

Amelia:

3, 2, 1.

Rosalee de la Forêt:

Welcome to the Herbs with Ro-

Mason Hutchison:

Welcome back to the Herbs with Ro-

Rosalee de la Forêt:

Wait. Are you starting?

Mason Hutchison:

I thought I was the host.

Rosalee de la Forêt:

Okay. I mean, it's my show.

Mason Hutchison:

Okay. So, okay. Alright, you-

Rosalee de la Forêt:

No. You—you—you do it.

Mason Hutchison:

Maybe start over.

Rosalee de la Forêt:

Okay.

Mason Hutchison:

Welcome back to the Herbalist Hour.

Rosalee de la Forêt:

No. It's Herbs with Rosalee.

Mason Hutchison:

I'm sorry. I'm used to it. It's a force of habit. Sorry. I'll get this, I promise. I'm a little nervous. Okay.

Amelia:

It's a blooper of a blooper.

Rosalee de la Forêt:

Welcome to the Herbs With Rosalee Podcast—a show all about how herbs heal, as medicine, as food, and through deep connection with the living world.

I can hardly believe it, but we've made it to 200 episodes!

Since this felt like a milestone worth celebrating, we decided to do something special. I traveled down to Salem, Oregon to be interviewed in person by my good buddy Mason Hutchison from HerbRally. Mason really showed up with thoughtful (sometimes very vulnerable) questions—and he even threw in a few surprises along the way, but you'll have to tune in to figure out what those are.

On a personal note, there are two big reasons this podcast has lasted this long. The first is the incredible team that brings it to life every single week. With so many moving parts happening behind the scenes, I truly couldn't do it without them. Included in that is the fabulous guests who have said yes to this show! Honestly, I ask a lot of my guests—they have to do a lot of prep work!—and yet so many have shown up with their full heart and joy and I'm continually grateful for that as well!

And the second reason this show has made it this long is you. Honestly, if you weren't here week after week, tuning in, sharing your love of plants, commenting, spreading the word, I definitely would have given this up long ago. So you're what keeps me fueled. Thank you, thank you. Truly.

On a side note, if you usually listen to the podcast, that's awesome, but for this one you might especially enjoy watching—we have a lot of B-roll going on behind the scenes.

Alright, so here it is—our 200th episode. Thank you for being here. I hope you enjoy it!

Mason Hutchison:

Welcome back to the Herbs with Rosalee Podcast. I am honored and excited to celebrate the big 200th episode. I'm your guest host, Mason Hutchison, and how are you doing, Rosalee?

Rosalee de la Forêt:

Well, I'm pretty excited to do this.

Mason Hutchison:

Did you celebrate a hundredth episode?

Rosalee de la Forêt:

No.

Mason Hutchison:

Okay. I was wondering about that.

Rosalee de la Forêt:

I don't even know when it was.

Mason Hutchison:

It just passed right on by.

Rosalee de la Forêt:

Yeah, yeah.

Mason Hutchison:

Well, here we are. Two hundred is a huge milestone. I don't know if a lot of you know this, but I actually just Googled it, but I've always heard the stat thrown around that a lot of podcasts have the best intentions to start, and then they stop after like seven episodes. Have you heard that before?

Rosalee de la Forêt:

Uh hmm.

Mason Hutchison:

And you far surpassed that. Two hundred episodes is epic, so I kind of want to spend a lot of time with you today. This might be a more unconventional Herbs with Rosalee episode, so I'm really excited to—to ask some of these questions, and uh-

Rosalee de la Forêt:

Can I give you some props first?

Mason Hutchison:

Me?

Rosalee de la Forêt:

Yeah.

Mason Hutchison:

Me?

Rosalee de la Forêt:

Well, this is your idea. So, we-

Mason Hutchison:

Can I be on your show again?

Rosalee de la Forêt:

So, we knew that the 200th episode was coming up. One of my team alerted me to the fact, and so I called up Mason, and I was like, “What should we do, 200 episodes?” and this was your idea that we do-

Mason Hutchison:

I probably even said I should be the host.

Rosalee de la Forêt:

That I was interviewee.

Mason Hutchison:

I probably said someone should interview you. That’s probably what I said.

Rosalee de la Forêt:

I think you said—yeah, and I said the—because I remember specifically saying the only person I want me to—I want to be interviewed by is you.

Mason Hutchison:

I’m honored.

Rosalee de la Forêt:

And we made it happen in-person.

Mason Hutchison:

Yeah. This is going to be awesome. This is your second time doing it.

Rosalee de la Forêt:

Well, you know, it's actually my third-

Mason Hutchison:

Okay.

Rosalee de la Forêt:

Because my first, you interviewed me in person, at my house.

Mason Hutchison:

That's true, Herbalist Hour, yeah.

Rosalee de la Forêt:

That was my first one, and then the second one, I interviewed you, and now, you're interviewing me.

Mason Hutchison:

There we go.

Rosalee de la Forêt:

So, here we go.

Mason Hutchison:

Back and forth, a little ping-pong, herbal ping-pong here. So, let's focus, really, kind of around your podcast for the first segment. I kind of chunked it in segments, and we're just going to go on a journey of Rosalee's life. Your herbal journey is going to be fascinating. Two hundred episodes—we've already said that a lot. I mean, it's a huge milestone.

How would you say recording that many episodes, some of them are interviews, some of them are like solo herbs, and you've got kind of a breadth of different types of episodes you do. But after recording that many, how would you say it has changed you as an herbalist, entrepreneur person, however you want to take that?

Rosalee de la Forêt:

Well, when I think back to the beginning, like the very beginning of the podcast, I didn't really know what I was getting into. I sent out a survey to my email list and I said, "Hey, how do you want to hear from me?" and podcast and YouTube came up, and I was like, "Nah. Thank you, but no," but then it's just like the brain niggles. I just kept thinking about it and thinking about it. I was like, "Okay." So, yeah, we decided to dive in. This was not like a skill set that I had and wasn't even a dream of mine, so I would say, in the beginning, I was definitely terrified and very self-conscious, and it was like big. I asked Rosemary to be one of the first guests.

Mason Hutchison:

Makes sense.

Rosalee de la Forêt:

Yeah, because I absolutely adore her, but that was like also very, "Ohh!" So, I've definitely relaxed into it. I think it's—I have a belief that we should always be growing, and growing isn't always comfortable, and so I'm glad that I took the step and have grown through it. So, there's that. I had to grow a lot even as a team because something I increasingly learn about myself is I don't really do anything small, and so the podcast has become really complicated over the years in the best of ways. That's the way I want it to be. Just that we have botanical illustrations, and recipes, and the format that we follow, and everything, so the team had to grow and I had to grow as a person in order to be okay with having a bigger team because that's like—I mean, it takes a lot growth in your own mindset to do that as well. So, yes, there are ways like that that I've grown. My apothecary has grown.

Mason Hutchison:

Naturally.

Rosalee de la Forêt:

Yes, because I have-

Mason Hutchison:

People keep sending you stuff.

Rosalee de la Forêt:

That does happen. That does happen. I have a new philosophy on that, by the way. I used to guard things or like hold on to things, like, “Oh, this is so special. So and so gave it to me,” or “Oh, it’s a really special harvest,” or a special herb. Now, when I get stuff, I’m like, “I’ll use this as fast as I can.” That’s my new mantra. I just try to use everything as fast as I can because I just find things on the shelf few years later and I don’t like that, so I’ve been pretty good about that-

Mason Hutchison:

Totally.

Rosalee de la Forêt:

Just use it all up. But no, because I have the guests on the show, and they talk about this one herb, and it’s the herb that they love and the herb that they’re connected to. They talk about it in all these amazing ways, and after every episode, I’m like, “I have to have this herb in my life everyday,” and so my apothecary has grown that way, which has been fun. I’ve been introduced to new herbs. I’ve come to appreciate herbs that I, maybe, didn’t appreciate as much before. So, there’s that.

Mason Hutchison:

We've talked a little bit about how when you have a guest on, they talk about their herb. You're like, "I need more of that herb in my life." That happens a lot, doesn't it?

Rosalee de la Forêt:

Oh, yeah, yeah, yeah. Yeah, that happens, and um, yeah. I think in the beginning too, Mason, I used to be nervous to meet people. I would be really nervous, like, oh, my gosh, like the day leading up to the interview, I'd be nervous. Now, I feel so much excitement.

Mason Hutchison:

That's so cool.

Rosalee de la Forêt:

And just honored to meet people. I was just—and curious, like who is—sometimes I know the people really well. Sometimes I don't know them at all. Every time, it's like there's curiosity. Who is this person? How'd they get called to the plant path? I will say every single person that I've interviewed and asked how-did-you-find-your-way-here kind of thing, I always find some similarity and some just kinship in being plant people together, so it's been fun.

Mason Hutchison:

Absolutely!

Rosalee de la Forêt:

Yeah.

Hey, it's Rosalee. You know, creating this podcast has been one of the most rewarding parts of my herbal work, and if you found something meaningful here, whether it's a new perspective, a favorite recipe or just a sense of calm, I want to let you know there's a good way to go even deeper. It's called the "Podcast Circle." Inside you'll get access to live classes taught by some of my favorite herbal teachers, behind-the-scenes updates, and a beautiful library of herbal

resources that we've gathered over the years. But more than that, it's a space to connect with fellow plant lovers who care about the same things you do. And truly, your membership helps make this podcast possible. It's how we keep the episodes coming and the herbal goodness flowing. So, if you're ready to be part of something more, something rooted in connection, head over to HerbalPodcastCircle.com. I'd love to see you there.

Mason Hutchison:

Here's maybe a softball question for you. Has it been fun?

Rosalee de la Forêt:

Well, like in the beginning, you know, I think I was really self-conscious. It was hard. I kind of second-guessed myself a lot, but pretty quickly, I began to see the best episodes were the ones where I had the most fun.

Mason Hutchison:

Yeah.

Rosalee de la Forêt:

Like, actually, so I interviewed you about oats a couple of years ago, and we're friends, and that was just like I think I felt more relaxed in that episode and I had a lot of fun. You had gone all out, done oats for like 30 days and stuff. I don't know. It was just really fun engaging with you on that one. That one sticks out as one that I was like, "Oh, that was a lot of fun!"

Mason Hutchison:

Yeah, you get to interview your friends.

Rosalee de la Forêt:

Yeah, that is helpful. When I interviewed jim, a good friend of mine, he's—of course, jim is fun.

Mason Hutchison:

Yeah.

Rosalee de la Forêt:

And interviewing him is fun. I just began to realize the ones where I loosen up and I'm not worried about perfectionism, which is never a problem, but I just do have fun. Those are the best episodes, so I think I've really leaned into that. Actually, I tell my guests most of the—most of the time before we start, I say we'll know we've done a good job if we had a fun time.

Mason Hutchison:

I have to imagine that's most of the time.

Rosalee de la Forêt:

Oh, yeah.

Mason Hutchison:

Except that one time.

Rosalee de la Forêt:

Yeah, I don't know that there—if any one hasn't been fun-fun, it's always technical difficulties.

Mason Hutchison:

Right. Oh, yeah.

Rosalee de la Forêt:

Which I haven't had that in a long time, really, but sometimes the technical diff—that's like the only negative of the podcast. With Zoom and stuff, like my internet can be slow, or just something like that.

Mason Hutchison:

Another advantage of doing in-person, but then again, there's—I don't want to speak it into existence, but, yeah. Okay, so, how do you feel as if—well, first of all, have you gone back and relistened to some of your old episodes?

Rosalee de la Forêt:

I just listened to your oats one because I just interviewed you.

Mason Hutchison:

You're like, "Mason was really awkward back then."

Rosalee de la Forêt:

No. I was—I was really impressed with that episode, actually. Listening to yourself is like the worst thing ever, but that is advice people give all the time: You have to listen to yourself to improve.

Mason Hutchison:

Totally.

Rosalee de la Forêt:

Maybe that's why I'm not improving so much. I don't know.

Mason Hutchison:

Gotta relisten to them.

