

Ellen's Top Ten Central Texas Herbs

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1. Purple Coneflower, Echinacea purpurea. Astringent herb used to enhance and build your Immune System. As a blood purifier Echinacea is used to increase the body's resistance to infection.

2. Chaste Tree, Vitex agnus-castus. The medicinal berries are used to treat PMS and menopausal symptoms, such as hot flashes and excessive bleeding. As a hormonal balancer, Vitex regulates progesterone and estrogen, treats fibroids and re-establishes normal ovulation and menstruation.

3. Passionflower, Passiflora incarnata. This easily grown climber's leaves and flowers are used as an anti-anxiety medication. It's non-addictive sedative properties treat insomnia, can reduce high blood pressure and acts as a pain killer.

4. Garden Sage, Salvia officinalis. This common garden plants' leaves are used to soothe sore throats and treat infected gums. This herb's strong astringent action helps to slow secretions of fluids; such as excessive sweating, vaginal discharge, milk flow and diarrhea.

5. Catnip, Nepeta cataria. This wonderful herb has a sedative effect on humans (just opposite it's effects on cats). Catnip can be safely used for children to treat colds, flu and to reduce fever. It is also used for colic and as a digestive aid for adults.

6. Horehound, Marrubium vulgare. This very bitter herb is used to treat coughs and lung congestion. It can induce perspiration and is safely used for children. A popular way to take horehound is by eating horehound candy.

7. Mullein, Verbascum thapsus. Often found growing wild, this common plant's leaves are excellent for lung congestion, asthma, bronchitis and sore throats. It's yellow flowers are often combined with garlic and used as infused oil to treat ear infections.

8. Rosemary, Rosmarinus officinalis. This delicious culinary herb (great with poultry and potatoes), is used to stimulate poor circulation. Rosemary is useful in treating headaches, to improve memory and as a digestive herb as it stimulates the flow of bile.

9. Lemon Balm, Melissa officinalis. This easily grown perennial is used to calm night-time headaches, nervous tension and as an anti-depressant. Like other mints it is used to treat upset stomachs, flatulence and colic.

10. Gotu Kola, Centella asiatica. This lovely herb, perfect as a container plant, is used to improve memory and works synergistically with Ginkgo biloba to prevent memory loss, improve circulation to the brain and help alleviate mental confusion.
