

You are receiving the Herb of the Month Newsletter because you are a valued Village Herb Shop customer. To ensure delivery to your inbox, please add info@villageherbshop.com to your address book. Having trouble viewing this email? [View it in your Browser](#)

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FYI -

Kathleen and the Village Herb Shop will be on TV Channel 8's "That's Life" s how with Robin Swoboda again on Friday, February 19 between 10 am and 11 am to present easy herbal tips for Natural Cleaning.



KATHLEEN GIPS'

VILLAGE HERB SHOP

HERB OF THE MONTH NEWSLETTER

SHOP OUR STORE

FEBRUARY 2010



Stevia

Botanical Name: *Stevia rebaudiana*

History:

Stevia was discovered in 1887 by Antonio Bertoni. The Paraguayan Indians used stevia to sweeten mate, the popular drink of Paraguay. Stevia was known by the locals as "sweet herb" or "honey yerba". Herbalists of Paraguay used stevia as a sweetener in teas in the early 1900's. In 1931, two French chemists discovered a pure white crystalline compound from their research into Stevia. This white powder was called "Stevioside". Their research found this white powder to be 300 times sweeter than table sugar. Today Stevia is a major crop that is cultivated in and exported from over a dozen countries around the world.

Stevia in the Garden:

Stevia prefers full sun and will reach its sweetest flavor when it is eighty degrees, in full sun, and well watered. It prefers rich garden soil and responds well to additions of Plantone and compost in the pots or in the garden soil around them. Growing stevia directly in the ground will produce larger plants. Fertilizing stevia results in large leaves with little sweetness.

Stevia should be planted when the soil temperature is warm and there is no chance of frost, usually around the third week of May in our climate. Pinch the tips of the plant and use the leaves often during the initial growing period. This will result in a bushy well-rounded plant. Fresh leaves of Stevia are very sweet, and the dried leaves will retain most of the sweetness. Glycosides are the ingredients in the cells of stevia that provide its sweetness. Glycosides dissipate with sun, so the leaves are sweetest in the morning.

Harvesting Stevia

Harvest the leaves of stevia in August or September for

Meaning in the Language of Flowers:

No meaning since it was not grown in Victorian times. Let's give it the meaning "sweetness" since the leaves taste so sweet.

[More about the meaning of flowers](#)

Characteristics:

Stevia has bright green leaves with serrated edges. It is a perennial herb with stems that become slightly woody at the end of the summer growing season here in our North Coast climate. In a pot on the patio Stevia will grow to about two feet high in our season. It is native to the hilly region of north east Paraguay. In natural growth in Paraguay, it can grow to over three feet in height with many branches.

Pinching and snipping stevia's leaves and branches produces a bushy plant. Its purple or white flowers are rarely seen in our climate. The leaves are frost sensitive and will die with the first frost. Sunshine is needed to produce the sweetness in the leaves, so stevia plants in our climate in late fall are not as sweet as in midsummer. The growth of stevia is stunted when temperatures exceed ninety degrees.

It prefers 75 to 80 degrees with adequate water in the soil.

Recipes

Banana Bread with Stevia

2 eggs, beaten
2/3 cup butter
1 cup mashed ripe bananas (approx. 2)
1/3 cup milk
1 teaspoon vanilla
2 1/2 cups whole wheat flour
1 teaspoon baking soda
1/2 teaspoon salt
2 tablespoons green powdered stevia
1/2 cup chopped nuts
1/4 teaspoon freshly grated nutmeg
1 tablespoon grated orange rind

Beat eggs and butter until creamy. Beat in bananas, milk and vanilla at medium speed until well blended. Mix dry ingredients together in a separate bowl. Add banana mixture to dry ingredients and mix until all dry material is moistened. Pour into a well greased loaf pan (9x5) and bake in a pre heated oven at 350 degrees for one hour. Test until toothpick comes out clean. This bread freezes well. Serve with lemon or orange curd.



Equivalent Amounts

Green Stevia Powder
8-10 times sweeter than sugar
1 cup sugar = 1 1/2 to 2 tablespoons of stevia

White Stevia Extract Powder
200-300 times sweeter than sugar
1 cup sugar = 1/4 teaspoon of stevia extract

drying. Be sure to harvest before flowers are seen and before the sunny hours have decreased. Both of these conditions result in decreased sweetness in the leaves. After flowers appear on the stevia plant the leaves begin to taste bitter.