Rosalee de la Forêt:

It's kind of painful. Actually, I also recently listened to Phyllis Light talk about sumac because I just interviewed her again too, so I was listening to her first episode. Man, that episode blew me away again! I remember listening the first time being like, "This is so good," but no, that was excellent. I think I actually messaged you and said, "I actually did a good job on that one,"

and then I was nervous like, am I going to do just as good of a job when I reinterview her? Like, I intimidated myself.

Mason Hutchison:

Totally. How did it turn out?

Rosalee de la Forêt:

I think really good.

Mason Hutchison:

You probably constantly surprise yourself like, “That wasn’t as difficult as I thought it was going to be. It went smoother and I had a great time.” The herbal community is just full of characters and wonderful people, so-

Rosalee de la Forêt:

And people are so kind too. We’re not here, I think, to be perfectionists. People aren’t expecting the highest production value and all this kind of stuff. People are very forgiving and kind.

Mason Hutchison:

[crosstalk]

Rosalee de la Forêt:

Yeah, yeah.

Mason Hutchison:

Do you think you’ve grown as a interviewer, and if so, how so?

Rosalee de la Forêt:

I would like to think that I have, for sure. I think it has been just calming down a bit and becoming more grounded. I always do a breath with the guest before we start.

Mason Hutchison:

We did that.

Rosalee de la Forêt:

Yeah, we did that. That helps because I get kind of like—not necessarily nervous, but excited up in my head, so I try to bring it back down again.

Mason Hutchison:

Totally.

Rosalee de la Forêt:

One thing that's interesting about being a podcast host is I have a direction that I want—I want to go in. I have questions I want to ask pre-determined, but then you have to be relaxed enough to go with the flow.

Mason Hutchison:

Yes.

Rosalee de la Forêt:

And that's like two different energies to maintain at the same time. I think I have gotten a little bit better at being in the flow and catching those, "Oh can you please elaborate on that?" kind of thing.

Mason Hutchison:

That's sometimes where all the juiciness is.

Rosalee de la Forêt:

Exactly.

Mason Hutchison:

I still work on that too.

Rosalee de la Forêt:

I feel like I have a long ways to go on that, honestly, but working on it.

Mason Hutchison:

Never ending process. Yeah, I definitely find myself in the same position where I want to—like, for this interview, I want to—I want to hit on these points, but I want to also be present for you. So, it's a challenge, for sure. Awesome! Well, I would love it for you to take a few moments to maybe tell us all about what goes into these episodes, because like you said, you don't do anything small just from the beautiful artwork. You're not just paste-copy-pasting MP3 files to the internet. You go all in on every episode. There's recipes and beautiful artwork. Clearly, there's a team behind it, so if you want to speak about everything that goes into the podcast.

Rosalee de la Forêt:

Sure. Yeah, in some ways, I feel like I did a good job of simplifying the podcast and that I have a formula. It's very formulaic. I ask basically the same four main questions each time, and that part is somewhat simple, but there's—a lot goes into it because we ask our guest to bring a recipe, and/or a download. For the record, I tell people I will do the recipe if you don't want to, so it's not like a requirement. For me, I love practicalness, and I always love the idea of what I offer as being a stepping-off point into something else. I like the idea of people doing things themselves in their own kitchen, so they really get to enjoy their own experience actively, instead of just passively. The recipe is a big part of the show. We ask the guest to bring a recipe if they want to, then we edit the recipe to make sure it fits a similar format. Then, there's the production of the recipe because I began working with Tatiana many years ago.

She's a botanical illustrator, so she does the botanical illustration for every single recipe, and then, so, shout out to Tatiana for that.

Mason Hutchison:

I was floored when I found out that every one was unique to that particular episode. I was like "Maybe these are pre-existing images already," but no they—

Rosalee de la Forêt:

Each recipe and each herb too. So, we do have a backlog of herbs, but for example, we just—I just interviewed Patricia Kyritsi Howell. She talked about black cohosh. We didn't have that illustration, and so she does an illustration of that plant too. We always link it with something in the fauna, like a butterfly or some other insect or a mammal, or whatever that might be. For the kelp, we had an otter. So, whatever, there's always something else along with it as well. Then we have Jenny, who's our graphic designer. She puts it into a recipe card, so everyone gets to download their recipe card for each episode. Emilie is like my right-hand woman. She does so much for the production of the podcast. I always tell people I just show up. Emilie does all the heavy lifting because she is making this massive system all flow together. So, she's actually booking the guests, getting their appointment, interacting with them on everything, answering their questions, making sure they're all set up. Some people are like—some people who come on the show have done a hundred podcasts, and some people, it's their first podcast, and so there's like the technicality of that as well. She's working all that. She also does the show notes. She's also coordinating the recipe, the editing and stuff. She's really like the production—production host of that. And then you have, of course, there's the audio-video editing; we have Francesca doing the audio-video editing, so that's a big part of it as well, and then checking on that. Francesca doesn't just audit, do editing, she's putting up B roll, making it look pretty, and the music, all that kind of stuff. And we have new music for the show, by the way.

Mason Hutchison:

Nice! So, I heard.

Rosalee de la Forêt:

Yeah, so that's exciting.

Mason Hutchison:

Will it be out for this episode?

Rosalee de la Forêt:

You know, I think it's going to be out for your episode, which is the last one.

Mason Hutchison:

Sweet. Awesome.

Rosalee de la Forêt:

It's exciting. We do transcripts for every show and we have a human do that. We started with the auto stuff, but it was just so much work to make it really good.

Mason Hutchison:

They probably mess up the plant names a lot.

Rosalee de la Forêt:

They do, yeah, so Jennifer does our transcripts as well.

Mason Hutchison:

Very cool.

Rosalee de la Forêt:

Then there's like the backend of it, with—and our Social Media Manager and tech person, Alex. So, there's all the uploading it to different systems. I don't even know what else. We got to do the social media to promote it. Then there's all the comments that come in. People ask questions, share their thing. I look at almost every—I mean, probably every single comment

that comes in, email. I get all the big emails. If someone sends a paragraph, then I get it. If someone says “thank you,” I don’t necessarily see that. All the YouTube comments and stuff, I see all of those, but Emilie, same Production Manager Emilie, and Karin, are on those, the comments and supporting people if they have questions or need help, and that sort of thing. And then, we have Nicole. She’s the operator for the whole Herbs with Rosalee team. She’s even like this more eagle-eyed view of everything that’s going on.

Mason Hutchison:

Sure.

Rosalee de la Forêt:

She was my first podcast Production Manager. She started the show with me and stuff, so she knows all the ins and outs of it. We got my handsome French husband, Xavier.

Mason Hutchison:

Yeah, yeah.

Rosalee de la Forêt:

He does the website. Everything gets put on the website, he’s doing that as well.

Mason Hutchison:

When is he going to be interviewed?

Rosalee de la Forêt:

That would be fun, actually. I think you told me I should do that.

Mason Hutchison:

Totally, yeah.

Rosalee de la Forêt:

Yeah, that would be fun.

Mason Hutchison:

He's quasi interesting.

Rosalee de la Forêt:

He is very interesting, yeah, very handsome. He also likes plants. He's really into the edible, so that could be a thing. Let us know if you'd like to hear from Xavier.

Mason Hutchison:

Actually, speaking of, you mentioned the comments. Please leave a comment, if you're watching on YouTube, how much you love the Herbs with Rosalee Podcast. That would be great--anything else that comes to mind while you're watching this. It sounds like a labor of love, the show.

Rosalee de la Forêt:

It is. It really is. When I first started out, I didn't know that it was going to be this big. I had some ideas that didn't pan out and then it grew in other ways. It is. It's like—I don't know. Even the cost of it now, I think is like a thousand dollars an episode to put it out.

Mason Hutchison:

Holy moly!

Rosalee de la Forêt:

Yeah.

Mason Hutchison:

I feel like you've told me that before and it surprises me every time.

Rosalee de la Forêt:

Yeah, yeah, and, you know we just—we make it happen. It feels like a gift to the herbal community. Those recipes are just so cool, and I just—I don't know, to hear from all these different herbalists about their one herb is just really fun.

Mason Hutchison:

I actually was not going to bring this up, but now seems like a good time to bring it up. Why don't you tell us about the podcast membership?

Rosalee de la Forêt:

Oh, yeah.

Mason Hutchison:

It's kind of so new that we probably didn't even think about talking about it.

Rosalee de la Forêt:

It's true. It didn't even cross my mind. Well, I thought it would be a cool idea to have a podcast membership for a few ideas. One, just to be honest, it costs a thousand dollars a show.

Mason Hutchison:

That's why I thought of that.

Rosalee de la Forêt:

So, we need to be able to keep it up. Keep going with it so that the podcast membership folks are really supporting the show to keep going. I also really wanted the podcast membership because we get to hear such cool stories that not everybody gets to hear, especially through email. And so, people tell us about how herbs have touched them and I thought, wouldn't it be cool if we had a space where people can talk together about the episodes and really have a place to share beyond YouTube? I actually get great comments on YouTube, but just something that's just kind of more private, and more in-depth discussions and stuff could go

on. I also really—the reason I have a podcast is because people asked for it, and so I really want to listen to our members, to be like, “What do you want next?” We’re going to be doing that more and more. Who do you want to hear from? What do you want to hear about? And just engage in the community more, so it really can feel like this is all of our podcast because that’s the goal.

Mason Hutchison:

For sure.

Rosalee de la Forêt:

And um—and then I also—this is just like threw it in on top of it because I thought it would be exciting. A lot of times, people will write in and they’ll say like, “Oh, can you do an episode on menopause?” for example. That’s actually not my show, right? My show is about herbs. It’s about a singular herb. We have a formula, etc., but I thought for the membership, since people are asking for that, that’s what we’re doing. So, every quarter, we have an herbalist come in and talk about a topic, not necessarily an herb. For example, next up, Camille Freeman is going to come and talk about menopause, so-

Mason Hutchison:

Perfect. I know you had David Winston on. Maybe he was your first one.

Rosalee de la Forêt:

Yeah, David—so, David Winston came and talked about little known uses of herbs—of common everyday herbs, and people loved it so much that we—and they begged. They’re like, “Please have him back,” and so, we just bonus brought him back. It wasn’t planned, so he bonus came back for Part 2.

Mason Hutchison:

He obliged.

Rosalee de la Forêt:

Yeah. He was so great. One of my own teachers and stuff. That's a pretty fun thing, just kind of have more advanced training, more topical things, so it's separate but very adjacent to the podcast as well.

Mason Hutchison:

So, I'm drinking on a dandelion chai from my dandelion episode that we just recorded. What recipe did you prepare for us today?

Rosalee de la Forêt:

Did you see the look on my face earlier where I was like, "Oh, shit. We didn't do a recipe for this."

Mason Hutchison:

Like I said, we're going off script a little bit here, but anyways, fun fact: Rose—this is actually your recipe, so I kind of cheated too so-

Rosalee de la Forêt:

Yeah.

Mason Hutchison:

There you go.

Rosalee de la Forêt:

Maybe we should share that recipe again.

Mason Hutchison:

There you—double up. There you go. Alright, so last question for the podcasting segment of the show: Do you feel like other herbalists should start a podcast maybe for their business,

for just their own life improvement? And if so, what advice would you give to a new herbalist starting a podcast?

Rosalee de la Forêt:

Good question. I love podcasting, so I do highly recommend it. You said earlier that people have the great intention of starting, and they make it to seventh episode, there's like a very high failure rate. I mean, I didn't know that particular statistic, but there's like an amazingly high- failure rate and it's because it's a lot of work. Ultimately, it's going to cost a lot of time or money, or time and money.

Mason Hutchison:

Yeah, and/or.

Rosalee de la Forêt:

And/or money, so there's that. I think it's important to be realistic about that. I actually hired a production company to get me started, and they walked me through this process of just like, "What is your intention? How do you want to feel after the episode?"

Mason Hutchison:

That's so Rosalee.

