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# Making Tea from the Balcony Garden Herbs

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I drink a lot of organic tea but recently realized it?s a cost that adds up, not to mention I?ve been a little tired of my usual flavors. Looking around for something different I realized the answer to my searching has been right under my nose: the herbs in my balcony garden.

I love to grow herbs because whether on the west coast in Seattle using them to season the grill or in a place like Worcester, MA trying to hold off calling an exterminator [1] and use them to repell pests, herbs have so many uses and I keep learning new things about them every day.

Since I spend a lot of time cooking with herbs it didn?t occur to me until recently that I should start enjoying them more as teas. Depending on the season, what I end up killing, and what I may give away as a gift there?s usually several varieties available for brewing.

For instance, some of my personal favorites for this include the following:

Mint

Probably one of the most well-known herbs to people who do not use them so much, mint has special properties which aids digestion and comes to the rescue when nausea persists. It?s also a common aroma which helps with respiratory problems, as it can open up the nasal passages during a particularly annoying cold.

At the same time it makes a wonderful tea and only needs a few leaves to give forth its flavor. Like most other herbal teas picked fresh simply give the leaves a rinse, boil some water, pour the water over the leaves in a mug and drink.

It?s a very pleasant drink, even on a mild summer night, and the leaves can be refilled several times or at least until the leaves start to darken.

Sage

For myself sage feels like a world apart from mint. A fairly interesting looking plant with beautiful flowers (if you can catch them while they last) I like to use it?s fresh leaves on chicken and meat but from a healing perspective its properties soothe sore throats and tempers bad coughs.

While pregnant woman and those nursing should not drink sage tea (that?s what the experts say) the rest of us can enjoy it?s leaves in a cup of hot water, though I?ve found drinking too much can dry me out.

Thyme

The thyme plant always comes across to me as a humble addition to an herb garden whether in the ground or on the balcony. It?s tiny leaves don?t look like much but as anyone who uses it in stews and soups knows it has a wild flavor that is so ?thyme.? In contrast to a cup of coffee which has it?s pleasantries, after drinking tea made from thyme leaves I feel like my entire body is re-energized.

Thyme tea also brings relief from indigestion and when cooled off can be gargled for throat care.

Melissa/Lemon Balm

A member of the mint family some know it as Melissa and others as Lemon Balm.

Either way it?s great in salads and a nice addition when sprinkled on fruit. As a tea it helps treat insomnia, boosts concentration, and lowers anxiety.

Jakob Barry is a green living journalist for Networx.com. Networx.com helps homeowners save time, money and frustration by connecting them with home improvement professionals. From plumbers and roofers to carpenters and exterminators [2], Networx simplifies the process of locating a reliable professional.

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