Cut the entire plant and place it loosely in a large paper grocery bag. Dry in a warm, dry, dim location until the leaves are crisp. Remove the leaves from the stems. Use a small spice/coffee grinder to grind the leaves into a green powder. Grinding the leaves in a mortar and pestle is also an effective way to make the stevia powder. Store the powder in small airtight jars and it will keep for a long time.

This green powder is preferred over the Stevioside which is white and has the chlorophyll and the other vitamins and nutrients removed. Always look for the green stevia including all the chlorophyll and nutrients. The fresh leaves of stevia contain almost 100 identified phytonutrients and volatile oils. Stevia extracts do not have these nutritional benefits.

Stevia as a Natural Sweetener

Stevia is an all-natural, low-calorie, sugar-free super sweetener. In Japan, China, and South America stevia is a common tabletop sweetener and is contained in many food products. It is sold in China as a tea recommended for "increasing the appetite, to promote weight loss, for keeping one youthful, and as a sweet tasting low-caloric tea." In the U.S. the FDA has not yet approved stevia as GRAS (generally regarded as safe) when it is used as an ingredient in processed foods. Soon perhaps, stevia will replace the synthetic artificial sweeteners that bring health concerns along with their use.

Stevia in the Kitchen

Stevioside is 300 times sweeter than sugar. Dried stevia leaf is 10 times sweeter than sugar. About 1/8 teaspoon of stevia powder equals one teaspoon of sugar. It takes only one fresh leaf to sweeten a cup of tea. The flavor of stevia is not the same as sugar. Sugar amounts can be reduced in recipes by using stevia. If a recipe calls for 2 cups of white granular sugar, use only 1 cup white sugar and 1 1/2 to 2 tablespoons of green stevia powder to reduce the caloric content of foods. Stevia needs special recipes since the substitution cannot provide the bulk of white sugar in your favorite recipes.

Use stevia to brew iced tea or hot tea. Put the fresh leaves right in the tea as it steeps. The result is a sweet tea with no added calories. Dried green stevia powder will not dissolve in beverages like sugar does. The green powder floats on the top, but its sweetness definitely sweetens tea. At home I will often add stevia leaf into my favorite loose

tea blends. The added sweetness heightens the flavor of some herbs.


Stevia is also the perfect sweetener for fresh fruits and cereal. Just chop the fresh stevia leaves into your fruit or breakfast for a no-calorie sweetener.

Keep a bowl of stevia powder on the table to add to all beverages.

Medicinal Actions

Native South Americans use stevia to treat diabetes, but scientific facts do not yet support stevia as a cure for diabetes. Stevia does not raise the blood sugar level when used as a natural sweetener.

Stevia is available for sale at The Village Herb Shop.

At VillageHerbShop.com you'll enjoy
FREE SHIPPING
On orders of \$75 or more
Shop our online store today for popular products and our own VHS branded products!
[SHOP ONLINE](#) 

Thymes Kimono Rose Room Spray

\$9.00 Off (50% Off)
Special Internet Only Price \$8.95 Reg. Price 17.95
ONLINE PROMO CODE: KIMONO
*Expires 3/15/10.
Excludes S/H or sales tax.



Featured Products:



[Pre de Provence Pomegranate Soap](#)

Internet Only - \$5.25
Reg. Price \$6.95

[MORE INFO](#) 



[Village Herb Shop Apricot Ginger Teriyaki Glaze](#)

Internet Only - \$4.95
Reg. Price \$5.95

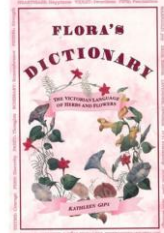
[MORE INFO](#) 



[Caldrea Green Tea Patchouli Dish Soap Liquid](#)

Internet Only - \$6.75
Reg. Price \$8.95

[MORE INFO](#) 



[Flora's Dictionary - Victorian Language of Herbs and Flowers by Kathleen Gips](#)

Internet Only - \$10.95
Reg. Price \$16.95

[MORE INFO](#) 

[Recipes](#)

Sweet Lemon Tea

A delicious lemon flavored green tea. Serve iced or hot.

Ingredients:

2 tablespoons lemon verbena
1 tablespoon lemon peel
1 tablespoon lemongrass
1 tablespoon rose hips
1 teaspoon dried stevia leaf, crushed
1/2 cup green tea

Directions:

Combine the ingredients above and stir until well blended. Place in a glass jar or airtight tin. Makes one cup of mix. Use a small muslin bag as a reusable tea bag to brew tea.