Rosalee de la Forêt:

And really walked me through all that, so I had a really good idea of what I was getting into even though I also didn't know what I was getting into. You don't really know until you're in it, right? But my advice would be, if somebody wants to do a podcast, yes, it's amazing. Yes, it's fun. I think—and there's probably courses out there to help you figure out how much time it actually takes, because if there's a 45-minute episode, that was not 45 minutes of anybody's time. This is many, many, many hours of time goes into a 45-minute episode. I would definitely say start small, start simple. Don't do what I did, so—and that's possible. It doesn't have to cost a thousand dollars an episode. It doesn't have to be that complicated.

You can start super simple. People love raw these days. They love just real and raw, so it doesn't have to be a huge production, and that's perfect. My show is definitely not perfect, I will say that. So, I'd say that. The other thing, I have this idea that I tell people all the time—I think it's brilliant—but sometimes, people say like they want to start a podcast and they envision it going for 200 episodes or, "I'm going to do this for years." I think it's a cool idea to just come up with a idea for ten podcast episodes.

Mason Hutchison:

Yeah, totally.

Rosalee de la Forêt:

Map it all out. Maybe it's on a particular topic, like a clinician could be "Herbs for Eczema." Map out a ten series thing on herbs for eczema or herbs for fertility or whatever. Choose a topic and really go for it, and just do ten episodes.

Mason Hutchison:

I love that.

Rosalee de la Forêt:

And you could do another ten if you wanted, but just get your feet wet on that, and it could be a complete success. I love listening to those kind of—like where they have a beginning and end, and they tell—there's a story arc through it and everything. Those are fantastic! So, that is—that is my biggest recommendation, actually: Just try—aim for ten. Create a story arc on that ten and see how it goes, then you'll know after ten if you want to keep going.

Mason Hutchison:

Yeah, or start a new show.

Rosalee de la Forêt:

Start a new show.

Mason Hutchison:

Totally. I love that advice, yeah. We need more shows like that. I know there are some out there. My friend was telling me about this one BBC producer, like this whole story about witches. I don't know if you've seen that.

Rosalee de la Forêt:

I was the one who told you that.

Mason Hutchison:

Yeah, well, someone else did too.

Rosalee de la Forêt:

Oh, okay. You did tell me. You did tell me someone else told you.

Mason Hutchison:

But you did tell me about it, yeah. It's kind of like that, right?

Rosalee de la Forêt:

Yeah.

Mason Hutchison:

There's this arc, and then, yeah. I think that's a fantastic idea for the herbal community too because you could really go in-depth on one topic, so that's great! Well, that kind of wraps up the podcasting segment. Is there anything else you want to cover that I didn't bring up?

Rosalee de la Forêt:

No, I think that covers that pretty well.

Mason Hutchison:

Cool beans. Alright, well, we will transition to a special guest question.

Rosalee de la Forêt:

Oh.

Mason Hutchison:

Did you see this coming? Did you see it coming?

Rosalee de la Forêt:

I don't know. Let's see what comes.

Rebecca Altman:

Hi, Mason, and hi, Rosalee. First of all, I am such a huge fan of yours and I can't believe I get to ask you a question. This is so exciting. Second, here's my question: My best friend is completely obsessed with a musician whose name is Toni A—Amos? Tori? Tori Amos. I don't know if you've ever heard of her, but she's a musician. My best friend is completely obsessed with her, which is completely fine most of the time until Toni Amont starts touring. And then what happens is, my best friend becomes really excited about the tour schedules and talks about it a lot, and it is a very stressful time for her, and also, for the people who are closest to her. What herbs would you suggest for coping with my best friend's obsession with Toni Amont. Thank you.

Mason Hutchison:

What do you think about the guest question?

Rosalee de la Forêt:

We should tell people that's my bestie, Rebecca. I am trying not to call Rebecca right now to talk about her proper pronunciation of Tori Amos, which she very well knows.

Mason Hutchison:

Tori Amon?

Rosalee de la Forêt:

Not funny. So, the other day, well, I—Tori is supposedly going on tour next spring, and I sent her a voice note, and I preluded the voice note with a lot of like, “Are you sitting down? Take some deep breaths,” kind of thing. Then, I told her the exciting news, Tori’s going on tour! And the voice note I got back was, “Mason and I need to start a support group,” and I laughed at her. She goes, “No. Mason doesn’t know what’s coming.”

Mason Hutchison:

Oh, but do I.

Rosalee de la Forêt:

So, yeah.

Mason Hutchison:

I vividly remember you saying you were passing up on a herbalist trip to Greece because Tori might be on tour.

Rosalee de la Forêt:

Yeah, yeah. Light. To quote another favorite musician of mine, Ani DiFranco, has this line about how the landscape shifts. So, when Tori goes on tour, it’s metaphorically, like the landscape shifts, like my priorities shift, my life shifts. I’m not going to say I don’t make wise decisions during a tour period, but-

Mason Hutchison:

So, thanks, Rebecca, for contributing. You didn’t actually answer the question. So, what herbs would you recommend for me and Rebecca, and those close to you?

Rosalee de la Forêt:

Yeah. I think the best herbal recommendation is to come to a concert with me because then you get to see what the hullabaloo is about, and then you understand.

Mason Hutchison:

Okay.

Rosalee de la Forêt:

I think that's actually-

Mason Hutchison:

I promise to go to one Tori concert with you.

Rosalee de la Forêt:

I'm so glad we have that on tape because case you've tried to rescind that a couple of times.

Mason Hutchison:

Oh, no.

Rosalee de la Forêt:

It's happening now.

Mason Hutchison:

Alright, alright.

Rosalee de la Forêt:

Thank you for calling in, Rebecca. I did not see that coming, actually.

Mason Hutchison:

Alright. Well, moving right along. I know your mom and your dad were a huge part of your life, and I just think it would be cool to hear a little bit about how—who they were and how they shaped you and your life and herbal journey, if you want to talk about that at all, but-

Rosalee de la Forêt:

Sure, yeah. Well, my dad and I were very close. My mom died when I was seven, so my dad raised me for most of my life. We were pretty tight, hung out a lot. My dad was a very unconventional dude. Hippie dude. He was definitely like—he loved to live life. He loved to celebrate. He loved to have fun. He loved the world on his own terms too, and so I had a pretty unconventional upbringing, I think, in some ways. I grew up in Utah. I wasn't raised Mormon, so that was already kind of like a step removed from the broader culture. I grew up watching Star Trek. Motorcycles were like our only transportation for a lot of my life, so I was on the back of a motorcycle a lot. We just hung out a lot. We were quite the team. I think one thing I really got from my dad was unconventional, like I never felt the need to follow a traditional pathway in my life. So, I never wondered, "Can I be an herbalist?" or any of those things. I always just felt like I could do whatever I wanted to do. My dad definitely was proud of me and believed with me—in me. He didn't always get me, in that my dad would rather play most of the time and I would rather work most of the time, but my work is like my life and my play, so yeah. I remember when I was young, I had a job, and I would come home after the job, and I would talk about the job at work, and my dad would be like, "You ain't on the payroll anymore." But that was like my mind just constantly thinking about it.

My dad—I think I can be rigid and really linear and focused. Even since his passing a couple of years ago, I feel his presence and I just feel like I've loosened up some, and just am better able to enjoy life. I have told you this many times that you remind me a lot of my dad. Just that fun-loving energy like, "Let's go have fun!"

Mason Hutchison:

Totally.

Rosalee de la Forêt:

So.

Mason Hutchison:

He was on the sanguine spectrum, for sure.

Rosalee de la Forêt:

Yeah, definitely. Yeah, definitely. He also really loved—he always said that God must have made a mistake, and that he should have been born Mexican, and he just loved Spanish, loved Mexican culture. And so, he—when I went off to college, he went to Mexico.

Mason Hutchison:

Yeah.

Rosalee de la Forêt:

And lived there for 20 years and a family there adopted him. We're still close to this day. He loved that. He also just taught me love of different cultures and people and languages, and so I definitely inherited that from him too, which—traveling, all of that.

Mason Hutchison:

You really do have his adventurous spirit, which I'm really excited to talk to you about your travels to Ireland later on.

Rosalee de la Forêt:

Yeah, yeah. I think my dad modeled that well for me. My mom, she died when I was young, but I think she also has a profound influence on my life, because she did die when I was young. I always looked up to her image of who I thought she was. She was an archaeologist who focused in ethnobotany, and she was very much a career woman, like very focused on-

Mason Hutchison:

Reminds me of someone.

Rosalee de la Forêt:

Yeah, but she was, you know—she was exceptional. When she died—she died of a heart attack. It was a congenital heart disease. When she died—she worked for the Bureau of Land Management, and they all—all of the buildings flew their flags at half-mast in her honor. We were at a small funeral home, but over 300 people came, including a lot of the Paiute and Koosharem that she worked with, Native folks from Utah, and so, yeah, she touched a lot of lives. I actually didn't know that she was an ethnobotanist, so that's actually one kind of sad thing. In my family, you didn't really talk about people when they passed, and so I didn't grow up with a lot of stories about my mom. It wasn't until I showed an interest in plants that my dad just nonchalantly mentioned out of the blue one day like, "You know your mom was into that." I was like, "No, I didn't, actually," and so that was a surprise to me, but I don't know.

Mason Hutchison:

That's incredible.

Rosalee de la Forêt:

She was working on her dissertation when she passed and it was working with the Koosharem bands and helping them to record their plant knowledge. So, I think I kind of feel like I have the unconventional travel, love of cultures from my dad, but I'm also a very driven person, like I'm told my mom was.

Mason Hutchison:

I bet your dad saw a lot of your mom in you.

Rosalee de la Forêt:

Probably.

Mason Hutchison:

Totally. Thank you for sharing about your mom and your dad.

Rosalee de la Forêt:

Thanks for asking.

Mason Hutchison:

Kind of staying in Rosalee's youth, kind of working our way forward. You were telling me a story, like one of your herbal origin stories the other day. I found it fascinating, and actually, I'm not sure if you told your audience before or not. I feel like it probably would have come up at some point, but you were talking about how getting UTIs was one of your introductions into the herbal world. I would love to hear you weave, kind of, that story with getting arrested in Portland, Oregon, just like a young Rosalee, if you will.

Rosalee de la Forêt:

Okay. The "getting arrested" definitely comes first.

Mason Hutchison:

Okay.

Rosalee de la Forêt:

That really started when I remember I was a teenager and I was watching the news. On the news, they mentioned that something was going on with Gap, the clothing company. They were being prosecuted or vilified or something because they had sweatshops with childhood labor. I was like floored, like flabbergasted, like I couldn't believe that that was happening because like in history class, you learn about that was history, and now, things are fine, kind of thing. I felt like that moment changed me and I became a lot more activist-focused and concerned about human rights. That stayed with me for a long time.

I often say in college, I minored in activism. I worked on a campaign in college for the U'wa people down in Colombia. They were on their ancestral lands and gas companies were threatening to come and drill on their lands, so it's a land rights/human rights issue, and so they had put a call out for help, and so I did a lot of work on that campaign, as well as

sweatshop labor, so I pretty much spent all my spare time not in class. I was in the streets of Portland with the plastic drum and marching, passing out flower—flyers, and that sort of thing. I just felt so driven, like I wanted to make—help people, but after—and I did that for years. After a while of doing that, I realized most of the people I was handing flyers to were just throwing them away. I just couldn't see the change that I always—that I wanted to see, and so I started to get kind of a little disillusioned, and just kind of burnt out and sad about the world. Why didn't people care? That sort of thing.

After college, I, through a series of events, I ended up going to a wilderness skills school, and that's like the beginning of my herbalism, really. Through that school, I started to dissect the wall of green, get to know my ecosystem, get to know plants. I watched me and my fellow classmates just really fall in love with the land, and I saw how powerful, and transformative, and joyful that was. For me, personally, I still think civil disobedience is very important. That's why I was arrested—was civil disobedience. I think going to the streets and making our voices heard is very, very important, so I don't that pooh-pooh that at all.

Mason Hutchison:

For sure.

