered herb.
5. Stir mixture well to fully wet herb and let herb settle.
6. Add more menstruum till ¼in of menstruum sits atop herb.
7. Clean rim and lid of jar. Then cap jar tightly and shake.
8. Check after 12 hours to see if herb has absorbed the menstruum. Add more to reestablish the 1/4in of extra liquid.
9. Shake frequently for 14 days.
10. Decant liquid, press remaining wet pulp, and combine the two liquids.
11. Filter if desired. (Will filter very slowly.)

12. Bottle, tightly cap, and label.

Making an Infused Oil

Infused oil:

- An infusion of medicinal or culinary herb in a fixed oil menstruum.
- Softens the keratin layer of the skin, rendering skin pliable and helping to facilitate the absorption of herbal remedies.
- It is important to protect infused oils from heat, light and moisture.
- We will be using a ratio of 1:5 weight of herb (lavender and calendula) to volume of oil menstruum.

External Properties of Lavender (*Lavendula angustifolia vera*):

- Cooling, relaxant.
- When applied to temples, helps with psychological tension, headaches, spasms, and paralysis.
- Stimulates the development and extension of the capillary network, increasing the surface area the blood flows into the tissues.
- Used topically on burns, where there is vesiculation (the formation of vesicles in or beneath the skin) with redness, and on poisoned wounds such as snake bites.

Lavender is a small shrub with downy, linear leaves around two-and-a-half inches long which are gray when young, with blue-violet flowers in compact or interrupted spikes up to three inches long, found throughout the Middle East, Mediterranean region, and India. Lavenders like well drained neutral to alkaline soils that are open and sunny.



External Properties of Calendula (*Calendula officinalis*):

- “Suited for places where the sun doesn’t shine.” – Glands under neck, axilla (armpit), groin, etc.
- Because it is antiseptic, bacteriostatic*, and hemostatic*, it is used on wounds, sores, burns, and infections.
- Effective on cat scratches.
- Drains hot swollen puss filled wounds.

Calendula is a bushy, aromatic annual with branched stems. Flowers are up to three inches across, with yellow to orange ray florets, produced from spring to autumn from Central Europe to the Mediterranean. It's hardy and its flowers are used medicinally.



*Bacteriostatic: Inhibit growth of bacteria.

*Hemostatic: Checks bleeding by contracting the tissues or blood vessels

The Process

1. Grind herb to a moderately coarse powder.
2. Place the powdered herb into a large jar that can be tightly closed.
3. Add prepared menstruum to powdered herb.
4. Stir mixture well to fully wet herb and let herb settle.
5. Add more menstruum till 1/4in of menstruum sits atop herb.
6. Clean rim and lid of jar. Then cap jar tightly and shake.
7. Check after 24 hours to see if herb has absorbed the menstruum. Add more to reestablish the 1/4in of extra liquid.

8. Place in thick paper bag or box to keep light out, and place in sun for 7-10 days.
9. Shake several times each day.
10. Strain oil from herb, press remaining wet pulp, and combine the two liquids.
11. Allow to sit indoors for several days, then decant and filter out sediment.
12. Bottle, tightly cap, label, and store in cool dark place.