Directions for use:

Brewing Directions: Place 1 teaspoon loose tea in a tea ball or tea infuser. Pour boiling water in cup and steep covered for 2 or 3 minutes. Sip and savor.



Our Upcoming Classes and Events

[VIEW ALL](#) 

- Note: The Village Herb Shop will be closed on Sundays - January through March**

FYI -

Kathleen and the Village Herb Shop will be on TV Channel 8's "That's Life" show with Robin Swoboda again on Friday, February 19 between 10 am and 11 am to present easy herbal tips for Natural Cleaning.

- Saturday, February 20, 2010**
11:00 am to 2:30 pm

[FREE Personal Natural Skin Care and Make-up Analysis](#)

By Ecco Bella Makeup Artist and Esthetician Jann Cellura

This Ecco Bella personal make-up or skin care analysis is FREE. Sign up for make-up or skin care analysis in half hour time slots from 11 am to 2:30 pm. Call to reserve your session.



Herb Craft of the Month
[Learn a New Herb Craft Every Month!](#)

Join us for February's Craft:
Hearts of Rose Sachet in a Floral Heart Box

Join us for March's Craft:
Roll-On Headache Relief

Join us for April's Craft:
All Natural Lemon Mint All-Purpose Cleaner in a Spray Bottle

Sign up Early! Come in during the month of February and ask for a free travel size sample of Ecco Bella facial care products.
Class fee: FREE
Reservations Please

New Year, New Decade and a Fresh Start for You!

Presented by Mary Landies

Saturday, February 20 11:00 am - 12:00 pm

An informational class and a strategy that will help you maneuver your way through Detoxing yourself and your environment.

With demonstrations and explanation of the benefits of ear candling, the Neti Pot and how to swallow a clove of garlic without tasting it! You'll leave with recipes for making your own household cleaners and a very do-able plan to boost your immune system and your overall well-being.

Join Mary Landies, reflexologist, for this 'feel good' class that lasts approx. 45 minutes.

Reservations please. Contact Mary directly at 440-279-3202 to sign up.
Fee: No Charge

Saturday, February 27

11:00 am to 12:00 pm

Sleep and Relaxation: A Natural and Herbal Approach

Join this class to learn therapy with aroma and how important our sense of smell is to our healing and health. Essential oils contained in herbs can effectively and safely heal and soothe and promote relaxation, stress relief and a resulting better night's sleep.

Let us show you simple methods to use herbs and aromatherapy safely, easily and economically. Learn how to blend herbs and essential oils and use them in your every day life from foot bath to tub bath to teas and sprays.

Class will take home a Relaxation Roll-on applicator to reduce stress and promote sleep when applied to pulse points, Sleep Easy Bath Salts and Sleepy Time Room and Body Spray.

Reservations Required.
Class Fee: \$15.00

Saturday, March 6 Jam, Tea & Scones with Lyons Market

11:00 am to 4:00 pm

Join us on, for a taste of our Lyons Market gourmet jams and jellies. The Lyons family will be on hand offering a wide variety of their gourmet recipes featuring the March Jam-of-the-Month. Learn more about the blood orange and other Lyons Market secrets as you sample the jams atop our freshly baked Sticky Fingers Scones, savored with a hot cup of our tea!

Free. No reservations required.

Saturday, March 6 Tea Leaf Readings by Lynette Trolli

1:00 pm - 4:00 pm

Psychic Reader and Clairvoyant

Lynette will be scheduling tea leaf readings March 6 from 1-4 pm. Please call Lynette at 216-481-3588 to schedule the time for your personal tea leaf reading. Just leave a message on her machine with the time you prefer. Lynette is very popular among our customers and will be reading tea leaves in our upstairs classroom.

Reservations Please
Fee: \$20 for 20 minutes.

Saturday, March 13 Aromatherapy 101

11:00 am to 12:00 noon How to Get Well from the Smell!

Confused about what aromatherapy is and what it can do for your life. Join us to learn the essential facts about aromatherapy. Learn how you can "Get Well From the Smell" of natural plant essences. Learn the definition of

Join us for May's Craft:

Lavender Lemonade Mix

Follow our simple step-by-step do-it-yourself directions to make your own craft any day of the week.

All supplies are included for this one low price. **Fee: \$5.00 each.**

[LEARN MORE](#)



essential oils and experience the effects of different scents. Essential oils can effectively and safely heal and soothe. Would you like to feel alert and be less sleepy?, have more energy?, sleep better?, relax?, have a better memory?, be happier? Let us show you simple methods to use aromatherapy safely. Learn how to blend essential oils and use them in your every day life. Class will take home an essential oil kit including the six most used essential oils for health and well being including a booklet on how to use these essential oils for aromatherapy.