Rosalee de la Forêt:

But I also just saw how powerful and transformative it is to be connected to the land and have the passion for seeing change come from that, like come from love. So, that was a really big turning point in my life, just recognizing instead of yelling at people, which was kind of what I was doing when I was 20, I could be helping people find their own connection to the land, and then watch that transform them. That became a big deal for me. At the time, it was really—I was learning how to make a bow and arrow, and how to make debris shelters. It was very “earth skills” kind of thing, how to make clothing and shoes from raw materials. I wasn't necessarily an herbalist yet, but I was getting a lot of urinary tract infections. Thank you for bringing this up, Mason.

Mason Hutchison:

You're welcome.

Rosalee de la Forêt:

I don't even remember how it came up with us. Urinary tract infections, UTIs, really suck bad. They like—you have to pee every five minutes and it feels like you have to pee really bad, and then it burns, and so it's just very uncomfortable, and then you have to go to a doctor while you're experiencing that. I was living in Seattle. I had no money. I was going to free clinics, so I had to take the bus there. It was just this whole rigmarole and it was horrible. Then you get—then what they do is they give you antibiotics. You're just wiping out your gut flora every time. It was just repetitive. I was just getting them all the time, so it really wasn't fun.

So, I started doing research on what I could do, and I came across this formula that was like yarrow, *uva-ursi*, and marshmallow. I was such a—it was all new to me, you know, but somehow I got the herbs. I drank the thing. It was horrible and the UTI went away, and I was so floored because now, instead of having to take the bus and go to the clinic and get the antibiotics, I could just brew up some leaves and have it be taken care of. That was really cool. It was just totally life-changing, paradigm-shifting, transformative. It was one of those like why doesn't every person know about this, who gets UTIs at least. It's just such a better option, so that was—yeah, that was a big shift for me in just seeing what a big deal herbs could be in a person's life. I had other big realizations like that too, but when I first started being interested in herbs I just felt like, you're going to have a little booboo. They're kind of antiquated, but have some cool issues to them that as I got deeper and deeper, I was like, "Oh, actually, these are often a better alternative."

Mason Hutchison:

Herbs work, don't they?

Rosalee de la Forêt:

Yeah, herbs work.

Mason Hutchison:

I asked 7Song this—we were talking about this the other day—I asked 7Song when I interviewed him if he’s still surprised when herbs work like that. Are you still surprised?

Rosalee de la Forêt:

Sometimes I am, yeah. Yeah, sometimes, because I think in some ways because I am trained as a clinician. I worked as a clinician for a long time, and so I’m used to coming up with these comprehensive plans that are—I don’t want to say “overly complicated,” but you think about lifestyle and all this kind of stuff, and then sometimes you just take an herb and it works, and just like, “Oh, cool. That’s awesome.”

Mason Hutchison:

It’s incredible. Thanks for sharing about your journey with the UTIs and arrest.

Rosalee de la Forêt:

Thanks for asking.

Mason Hutchison:

Good times. I feel like when I interviewed you on Herbalist Hour a while back, we kind of talked about your herbal journey, and going from little Rosalee to the Portland days. I know that our good friend, John Gallagher, was a big part of your herbal journey, and as I’m sure all of the audience knows he recently passed away. Just curious, and obviously, John was a huge part of your life for many years, just kind of curious how you’re doing and if there’s anything you’d like to share about John to honor him.

Rosalee de la Forêt:

Yeah, we agreed that we would talk about John. I’m a little nervous because, yeah, it’s still really hard, still very fresh, and there’s not—obviously, there’s not a day that goes by where I’m not thinking of him. That’s actually been an interesting thing to realize I most likely thought of him just as often, but now that he’s gone, it’s like poignant and I’m just very aware

of it. There's—I learned so much from him. I mean, he did shape so much of my life. There was probably at least a decade, if not 15 years, where we spoke to each other practically every day. I'm still not used to the idea of him not being around in the—in the physical sense. I had a really good chat with Rosemary and she kept reminding me that he's still around, so I've been trying to, you know, pull that in. The other day, I was toasting toast. John gave me that toaster. It's a really nice toaster. It was my housewarming gift when I moved in, but that's how infused he is in my life. There's not just like a moment that goes by without thinking of him.

There's a couple of ways I think a lot about how I can honor John. One, is I think it's important to talk about the side effects of withdrawal from a lot of different pharmaceutical drugs. Not to vilify the drugs, but to be made aware that there are very serious side effects from sudden withdrawal from these benzodiazepines, insomnia herbs, SSRIs. I didn't know how big of a problem it was. Now, when I—I was part of the calling people to let people know what had happened. Every person that called had a story of how just terrible the withdrawal effects are and how—you know, these drugs, they alter the brain chemistry for better or for worse. They mean it for better because they do help people, but they alter the brain chemistry in such a way that sudden withdrawal for them, it is known that it's—the consequences of that are very serious, which is what happened with John. So, I think it's important to be talking about that. I'm going to be talking about it more because I think we can honor his death by preventing it in others. I feel like John's death was preventable. I think that's one way. The other way, of course, is to celebrate his legacy. We're working on a celebration of life for him right now. We're going to have a beautiful celebration of life and really honor who John was, and all the beautiful gifts he gave us. We will have that event, and I know there's not going to be a day of my life where I'm not grateful for John and his influence in my life, and the influence he is as a person. That—that honoring is going to be in my heart forever.

Mason Hutchison:

You bring up good points. I mean, I've experienced that with someone else when they were withdrawing, and same thing, yeah. Did I hear you say you might be working on a blog post or a project about this at some point?

Rosalee de la Forêt:

Yeah, yeah, yeah. I want to write an article and just speak to it. It's not my expertise, so I'm taking time with it to do-

Mason Hutchison:

Kind of a sensitive topic too.

Rosalee de la Forêt:

It's also been hard. It's been two months now as we're recording this and it's still very, very fresh.

Mason Hutchison:

What's something John taught you that you carry forward, whether it's in your personal journey or herbal journey?

Rosalee de la Forêt:

So many things, you know.

Mason Hutchison:

Give me one thing. No, I was just kidding. No. I know it's countless, yeah.

Rosalee de la Forêt:

Yeah. Again, there are so many practical things. You and I were prepping for this podcast. We're doing all this stuff with mics. I still use—when I do my podcast, I still use the mics that John bought me. They are very expensive mics. He bought those for me and taught me how to use them. There's just stuff like that that's super practical. I would say John taught me how to be generous. He was so generous with me. He just kind of brought me in under his wing. He mentored a lot of people just for the sheer joy of it. He was so excited to see people succeed and I loved that about him, and I hope I can carry that forward.

Mason Hutchison:

I see it in you. His enthusiasm was infectious.

Rosalee de la Forêt:

Yeah.

Mason Hutchison:

His laugh, his joy. I was so honored to get to know him a little bit, and yeah, I could not agree with you more. That's—that's great.

Rosalee de la Forêt:

He also taught me to love elderberry wine. There's a lot of different levels.

Mason Hutchison:

Multifaceted man that he was, absolutely.

Rosalee de la Forêt:

Everyone—we don't know when the celebration of life is going to be, but really look out for that. It's going to be beautiful. I think another way that we can all honor John, like those of us who loved him whether because we knew him closely or from afar, were touched by his offerings, Learning Herbs, Herb Mentor, everything he did—a great way we can still honor and support John is to support Kimberly and Learning Herbs through this transition, and just recognize that they are doing—continuing the amazing work that John kind of led for a while. I think we can really honor him by honoring Learning Herbs and Kimberly too.

Mason Hutchison:

Amen. Well, I know that you were processing a lot of this grief during your trip in Ireland, so if you'd like to share maybe some stories or some insights you had, I really would love to—just to hear about your trip, what prompted it, and anything you'd like to share from your Ireland journey.

Rosalee de la Forêt:

Sure. I was walking one day in my woods, and I just had this thought. This happens to me sometimes where I just—it's like a knowing. I just had this random thought. I was like, I'm going to go on a walking tour before I'm 45, and this was like an impossible thing, right? Because I have a history of chronic pain, and just like I knew I'd have to go on my own because my wonderful, handsome French husband doesn't travel, so I knew it was going to be like a solo walking tour on my own, and I knew that I would do it and things just kind of fell into place and ended up that I was going to Ireland to do the solo walking tour.

I prepped for it for a year, steadily walking more and more and more. Towards the end, I was walking—I'd walk three hours a day, then I was walking six hours a day, just really getting prepped for it. Got there and had—those first several days were kind of a dream. Just traditional music in the pubs every night, like I was living the Irish experience like Guinness and just loving it. I started my solo walking tour. I was doing the Dingle Peninsula. It's 110 miles total. I was on my second day when I heard about John. I knew bad news was coming. You knew bad news was coming. We were in touch. As the day progressed, I got a lot more worried. I didn't know the nature of the news, but as the day progressed, I just felt like I knew. It was my day. It was your night. You were sleeping, kinda. You were like messaging me every 30 minutes, "Any news? Any news?" and then the news—Kimberly, 5:00 A.M. her time, called and not the news I wanted to hear.

Mason Hutchison:

Yeah.

Rosalee de la Forêt:

I did kind of freak out a bit. I was all alone in Ireland. In the end though, I got so much support from my friends. You were there as a companion on the phone or whatever. jim mcdonald, he got in touch with me a lot; Rebecca, my other bestie, a lot. Of course, my husband, so I had a lot of support, and in the end there's no good time to get this news. In some ways, I just had to put one foot in front of the other for days. That's all—all I could do, and so that's what I did.

Mason Hutchison:

You were doing about 15 miles per day, right?

Rosalee de la Forêt:

Yeah, yeah.

Mason Hutchison:

Raining a lot too.

Rosalee de la Forêt:

Yeah, it was everything—rain. I was pretty impervious to the weather except in one way, like—so, John hated the wind.

Mason Hutchison:

Yeah.

Rosalee de la Forêt:

Hated it, like despised it. The amount of hours that man spent complaining about the wind—and I'm definitely saying hours. This is a known part of his personality. So, I'm out in Ireland on the coastal path. There's a lot of wind. Every time I'm with wind, I think of John before then. I'm out there and the wind is blowing me left and right and I just thought, "Man, John would hate this." He would really hate this. Then I thought, well, John is the wind now, and that was just very comforting. Then, I thought John would not want to be the wind. I think he hated it that bad.

Mason Hutchison:

"Don't call me that."

Rosalee de la Forêt:

But that was comforting in that way, so I definitely—I learned a lot about friendship through that. I needed my friends to get through that time and just kind of finding myself through that process was important.

Mason Hutchison:

I'd love to hear more about your love of walking because that's kind of what got you to Ireland, but there's been a lot of other steps, literally, kind of in between. It's been inspiring for me. Well, I mean, I'm also an avid walker. I love walking as you know. I'd just love maybe to share with the audience your love of walking.

Rosalee de la Forêt:

Sure.

Mason Hutchison:

Some of the benefits and maybe weave in also a little bit of your fitness journey, in general, because I think that's fascinating and inspiring as well.

Rosalee de la Forêt:

Yeah. Well, it starts way back. When I was 14, I was hit by a car as a pedestrian. I was being like a very stupid 14-year old. Amelia, look both ways before you cross the street.

Mason Hutchison:

Please.

Amelia:

I get that a lot from my father.

Rosalee de la Forêt:

It's actually good advice because I did not. I just didn't see the car coming and I got hit by a minivan that was going 40 miles an hour, and that just forever transformed my life because it basically rearranged my lower back in such a way that I was in chronic pain. I went to the chiropractor. I went to massage therapy. I did all those things. I was never the same and I spent, basically, three decades in pain. By that, I mean I couldn't really lay on my back without pain. I couldn't stand for very long without pain, and I couldn't walk for very long without pain. Really helped me build my business in the beginning because I could sit just fine. I'd sit for 12 hours a day and can do all the work, study and do all the stuff, but I was in a lot of chronic pain, and I just kind of accepted it, really, like that was just my way of life. Then, one day, Rebecca, she said, "Well, here's the thing. You can keep doing things like you're doing or you could try something different." I was like, "Okay. Okay, I'll try something different." She recommended that I go see this guy, Craig Levinson, and so I did. I had no idea that I was about to get into strength training, but I saw him. He gave me some exercises. Those exercises actually more than anything I had done in my life, they helped tremendously; took away a significant amount of my pain, and I was floored. That was four years ago and I just traveled down this path of strength training. Now, I'm pretty evangelical about it. It just changed my life.

Mason Hutchison:

You infused it in your keynote last year at the Great Lakes Herb Faire.

Rosalee de la Forêt:

I pretty much anybody who talks to me gets to hear about strength training. Now, it's like if somebody tells me that they're in pain or don't have the energy or struggle, I'm always just like, "But are you strength training?" because I feel like it was such a blind spot for me. I kind of knew people should be doing that, but at the same time, I just thought that was like gym bro activity or something, and/or I felt like that was something you did if you had the energy for it, kind of, like if you're feeling great, but if you're in pain, obviously, you wouldn't lift heavy things. You're in pain.

Mason Hutchison:

It's counterintuitive.

Rosalee de la Forêt:

Yeah, yeah. I got schooled on that. I've been with my current—I have a personal trainer now, Sam, and I've been with her for three years. The work we've done has just totally transformed my life. It was about maybe a year and a half ago that I realized, oh, I'm not in pain. It was just one of those things. It happened slowly over time, and then once I was out of pain, it was like, "Whoa! That happened. Cool!" and then from there, it was like, "What can I do with my life?" I used to always joke with Sam that my—she's always training, like training for life, training for a sport or something. So, I tell her my sport is knitting and I would joke with her a lot. I'd be like—she'd want me to do squats or deadlifts and I'll be like, "How is this helping my knitting skills though?" I just always bring it back to that. She loved that, but I've started-

Mason Hutchison:

You got rid of that joke, right? It's played out.

Rosalee de la Forêt:

She brought it up the other day and I was like, "Oh, yeah. I remember that." Now, I identify as an athlete. I am a walker and I take it very seriously. That's often the first thing I do when I get up and I rearrange my entire day around it to prioritize it. I love it. I love it on so many different levels. I love the meditative state of walking. I love getting out through all the seasons. I walk in the rain, in the snow. I walk when it's freezing. I walk when it's hot. I just accept it—like that's part of the process. It's like I think I used to complain a lot of the weather wasn't perfect-

Mason Hutchison:

Right.

Rosalee de la Forêt:

And now, I'm just there for it. I'm just there to experience it. It helps that I'm going home to a warm or cool house afterwards, you know. That's another thing, just like everything is temporary. Once I got out of pain, I just started walking and I haven't stopped. When I finished the walking tour in Ireland, I was sad. I was already in a sad state, so it's probably compounded, but I did not want it to end. I was already planning, like "Where am I going to go next?" So.

Mason Hutchison:

I remember you telling me earlier on in your childhood, you fantasized about Lord of the Rings, going on these long journeys, and now, you get to do that while you were in Ireland you go on these walking tours.

Rosalee de la Forêt:

That was the dream. I love the fantasy books, like you walk all day, and then you show up at the inn. You get the ale and the stew. Every day I was living that life. I was by myself, so I learned pretty quickly, go sit at the bar. Don't get a table by yourself. Go to sit at the bar. So, I had lots of cool conversations.

Mason Hutchison:

You met some characters.

Rosalee de la Forêt:

I met some characters. I felt like it hit all these different things for me.

Mason Hutchison:

As we're—as you were there, I was kind of living vicariously through you telling me of all the crazy characters you meet and stuff like that. I love that you say you identify as an athlete now. I think that's super cool.

Rosalee de la Forêt:

Once I started walking three to six hours a day, that's really—and strength training three times a week.

Mason Hutchison:

You got kettle bells swinging around.

Rosalee de la Forêt:

My whole study, my office now is—it's got the trap bar. I've got two different workout stations. I have a rower. I have a bike. I have a treadmill and I've got all the kettle bells.

Mason Hutchison:

That's right. But that's not all you do as an athlete. You also take a supplement. I don't know if you studied much for this interview on the benefits or if you want to talk about it, but I know you like one particular supplement.

Rosalee de la Forêt:

Yeah, yeah. Creatine.

Mason Hutchison:

Creatine.

Rosalee de la Forêt:

Creatine is pretty incredible. My friend, Rebecca, she kept telling me about creatine. I was like, "Umm, I'm not really into supplements, you know." I don't really love the idea of taking these things. I like to get my nutrients from foods and herbs and stuff, so I kind of was just like, "Uh-huh. Uh-huh." Then one day, Sam, my trainer, was like, "I think you're lifting heavy and I think creatine would be good for you." She's like, "I can't recommend it, but you just might want to look into it." So, I looked into it and I was like, "Holy shit!" It's one of the most well-studied supplements out there and it really helps with recovery, especially, which is

something I'm really into. Because Sam and I do progressive strength training, so we're progressively lifting heavier and heavier or more intricate, going from double leg squat to single leg squat, and stuff like that. I see her three days a week, and it sucks if you don't recover well. Creatine really helps with muscle recovery, and just the soreness, and just ready to get back at it again. It also helps build muscles as well. It has some mental health benefits too. There's really like—I think they say don't—it's not for pregnancy and breastfeeding. There's a couple of things like that, but a lot of people can benefit from creatine, especially as we get older too, because it's something that our body naturally produces, but as we get older we produce less of it. So, big fan, big fan of the creatine.

Mason Hutchison:

Do you want to tell the story about the flight attendant briefly?

Rosalee de la Forêt:

Yeah, I'll tell that story.

Mason Hutchison:

That's a good one.

Rosalee de la Forêt:

I was flying to Austin earlier this year—also, I told you-

Mason Hutchison:

Oh, that was to Austin. I thought it was to Ireland. That's right.

Rosalee de la Forêt:

I told you about creatine. You started taking creatine.

Mason Hutchison:

Well, I took—actually, I took creatine back in my weightlifting days, but you got me back on it, so yeah.

Rosalee de la Forêt:

So, we talk about creatine.

Mason Hutchison:

For sure.

Rosalee de la Forêt:

And I don't know what inspired this, but—so my flight attendant was like busting out of his shirt, like the snaps are kind of open. His-

Mason Hutchison:

That's intentional.

Rosalee de la Forêt:

Yeah, it's really tight, and so I took—this is embarrassing. I took a photo of him on the sly and I sent it to Mason. I said, "I bet my flight attendant takes creatine," and Mason writes back. You probably didn't say this, but this is the intention behind it. You're like, "I double dog dare you to ask him." I was like, "Dude, no. I'm not asking this random stranger if he takes creatine," but then we got stuck on the tarmac for 90 minutes waiting for our gate to go in. I went to the bathroom and I was coming back, and he was right there, and so I was just like, "Oh, man. I'm doing it," and so I set up the whole thing.

Mason Hutchison:

Here we go, strap in.

Rosalee de la Forêt:

I was like, “Well, you know, one of my best friends”—I can’t remember how I said it. I did blame it on you. I said something like, “I’m not the weirdo.”

Mason Hutchison:

“I got double dog dared to do it.”

Rosalee de la Forêt:

Yeah, like, “I’m not the weirdo, he’s the weirdo. I’m just the messenger.” I was like, “So, I have to ask, do you take creatine?” His face lit up. He was like, “I do,” and we had a 15, 20-minute conversation. He ended up going to the back of the plane and getting his bag and bringing it up to show me his pre-workout, his creatine. We talked about his mom getting into strength training. I was curious. I asked him, “How do you get so ripped as a flight attendant? That must be a hard schedule.” He told me how they get access to all the 24-Hour Fitness and gyms, and stuff. Obviously, it’s a big thing for him. Anyway, we had this great conversation that was so random because you dared me. So, that started this whole thing on that whole trip where every person I saw who I thought like that person must work out, I ask them if they took creatine, and all but one person did. I asked our waiter who was—well, I asked our waiter and he said yes. I was like, “How old are you?” He was like—no, I because asked him and he goes, “I have been taking it for three years.” I was like, “How old are you?” He was like, “I’m 21.” I was like, “Okay.” It was like—it just became this really funny thing that I kept checking in with you about like, “Okay. I found a new person taking creatine.”

Mason Hutchison:

You’re such a weirdo.

Rosalee de la Forêt:

Anyway, I’m the herbalist asking everybody if they’re taking creatine.

Mason Hutchison:

You sound like a gym bro now.

Rosalee de la Forêt:

I often think I have become a gym bro.

Mason Hutchison:

Your love of creatine. Well, you know this—you're an herbalist. I love hearing your enthusiasm for creatine, but I am kind of curious, are there other supplements that you recommend as an herbalist for yourself and for others?

Rosalee de la Forêt:

I would say the one other one that I feel very strongly about is magnesium. I take magnesium and I've taken it for decades now, and I think that's one that a lot of people can benefit from. A really good quality magnesium, like a glycinate or malate. Magnesium is so amazing for the nervous system, really important for muscular, skeletal health, for sleep. There's really just so many benefits, but the reason why it becomes necessary to take it as a supplement is that most of our foods are now deficient in magnesium. In an ideal world, we'd be getting magnesium from our foods, but most of us are not, and magnesium deficiency is just rampant. I don't know that I've ever met somebody where I'm like, "That person doesn't need magnesium."

Mason Hutchison:

It's interesting because you know I drink nourishing herbal infusions all the time, but I still supplement with magnesium. I just presume I probably need it. Do you—would you concur or...

Rosalee de la Forêt:

Some signs of magnesium deficiency, sometimes leg cramps or restless legs, anxiety, insomnia. Those can be things that would be kind of flags for magnesium.

Thing too is we excrete the magnesium that we don't use. It's not something that we can really—you can overdose in that you can get loose stools, but you can't overdose-

Mason Hutchison:

Thanks for the warning.

Rosalee de la Forêt:

It's not harmful, so that's another pro to it. There's really no harm done there.

Mason Hutchison:

It's also a relatively inexpensive supplement.

Rosalee de la Forêt:

Yeah, and really great for heart health too. I won't say that it's for—like it's not going to totally correct high blood pressure, but that could be another thing that could help that a little bit as well. Just as a muscle relaxer, there's a lot of great reasons. Go for the magnesium.

Mason Hutchison:

Awesome. Fish oil?

Rosalee de la Forêt:

Oh, fish oil.

Mason Hutchison:

I was just curious.

Rosalee de la Forêt:

That is also one I take everyday.

Mason Hutchison:

For sure.

Rosalee de la Forêt:

Just got you on my brand.

Mason Hutchison:

Yeah.

Rosalee de la Forêt:

Amelia and I took it today, so.

Mason Hutchison:

Pretty tasty. Not too shabby.

Rosalee de la Forêt:

Just wonderful. Most of us don't get enough omega-3s as well, so that's a good one.

Mason Hutchison:

By the way, shout out to Amelia behind the camera, recording all this, my daughter. Awesome!
Well, okay, back. We're—we're an herbal show.

Rosalee de la Forêt:

Okay.

Mason Hutchison:

So, why don't we do a guest herbal question? How about that?

Rosalee de la Forêt:

You have another guest question?

Mason Hutchison:

Yeah, I feel we should bring it back to herbalism, so...

Rosalee de la Forêt:

Good call.

Mason Hutchison:

Enough of this gym bro shit.

Rosalee de la Forêt:

You were the one that dared me about the creatine.

Emilie Thomas-Anderson:

Hi, Rosalee. Imagine somehow become stranded on a desert island. Fortunately, you have a backpack with you that has some basic supplies, but unfortunately, that backpack only has three herbs in it. Which three herbs would you like to have with you on this desert island and why?

Rosalee de la Forêt:

Aww.

Mason Hutchison:

Who's that?