Reservations required.

Class Fee: \$25.00

Includes aromatherapy kit with essential oils and instructional booklet.

Class fee without kit: \$15.00

Please specify if you will be signing up for class with or without the kit and booklet.

March 20, Saturday

11:00 am - 2:30 pm

FREE Personal Natural Skin Care and Make-up Analysis

This Ecco Bella personal make-up or skin care analysis is FREE. Sign up for make-up or skin care analysis in half hour time slots from 11 am to 2:30 pm. Call to reserve your session.

We will be offering this free service monthly. Come in to see a more radiant you in only two weeks with the Ecco Bella two week facial care kit. Sign up Early!

Class Fee: Free

Reservations Please.

Saturday, March 27

1:00 pm to 2:00 pm

**Abbots, Arbors and Flowering Meads:
A Medieval Garden of Herbs**

Presented by Kathleen Gips

As told by Lady Catherine of Louvain, circa 1429

Lady Catherine will arrive at your banquet hall in full medieval costume and character. She will curtsy to each guest while Gregorian chant music announces her arrival. The Lady is presented with the task of being a mentor to the group of young maids in the audience who desire to become proper ladies in the year of our Lord, 1429. The Lady of a medieval manor has a vast knowledge of herbs and uses them to promote the well being of her family and her home. Important herbs of this time period will be described with instruction and practice.

Lady Catherine will come prepared to demonstrate her daily duties. Young maids from the audience will be asked to show their skills in various tasks as taught by the Lady including preparing the hall with strewing herbs, sprinkling the guests with rose water, combing their hair with a rosemary branch and beautifying their face with orris root powder. There will be a rosemary bride's parade. The Lady will show how to dispel witches and prepare a proper "stew" or herbal bath for healing.

This program is light and humorous while, at the same time, educational about the uses of herbs in medieval times. It will include audience interaction with props and demonstrations. Lady Catherine will be in character throughout the program until her final exit. She will answer any questions about herb gardening during the Middle Ages. She will explain her costume and talk about the research done for this program at Gaasbeek castle in the Burgundy area of Belgium.

Join us for the celebration of the first day of spring with a sampling of Meade and medieval fare.

Note: Wear medieval attire and receive magical herbs from Lady Catherine. Reservations Required.

Program fee; \$15.00.

Saturday, April 3 Jam, Tea & Scones with Lyons Market

11:00 am to 4:00 pm

Join us on, for a taste of our Lyons Market gourmet jams and jellies. The Lyons family will be on hand offering a wide variety of their gourmet recipes featuring the March Jam-of-the-Month. Learn more about the blood orange and other Lyons Market secrets as you sample the jams atop our freshly baked Sticky Fingers Scones, savored with a hot cup of our tea!

Free. No reservations required.

April 10, Saturday

11:00 am - 12:00 noon

Rootbeer Plant, Samphire and Other Unusual Plant Varieties
Presented by Karen Langon of Mulberry Creek Herb Farm

Diversity is the specialty at Mulberry Creek Organic Herb Farm. What's on the cutting edge in the plant world? We grow and know how to use over 400 varieties of herbs. See, feel and smell a couple dozen of them and open your eyes beyond Genovese Basil and French Thyme. We will have a selection of these unusual herbs available for special purchase after the program.

Karen and Mark Langon own Mulberry Creek Herb Farm which supplies the Village Herb Shop with our organic and unusual herbs each season. Plant variety and education are the strong points of Mulberry Creek. At present, they grow over 700 varieties of culinary and useful herbs, miniature perennials and heirloom vegetable plants. Karen and Mark are herb growing experts who actually use herbs for cooking, healing, relaxing and living! Join Karen for an inspiring talk about herbs.

Class Fee: \$15 - includes one free herb plant

When will the Herb Plants Arrive at the Herb Shop?

Hardier varieties such as lavender, rosemary, sage, tarragon, chives will be available in mid-April. Since we do not have a green house, all of our plants are "seasoned-off" and ready to plant when we have them for sale. Tender varieties such as lemon balm and mint will be available in late April and the most tender varieties such as basil, marjoram will arrive in early May. Tropical plants like lemon verbena and lemon grass break dormancy late and will be available in mid-May. New herbs are delivered every week. Our unusual and organic herb selections are delivered early every Thursday morning. Look for these special herb selections on their own display located next to the herb garden in the front garden area.