Rosalee de la Forêt:

This is Emilie Thomas-Anderson who's my right-hand gal. I don't know if she likes being called that. Production Manager of the whole podcast. Hi, Emilie! Yeah, three herbs, desert island. Hoo! The thing is I'm going to come up with three, but if you ask me in five minutes, I might have-

Mason Hutchison:

Totally. Can you see how that kind of took the place of the one we might have talked about before?

Rosalee de la Forêt:

Sure, yeah, yeah, yeah. Well—gosh. My mind wants to go super practical.

Mason Hutchison:

Very prac—I knew you were going to go there.

Rosalee de la Forêt:

So, you know what I'm going to say?

Mason Hutchison:

No, I have no idea. I have no idea.

Rosalee de la Forêt:

Really?

Mason Hutchison:

Cannabis?

Rosalee de la Forêt:

I'm not a cannabis person. That would be the worst. I would just be like an anxious, paranoid mess on the desert island. That would not be a good one. I love that that's your idea of practical. I was thinking yarrow, very practical.

Mason Hutchison:

I kind of figured that one, totally.

Rosalee de la Forêt:

Just so practical for any infection that you have, like skin infection, tooth infection, cold and flu. I love the yarrow for that. Yarrow always comes up for me in this situation. I'm going to go rose too, a good wild rose that's really fragrant for the joy of it, the smell. I'm going to say my backpack has honey in it, so I can make rose petal honey, which is one of my favorite things. It's really soothing and wonderful, so I'll need that on a desert island. I will say just to be very honest, I probably would need some kind of inebriant! I could go either way on this, like *Camellia sinensis*, tea. I'm a tea drinker every morning, so I could go that route or I could go kava.

Mason Hutchison:

Oh, kava, yeah.

Rosalee de la Forêt:

So, one of those very different, very different herbs. I'd probably benefit more from having kava there.

Mason Hutchison:

There you go. I'm excited to make that kava-

Rosalee de la Forêt:

Colada.

Mason Hutchison:

Colada.

Rosalee de la Forêt:

Reel coming soon. Now, we have to do it.

Mason Hutchison:

That's right. Thanks, Emilie, for the guest question. How many tattoos of yours are related to Tori Amos?

Rosalee de la Forêt:

All of my tattoos are. I got my first one, it's a fairy, when I was 18. It's Tori as a fairy.

Mason Hutchison:

Toni Amon?

Rosalee de la Forêt:

It's not funny. I just got a frog on my toe from a Tori song that's called, "Frog on My Toe."

Mason Hutchison:

Very literal of you.

Rosalee de la Forêt:

Yeah, his name is Jethro.

Mason Hutchison:

Okay.

Rosalee de la Forêt:

Pretty much all my—I have a lot of botanical tattoos, and all of them pretty much have a reference to Tori as well.

Mason Hutchison:

Cool! I wasn't originally going to ask that, but then it just kind of came up off-hand. Alright. Cool. Um, so-

Rosalee de la Forêt:

I have a Cornflake Girl tattoo [crosstalk]

Mason Hutchison:

Oh, I love that song! That's a good one. That might, arguably, my favorite Tori song.

Rosalee de la Forêt:

It's your only-

Mason Hutchison:

It's the only one I know. Again, shout out. Thanks to Emilie for the guest question. I'm going to follow that up with another guest question, herbal-related, so let me go ahead and pull that up. Let's see who is joining us this time.

Rosalee de la Forêt:

You told me that was the last one.

Mason Hutchison:

I know, I lied.

Jesus:

Jesus, here.

Rosalee de la Forêt:

Jesus.

Jesus:

Hello, Rosalee, your friend, Jesus, here. And I wanted to ask with all the herbs that you work with, which is the go-to herb that you work with to heal your spirit?

Rosalee de la Forêt:

Love that guy.

Mason Hutchison:

Love Jesus.

Rosalee de la Forêt:

Hmm. Well, honestly, the first one that comes to mind is rose. That rose petal honey I feel like is my spirit healer, but I also work a lot with hawthorn. I just feel like that just goes straight to the heart in so many different ways. That's an herb that I take in so many different forms. I just feel like it's enmeshed into my life, and so whether—maybe I should mention it now so nobody is left wondering. The tea of the leaf and flowers is lovely. I like to mix that with tulsi. I make that everyday, especially for the handsome French husband. I love hawthorn berries as an oxymel. It's really lovely, and then I put that into drinks. That gets a lot of use these days. Wait. It's great infused as brandy. I don't drink as much these days, so I tend to do the oxymel more. We just made hawthorn berry ketchup, which is—or actually-

Mason Hutchison:

Barbecue sauce.

Rosalee de la Forêt:

It is barbecue sauce because I think ketchup is disgusting, so I made it into a barbecue sauce that was phenomenal. I dream about it at night. It was so good. There's just all—all the ways with hawthorn.

Mason Hutchison:

Maybe that's the recipe for this episode. That's awesome. Thanks, Jesus.

Rosalee de la Forêt:

It's so good to see Jesus.

Mason Hutchison:

Well, as you know, I'm a big advocate for self-care routines. We talk about that a lot. Just kind of curious if you have any—maybe you can share some of the more common ones if you want, but if you have a sort of unconventional self-care that you practice.

Rosalee de la Forêt:

That's nice. Well, I would say—I just mentioned some herbs like tulsi and rose. I love to infuse those into oil, and every night I use them.

Mason Hutchison:

Every night?

Rosalee de la Forêt:

Every night, they go on my face, my neck, my breasts, my belly right before bed. It's just so soothing and grounding, and then you get into the bed, and then the bed smells so good.

Mason Hutchison:

I was gonna say, it probably smells very good.

Rosalee de la Forêt:

Yeah, so I really like that a lot. I often say that infused oils are my #1 way to work with herbs because of that. I also make them into creams and body butters, that sort of thing, but sometimes the oils are just what happens most of the time. Actually, I started doing that because I got a lot of sun as a kid, so I just had a lot of really dark skin, sunburns, etc. So, I think of it—I started as like a preventive. I might as well saturate my skin with good stuff, but it may have been a little fear-based. Now, I love the ritual.

Mason Hutchison:

It's luxurious.

Rosalee de la Forêt:

Yeah, it's very luxurious. I love the smell. Now, it's more joyful-based, for sure. I like that a lot. I became a meditator a year and a half ago, which—I always wanted to meditate, but I thought it was the most boring-ass thing you could ever do. Every time I meditated, I was like—it was torture, like, “Wow! This is—I could be doing anything else but this right now.”

Mason Hutchison:

It's kind of boring.

Rosalee de la Forêt:

But I made—I was able to make that shift and become a meditator, and that really changed my life in a lot of ways. I think I got inspired to do it because I was dealing with some anxiety. This is maybe a weird self-care, but I do a lot of tracking, so I have an Oura ring and a Garmin.

Mason Hutchison:

I love that.

Rosalee de la Forêt:

And I saw when I started meditating regularly that my heart rate variability increased significantly, and so that was really cool for me. It really helped me stay on the meditation train, so I'm really into meditating.

Mason Hutchison:

Well, I just wanted to point out too. You told me that not just meditating, but meditating a second time in the evening. You actually see your heart rate variability improve, which is so crazy to think about. That's the one variable, and then you—you see it improve. I love that.

Rosalee de la Forêt:

I, unfortunately, have tested it in the opposite direction of not meditating as much in the evening, watching it go down. Walking is definitely a big part of my self-care. Also, what I call

my “second office,” which is a hammock. It’s a Mayan hammock that my dad had made for me that’s hanging outside. I love to go out there in the summertime. That’s just like my happy spot, listen to the birds. It’s just so lovely. I often sleep out there a little bit too. I’ve become—this is maybe conventional/unconventional, but I’ve recently come to realize I use hugs a lot.

Mason Hutchison:

Yeah!

Rosalee de la Forêt:

To regulate my nervous system.

Mason Hutchison:

You’re becoming more phlegmatic, I’ve noticed.

Rosalee de la Forêt:

Yeah. I learned that the education of hugging actually does spike your oxytocin levels and does bring happy stuff. I think I learned that from an intellectual perspective, but then I began to feel that like, “Oh!” like I’m feeling too up and jittery or whatever, a hug will just bring me right down. It’s just so soothing and just really assuring.

Mason Hutchison:

I love that!

Rosalee de la Forêt:

Yeah. You know they’re often free. You have to get your friends on board.

Mason Hutchison:

Free hugs! That’s a sign, right? That’s cool.

Rosalee de la Forêt:

So, yeah. I really like a good hug. Those are some of the things. I feel like I spend-

Mason Hutchison:

I saw someone on knuckle rockers before that said “free hugs” tattoos.

Rosalee de la Forêt:

Really? Oh, that’s sweet. Aww.

Mason Hutchison:

That’s cool.

Rosalee de la Forêt:

I do feel like I spend a lot of time on the self-care, like, you know, I get good sleep for the most part. We eat really nutritious foods. The meditation, the walking, strength training, all of that--all the things I mentioned, all the herbs, and all of that is just so important. I feel like I work hard and I play hard, and I really-

Mason Hutchison:

You rest hard.

Rosalee de la Forêt:

Rest hard, yeah, I have to, especially as like a creative. I can’t force myself into creativity. I can’t.

Mason Hutchison:

Right.

Rosalee de la Forêt:

And I love being high energy for my students.

Mason Hutchison:

Yeah.

Rosalee de la Forêt:

And I love bringing my enthusiasm. I love traveling – all these things I love. I really have to take care of myself well in order to do it. I think that’s going to become increasingly true as I’m getting older-

Mason Hutchison:

Definitely, yeah. Thanks for sharing. Awesome.

Rosalee de la Forêt:

Thanks for asking.

Mason Hutchison:

Well, that took care of that portion of the episode. We’ll see what’s next. Moving along to what I’ve labeled for some reason, the “herbal philosophy” segment of the show. Kind of a basic question. I actually really enjoy asking this question though. So, what’s your definition—definition of an herbalist? And second part of that, what makes a good herbalist?

Rosalee de la Forêt:

It’s funny. I was actually thinking about this the other night as I was falling asleep. I have this friend who plays a lot of basketball, but he’s not in the NBA or anything. He just loves it.

Mason Hutchison:

Not even close.

Rosalee de la Forêt:

Yeah, he has always loved playing basketball. I mean, you couldn’t go up to this guy and be like, “Hey, you’re not a basketball player.” I think of him as a basketball player, again, not in

the NBA. So, it's kind of like that with herbalism. It's like this person, my friend, he plays basketball almost on the daily. It's like his life--his way of life. He's also into watching really boring YouTube NBA things. It just is like his life. He teaches his daughter about basketball. It is his way of life, and so he's a basketball player, right? Same with herbalism. If we're infusing herbs into our lives, then—do we have to tell people? I'm stealing your stuff right now.

Mason Hutchison:

No! I was—you probably had a different answer earlier, and then-

Rosalee de la Forêt:

But yours is just so perfect. I'm going to tell people that in the last episode, I asked Mason the same question, that was his response, which was really good, so I'm stealing it. I'm probably going to use it forever now.

Mason Hutchison:

I like it. I mean, I kind of used the example about chess too, like I'm not a professional chess player, but I play chess everyday. We—we—we do herbs every day. I think I said it way better in my episode.

Rosalee de la Forêt:

I think you did, yeah, but mine was funnier.

Mason Hutchison:

Yeah, you did a good job.

Rosalee de la Forêt:

So, yeah, if somebody is working with herbs on the daily, they are an herbalist, 100%.

Mason Hutchison:

That's cool.

Rosalee de la Forêt:

People can choose whether or not they want to identify as an herbalist. Maybe somebody just has chamomile tea after dinner, and that's the most they get into herbs, and they don't think about herbs otherwise. Maybe they don't want to call themselves an herbalist because it's not even on the radar, but for those of us who do identify with herbalism and bring herbs into our life in some way, shape and form, we are herbalists.

Mason Hutchison:

So, I guess by definition, that makes you a good herbalist too.

Rosalee de la Forêt:

Uh.

Mason Hutchison:

I won't speak for you.

Rosalee de la Forêt:

Yeah.