April 15 - Herb Plants Arrive!

We Take Herb Plant Special Requests!

Call in your herb plant requests to our plant request file.

We will be happy to take your herb plant requests, order the plants for you and call you when your plants arrive.

Check your herb plant wish list now and give us a call!

(Herb plants available April through July.)

Hints from the Herb Lady:

Herb seeds are more successful when planted directly in the ground or in pots in April when the soil is warm enough to till. Herbs really are not happy indoors!

Basil must have a warm soil temperature to thrive. Plant basil plants or seeds when night temperatures are 50 degrees or warmer. Until then, keep basil in a pot outdoors during the day and bring indoors at night.

Rosemary prefers cool, bright conditions indoors. Move the rosemary plants outdoors as soon as night temperatures are over 30 degrees and pot soil will not freeze. This is usually in late March in our area. Move rosemary indoors on the days we have snow or ice.

April 21 Herb Gardening Club

Join our Green Team of herb garden enthusiasts.

Our club will meet the second Wednesday of every month. We will work two hours to maintain the herb garden in the front of our shop. Learn to manage your herb garden by working in ours. Learn how to plant and maintain an herb garden by practicing hands-on gardening techniques. Each month club members will learn the best techniques to plant, fertilize, cultivate, grow and harvest herbs with organic gardening practices.

We will discuss uses of herbs and share the harvest. Come dressed for gardening and **prepared to work in the garden** from 10 am to 12 noon. Bring tools, scissors and gloves. After gardening, bring a sandwich and join Kathleen for lunch with an edible flower salad and herbal bread. We will enjoy new friendships and have an informal question and answer session. Unable to work in the garden? Bring your own lawn chair and learn while you watch us work. Membership is **FREE**. Join anytime. **Reservations Please.**

Work in Gardens: 10:00 - 12:00 pm

Mini herb class and lunch 12:00 pm - 1:00 pm

Herb Garden Focus

Wednesday, April 21 - Inaugural Meeting : Spring clean up, prune and feed roses, soil cultivation, plant hardy herbs, bone meal application

Wednesday, May 19 - Plant edible flower seeds, organic soil toning, lime application, planting of annual herbs

Herb Gardening Club Benefits

Herb Garden Knowledge and Learning from fellow herb gardeners. Free fresh cut herbs from the garden. Plant exchange among members. More....

Saturday, April 24, 2010 VHS Tea Tasting Club

Two tea tasting seatings:

AM: 10:30 am to 12:00 noon

PM: 2:00 pm to 3:30 pm

Learn about tea, taste tea and have a tea party.

- Demonstrations of proper brewing techniques and tips on serving tea
- Taste a variety of teas: red, green, black, herbal

- Enjoy tea time desserts with friends

Reservations Required. Seating is limited.

Fee: \$5 at the door for each seat. **Free** admission if you bring tea time sandwiches, bread or dessert to share.

Join us to sip and savor!

Next Quarterly Tea Tasting will be held on July 24, 2010

Would you like to have a Tea Tasting Party for your group? Ask us!

NEW PRODUCTS ARRIVING DAILY

- We enjoyed a very successful buying trip to the Atlanta Gift market in January. The selections that Kathleen has chosen to delight our customers are arriving daily. The store is already filled with new merchandise for your shopping pleasure. With new products in every corner and many new displays, the shop will soon have a whole new look.

New products will continue to arrive throughout the year. Come in often to see what's new. We will always have unique products at great prices. See our wide selection of new **loose teas and tea ware, new tea breads, flowering teas, and the best tea pots for loose teas.** We have new **candies and fudge from Nancy's Candies,** fresh new colors and scents in **square candles from Texas General** will arrive every two months, and two new scents from **Greenleaf - Valencia and Garden Breeze.**
Join us at the Village Herb Shop for all the excitement.

- **Cookbook Trade:**

Bring your unwanted, used cookbooks to our cookbook trade. Bring one, get one. Take one cookbook for each one you bring in. See our cookbook trade basket in our upstairs classroom.

WE ARE HIRING: Are you interested in working at the Village Herb Shop on the weekends? We are hiring seasonal help beginning in April. Come join our team and learn more about herbs.

- *Remember to SHOP LOCAL and support your favorite small stores! We all appreciate your patronage.*





Monday through Saturday: 10 am - 5 pm

Sundays: Closed on Sundays
January through March: 12 noon - 4 pm
April through August: Closed on Sundays
September: 12 noon - 4 pm
October through December:



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