Mason Hutchison:

But maybe that second part of the question was redundant or unnecessary.

Rosalee de la Forêt:

No. I think the second part of the question is great. I think, #1, maybe I don't want to have the pressure of defining what a good herbalist is. But the fir—when I heard—when you asked that, what I heard, the word that came into my mind was curiosity.

Mason Hutchison:

I love that.

Rosalee de la Forêt:

I think curiosity makes a good herbalist because so much of what we do is paying attention, like paying attention to our senses, paying attention to the plants, and paying attention to how we dynamically interact with the plants, and so I think curiosity is a key feature of a great herbalist--just always wondering more, you know.

Mason Hutchison:

I want to shout you out, give you some props. I don't know if your audience knows this or not, but you always stay curious. In fact, I know you're in two different herb schools right now. You just keep the learning going. You've been studying for years and years, but you continue to grow your practice, and that's what it is, so, yeah.

Rosalee de la Forêt:

That's the beautiful thing – there's always so many more things to learn and so many different aspects of herbalism to learn.

Mason Hutchison:

We just talked about dandelion for 45 minutes. I bet we could have talked a lot longer about it-

Rosalee de la Forêt:

We could have, yeah.

Mason Hutchison:

But you just keep going, get down building those relationships, and yeah. Rosalee, do you have any unpopular opinions about herbalism that you typically don't like to say out loud? But fortunately, it's just you and me and Amelia listening, so give me the dirt.

Rosalee de la Forêt:

That's kind of a weird question because I don't know if I want to say it out loud.

Mason Hutchison:

You can whisper it.

Rosalee de la Forêt:

I feel like I could take the easy road or the hard road. What do you think?

Mason Hutchison:

Hard road, hard road!

Rosalee de la Forêt:

Alright. Well, very honestly, there was, like a few years back, I think this happened in the general public, but it happened in herbalism, that there was a very strong cancel culture, and I didn't like that. I think that we're stronger together, and I think that bringing in a lot of divisiveness—and canceling, just like shut people down and out, and label people as “other” and stop listening, is a bad thing. I don't think we have to agree all the time. You know that's not a thing. I recently read a book on validation, which was a really fascinating book. It was like you don't have to agree with someone all the time to validate their experience. I think anytime you shut down listening to someone, shut down their experience, tell them they're wrong, push them away, close them out of a community--we are taking a lot of wrong turns when we do that. Again, it's not always going to be easy. We don't have to always agree. We don't always have to be best friends, but I wish we could be, I guess you know. I wish we could listen to each other more. I wish we could accept that there's no one way of doing things.

I think if there is—well, even that—I was going to say if there is an “other”, I would say I think—this is we have grassroots herbalists. I define “grassroots herbalist” as somebody who loves the plants, loves herbalism, connected to the plants as well, versus, say, nutraceutical companies who prob—I'll just paint the worst picture. They couldn't show you a dandelion plant, but they've isolated a chemical constituent and they put it into a jar, and then they sell it for \$50, something like that. Even then, maybe there's a discussion to be had there—just something. I would rather find our common qualities and I'd rather grow together.

I'd rather even disagree with people and be pushed by people into expanded new ways of thinking, and/or just respect that that person feels that way and let them do that. But just anytime we need something to be one particular way or, again, just shutting people out, I don't like that. I don't think that's—I don't think that's the way to go. Honestly, I would have been terrified to say that a couple of years ago because the culture was so intense, you know.

Mason Hutchison:

Thank you for your bravery in sharing this. Now, let's hear the easy road answer.

Rosalee de la Forêt:

I think a lot of people make—not a lot. This is—okay. I'm scrolling social media. I just see people making a lot of shit medicine out there and I don't like it.

Mason Hutchison:

Because they're just regurgitating something they have heard.

Rosalee de la Forêt:

Yeah, so it's like they'll be making their tinctures. They'll chop up this much dandelion root, and then pour a quart of alcohol over it. The one that always gets me—it happens all the time—is they put in these whole calendula flowers in the oil, and there's like ten flowers floating beautifully in the oil, and you're like, “Oh, how lovely!” but it's like, “Hmm.” It's more of like a decoration than medicine. The reason why it annoys me because—there is like working with herbs in very low doses and stuff. There's an intentionality behind that, and there's specific medicine for that, so I'm not like even saying that all medicine has to be potent.

Mason Hutchison:

Yeah, yeah, sure.

Rosalee de la Forêt:

But I think when we're unconsciously making poor medicine, then that medicine doesn't work that well, and then we get into a situation where people are like, "Oh, herbs don't work." It's like, yeah, but-

Mason Hutchison:

Good point.

Rosalee de la Forêt:

Where we're using strong medicines intentionally, then there's probably a better—I mean, herbs can not work for a variety of reasons, but let's elevate our medicine making so that we know that's not the problem.

Mason Hutchison:

I think you should get on TikTok then and start popularizing a lot of these good medicine making practices. Oh, wait. She is on TikTok now, @rosaleedelaforet. Go through or follow. You've been doing some awesome stuff on there-

Rosalee de la Forêt:

Thank you.

Mason Hutchison:

So, I highly encourage you.

Rosalee de la Forêt:

Thank you for the inspiration.

Mason Hutchison:

Absolutely.

Rosalee de la Forêt:

Mason pretty much forced me to go on TikTok.

Mason Hutchison:

You're welcome.

Rosalee de la Forêt:

You encouraged it.

Mason Hutchison:

If you could send one message to your younger herbalist self, what would it be? Classic question.

Rosalee de la Forêt:

Yeah. Man, I did so much right. That comes up first.

Mason Hutchison:

A humble brag.

Rosalee de la Forêt:

I followed my inspiration. I went to all the herbal schools. I'm still going to all the herbal schools. I think that's a big one for me, just the curiosity, keep learning, keep following your inspiration. It doesn't have to be a "why" behind anything. Go for the joy of it. I did a lot of that, right? I kind of alluded to this earlier where I'm talking about my young activist days. I could be a little dogmatic when I was younger, so I would say like, maybe invite people in more than "should" them out. I think that's the common thing that a lot of us go through in our twenties. I know you had that phase too. So, I think-

Mason Hutchison:

I was a real a-hole.

Rosalee de la Forêt:

I don't know if I believe that, but I definitely probably turned away some folks, alienated some folks just in my zealousness. I'm much more like let's invite those who want to come in—in now, instead of trying to cram things down people's throats. I could tell that younger self, "You could ease up a little bit, stay enthusiastic, but maybe just rein it in a little bit." I always like to be practical. The practical thing would be like, wait. Make way less tinctures. I tintured everything, like this one summer, Ancestree Herbals is my local herb farm. I got a pound of every single offering they had. They had like 80 herbs that year. I got a pound of everything and I tintured it all up.

Mason Hutchison:

Oh, wow!

Rosalee de la Forêt:

And I had—literally half my kitchen was just jars and jars of tincture. We put in an extra bookshelf. It was intense.

Mason Hutchison:

You're still working through those?

Rosalee de la Forêt:

Yeah, so I kind of—and I would like—I'd hear about an herb and I'd order it from Mountain Rose Herbs right away. I actually threw away a lot of herbs, which is kind of shameful and embarrassing to me, but I do talk about it because I feel like just less is more, you know. You don't have to order every single herb you ever heard about. You don't have to tinture every little thing. Better to go slow and really get to know the medicines and use them with intention. So, I wish that I had known that, but at the same time, I was so enthusiastic. I don't know that I would have listened.

Mason Hutchison:

If you're just starting on your journey, heed Rosalee's advice, for sure. It's all good stuff. You talk about this concept about—you love talking about inflammation. I want to say it's like one of your specialties, but then I love how you kind of tie it in to the health of the world. I don't know if you want to talk about the project that might be associated with this, but in general, I love when you talk about it. I think it's really fascinating, so free to share with the rest of the audience.

Rosalee de la Forêt:

Sure. I feel like inflammation is just the crux of so much, like so much of our chronic disease is due to chronic inflammation. It's something that we, as herbalists, are just so able to address in folks. It's all the lifestyle stuff. I think it's known that chronic inflammation is bad. Western medicine recognizes it as the source of most chronic disease; and natural health folks recognize it as well, but I do have a lot of complaints with how it's addressed.

Mason Hutchison:

Just take turmeric.

Rosalee de la Forêt:

Yeah, just take turmeric, exactly. That's one way. Or the fearful, "Gluten will kill you. Toxins will kill you." This kind of like, "You're going to die because we live in a toxic world," kind of thing. That is actually inflammatory--to be in a state of fear and anxiety. That doesn't—that doesn't help. Or you have other—I don't know what the term is. It's often in this kind of functional medicine realm where you have this growing list of influencers, we could say there, that their goal is kind of to get to Mars. You know, this very futuristic like, "Oh, you need these." Like for example, I was reading a book the other day that was like, "They're coming out, these things. This \$50,000 body scan every year," and then all this super high tech stuff. I mean, they do. A lot of those folks, seriously, are going into space and looking for this next evolution.

For me, I like to just bring it back down to I think chronic inflammation exists because we're living out of balance, and I think that is a deep reflection that we see within the world around us. Something I'm still in the process of relearning is that humans are not separate from nature. We're all one, and so—and I still find myself catching my language and stuff. I'll still use that as if there's a separation, but since we are a reflection of the whole ecosystem that we're in, the earth is obviously in a state of imbalance. We're in a state of imbalance, and I don't think we can fix one without the other. It's like a mutual thing that needs to happen. When I talk about imbalance, obviously, global warming and climate change can be part of that. The wildfires that we're seeing, those are all-

Mason Hutchison:

Inflammatory.

Rosalee de la Forêt:

Yeah, inflammatory. Acid rain, the changing of our oceans – all of those things are inflammatory in nature, and our bodies are in a state of inflammation. And I feel, actually, a lot of faith that we can go in a good direction if we're, again, working together with our living ecosystems and our personal health, but I don't think that we can ignore the earth and ignore our impact on the earth, and expect our personal health to improve. I see that as kind of a missing piece on a lot of this kind of like nutraceutical approach to inflammation. It's like, "Eat your rainbow of food," sure, but it's like if those foods aren't actually nutrient-dense because they're grown in a really beautiful way that's nourishing the earth, then—everything is just so interconnected in that realm. I think it's really beautiful, and I have a lot of-

Mason Hutchison:

The micro and the macro.

Rosalee de la Forêt:

Yeah. I really do have a lot of faith that we could move in a really beautiful direction by understanding that we're connected and working towards a world in which that's like if we truly believe that, our choices become different.

Mason Hutchison:

The forever optimist. That's one of the things I love about you, Rosalee. You're very optimistic. I, too, am optimistic as well. Do you want to talk about the project that you might be doing?

Rosalee de la Forêt:

Sure! For years now, I've wanted to write a book about chronic inflammation and my perception of it, and a holistic perspective of it. I really want the book to be joyful, and fun, and inspiring, and empowering. Last fall, I just had this one of those "knowings" that I was talking about. I had this knowing that I would write it with Rich Mandelbaum, who—I have been in his classes a lot. He didn't really know me, but I just decided to call him up out of the blue and be like, "Hey, dude. Let's write a book together." He was very understanding. He said yes. We're actually working on—we're actively working on that right now. I always knew I wanted to write the book for a long time, but I knew I wouldn't write it by myself. I haven't been in clinical practice for a while, and so I knew I would really benefit from someone in clinical practice. I just could tell that our perspective is really intertwined together, so we're working on that now.

Mason Hutchison:

I love that it might have the opportunity to hit a more mainstream audience and push this optimism that you're referring to.

Rosalee de la Forêt:

Yeah, it's definitely. We're both herbalists writing this book, but I don't think it'll be an herbal book.

Mason Hutchison:

Right.

Rosalee de la Forêt:

There will be plenty of herbs.

Mason Hutchison:

You read a lot. Actually, you read a lot of different types of books. I think mostly nonfiction at this point, but I can—if you weren't the author, I could see this exact book on your bookshelf.

Rosalee de la Forêt:

Yeah. I mean, yeah, very much. I think that's the most—like everything I do is like the book I wish I had had.

Mason Hutchison:

Totally. That's super exciting. Awesome! Well, let's wrap that segment up with yet another guest question.

Rosalee de la Forêt:

You said that was done. Now, I'm so curious. I'm still like—I was just thinking how happy I was to see Jesus. That was lovely.

Rosemary Gladstar:

Hi, Rosalee. Thank you for this opportunity to question you. First of all, I just want to tell you how much I admire you as a human being, an amazing woman, and just an incredible herbalist, really. I always learn so much when I get to sit in your classes. So, my question to you of all the many things that you've accomplished and done in your work as an herbalist, what is it that pleases you the most that you're most proud of? And if I may ask a second question, it's also of all the amazing things going on in the herbal world, most of them

incredible, some challenging, what is it that you personally would like to change if you had the opportunity? So, thank you. I'm so looking forward to your response. Have a lovely day.

Rosalee de la Forêt:

Mason, I feel like I could use a hug. That was so sweet. I feel like my work is done here, Rosemary. That was really special, thank you. What did she say?

Mason Hutchison:

The first—the gist of the first question was what are you most proud of of all the work you've done, I think, right?

Rosalee de la Forêt:

Oh, my gosh!

Mason Hutchison:

What a thoughtful question.

Rosalee de la Forêt:

That is such a thoughtful question.

Mason Hutchison:

Thanks, Rosemary.

Rosalee de la Forêt:

The thought that comes to me is I hope it's the impact I've had on people's lives, like whatever the project was, I hope that I've had—I guess my goal is that I am a catalyst for people, like a bouncing-off point for people to perhaps get inspired and then go on their own herbal adventure. And so, I hope whether it's people read my book or took my classes or listen to the podcast, that they're inspired to bring herbs into their lives, allowing herbs to transform their

lives, and then blooming in their own way. Does that make sense? I hope it's my impact rather than-

Mason Hutchison:

You use the word "impact" a lot, so I love that.

Rosalee de la Forêt:

I hope it's more than a singular project, you know.

Mason Hutchison:

You're doing it! Yeah.

Rosalee de la Forêt:

I think we all are, you know, because the plants call us to do that, so that's why. I think that's why they call us, to be that ripple that goes out into the world. It's kind of like if you're—I feel like if you're blessed to be called by the plants, and that's like the best reciprocity that we can engage in is to keep spreading the love.

Mason Hutchison:

That's right.

Rosalee de la Forêt:

Like Rosemary has been for me. I have found her—talk about a woman of impact. I don't think that we could—my mind cannot comprehend the amazing impact that she has had on undoubtedly millions of people's lives, and what that then ripples out to be. I love that woman so much. That was really special. She had a second question there too.

Mason Hutchison:

The second question I think the gist of it was, with all the incredible things going on in the herbal world, is there something that you'd like to see change? You kind of alluded to it a little bit earlier.

Rosalee de la Forêt:

I did. Rosemary and I have talked about this at length, so I could see what she was getting at. I honestly just—she said such nice things about me. She also—everyone is going to see the video, right?

Mason Hutchison:

Yes, it's going to be edited in.

Rosalee de la Forêt:

She's so stunningly beautiful. I was kind of caught up in her beauty, and just-

Mason Hutchison:

She's got an aura. For sure.

Rosalee de la Forêt:

I would like to see more of the coming together and the listening. I think being in-person whether it's through classes or through herbal gatherings of some kind, plant walks, the more time we can spend with each other, the better. I am—you could call me an online herbalist. My school is online. My podcast is online. I do so much remotely. I live in a town of 200 people.

Mason Hutchison:

Yeah.

Rosalee de la Forêt:

So, that is the way of it for me. I chose to live out in the wilderness, and so I do a lot of stuff online, and I 100 percent know in my heart, that there's a place for that and there's a place for these in-person gatherings and being together. I think when we're together, we're able to listen to each other more. I think we're able to have fun. I think that's something that's increasingly important to me. I think the more we can gather, the better. The more we can listen, the better.

I just went through a series of books where I was learning all about communication. It's like how we communicate. I mentioned the validation book. How do we really participate in tough conversations? I feel like that is something that is worth learning right now whether we're learning how to be in difficult conversations within our herbal community, within our families, within our neighbors.

Where I live, it's very rural and it's intense. We have intense winters. We have wildfires. We know that our lives depend on our neighbors and we cannot afford to discount them because of, say, their political beliefs, or their religious beliefs, whatever. We—literally, your life depends on your neighbors at times, and that's something we know in the valley and we talk about it. We can't afford to get into our little silos and just be with likeminded people. I wish that that was more true otherwise—again, we don't always have to agree. I'm—I know we can always take it to the extreme of hate-filled people or people who want to cause harm to others. I'm not talking about that.

Mason Hutchison:

Sure.

Rosalee de la Forêt:

That's a whole other thing. What I'm talking about how can we just show up for each other, listen, agree to disagree, grow together. I hope we can continue to do that in the herbal community.

Mason Hutchison:

Very insightful. Thank you.

Rosalee de la Forêt:

Thank you.

Mason Hutchison:

Moving on to the final segment, I'm kind of start wrapping things up here. Thanks for joining me on your show.

Rosalee de la Forêt:

Thanks for being here.

Mason Hutchison:

Two hundred episodes. It's huge. So, speaking of your show, you have an epic podcast, 200 episodes, YouTube Channel. You got a wonderful website just chock-full of information, but I think a lot of people don't know what you really do is—you're saying "online herbalist," whatever, but you're an herb school. I feel like you told me somewhat recently in the past year, you're like, "I'm an herb school. This is an herb school. It's what we're doing. We're teaching students. We're creating new herbalists and everything," and so I was just hoping you'd go in-depth a little bit on your—what the Herbs with Rosalee herb school is.

Rosalee de la Forêt:

Sure, yeah.

Mason Hutchison:

If I said that correctly. My bad. I kind of butchered that.

Rosalee de la Forêt:

Herbs with Rosalee School, yeah. I can't believe I'm saying this out loud, but it was like a year ago that I was like—I felt like—I was like, “You know, I really want to have a big herbal school,” and then I asked Nicole, my operator. I said, “How many students have we had in the past year?” and she counted them up and I want to say it was over 6,000. I was like, “Oh!”

Mason Hutchison:

It's a pretty big herb school.

Rosalee de la Forêt:

I do have a big herb school! But it was kind of a funny dawning realization to me too because I think—because I've been passion-driven and I've been inspiration-driven, I've just done what I loved and I started teaching classes, and then suddenly realized I have an herb school!

Mason Hutchison:

Mission accomplished.

Rosalee de la Forêt:

I feel—I have been working towards having foundational courses. I feel like I have reached that where I want the foundation is covered now. I have three main courses. In order of appearance, I have Rooted Medicine Circle, which is our medicine making class. I teach that with Emily Han, who I wrote *Wild Remedies* with, and that is a naturalist course made up as a medicine making course. The two are very much infused, so it's very much about learning about your local ecology, learning how to strengthen that connection. We talk about things like awareness outside, interdependence, reciprocity, self-care, community. We always end every class in community and giving back. Through that, we learn about medicine making. I'm pretty passionate about making potent medicine, so that's a really fun part of it. It's very much a co—it's a live cohort, so we make the medicines together. We have a lot of live classes together, and so we're going through it as a process. It's a nine-month process where we're learning and growing and making medicine, filling up our counters. I fill up my counter.

We choose the medicines that we want to make, so that happens throughout the year. So, that's Rooted Medicine Circle.

Then the next class that I had come out with is Cooling Inflammation, which is my inflammatory class. This is where I really started to explore how do we joyfully bring things into our life, instead of fearfully run from things. That class is set up with a lot of invitations, so people choose the invitations they want to bring into their lives. It's really—this one is kind of more for people who are working through chronic illness, chronic inflammation. They just want to live joyful, happier, healthier lives, and be surrounded in the community that's also working towards that. And so, that's Cooling Inflammation.

And then, the course that I just finished was a remake or upgrade of my first ever online course, which is Taste of Herbs. I remade that into Herbal Energetics Course, and I spent the last year making that. You know that very well because I always share a lot of that process with you. I thought it was going to be like a minor upgrade. It took me an entire year and over 60 hours of video and just the whole production of it, but this class is really about learning how to hone your own senses so you understand if something tastes bitter, what does that mean physiologically, and how to really understand heating and cooling and moistening and drying. How does that—what does that mean in a plant? What does that mean in us? And again, how does that combine together in a way that basically equals herbal medicine? That's a very foundational piece in terms of people understanding how to trust—how to first understand it so then they can trust their own intuition. I don't mean intuition in terms of it suddenly came from the heavens, but you honed this. It's such a like learned sense in you that you begin to trust it, so the herbs become less of something that's like memorized or this-for-that herbalism, like take-this-herb-for-that-thing, and more of this guided, embodied, sensorial experience. That's very practical. I'm always super practical.

Mason Hutchison:

I don't know if you've said the name of the course, which is Herbal Energetics Course. Did you say it?

Rosalee de la Forêt:

I think I did.

Mason Hutchison:

My bad, my bad.

Rosalee de la Forêt:

It's alright. We can say it again, Herbal Energetics Course.

Mason Hutchison:

Upsy-daisy, yeah, totally. So, I suspect with each one of these, we'd go to your website and get on your waiting list because I know they come out once per year.

Rosalee de la Forêt:

They're all live cohorts. I think it's just so great to learn together.

Mason Hutchison:

Totally.

Rosalee de la Forêt:

They're all live. I always want people to feel fully supported, so if they have questions, we're there for them. I don't want—I never want people to feel overwhelmed or confused or just wondering where the next step is. I want folks fully supported.

Mason Hutchison:

I could attest. I've seen behind-the-scenes inside of the classroom. It is a massive course, lots of guest teachers. I took the whole module with jim mcdonald on the temperaments and that was amazing, so...

Rosalee de la Forêt:

We have Rich Mandelbaum teaching phytochemistry, and we have—last year, we had Anjali Deva teaching Ayurveda segment. We had Tiffany Harper teaching Traditional Chinese Medicine segment—

Mason Hutchison:

All-encompassing.

Rosalee de la Forêt:

Yeah, all-encompassing in the realm of herbal energetics and what that means.

Mason Hutchison:

Amazing. You got any student success stories you want to share?

Rosalee de la Forêt:

I've been reading a lot of reviews. We also do certificate reviews for all the courses, and I just read a review the other day. I don't have it memorized or anything, but the person said, "Learning through you, I'm taking better care of our family," and they had ways that their family's health was improving. They said that they love feeling more confident through that process, and they just know now. Instead of feeling overwhelmed, they just know what to reach for. And then they said, but more than anything, their connection to their local ecology had strengthened and they're living with the seasons, and just feeling the beauty and awe and wonder of the outside world. It was everything I've ever wanted my teachings to be. It's like they nailed every one: the better health, better connection, have healthier family, and also the connection to the world around them. I just felt like, "Okay. We're doing this!"

Mason Hutchison:

Sounds like you're making an impact almost.

Rosalee de la Forêt:

I hope so.

Mason Hutchison:

That's awesome. You kind of touched on the book earlier, the inflammation book. Any other projects coming up that you might want to chat about that you're excited about?

Rosalee de la Forêt:

Always. There's always something to be excited about. Gosh. How many of my projects involve you?

Mason Hutchison:

Too many.

Rosalee de la Forêt:

Too many. You love them. I feel like—so, our last episode, I talked about Herbalists After Hours, which is our new podcast. Maybe you could share about Herbalists After Hours.

Mason Hutchison:

Oh, flip the script. So, basically, I mean, the origin was kind of like I was potentially writing a book on the herbal community. We're kind of like, "How does that even work? What would that look like?" and so, we're still kind of marinating on this. Rosalee and I are trying to find every excuse we can to work together, and-

Rosalee de la Forêt:

And have fun.

Mason Hutchison:

And have fun, that's a part of it always, and so it kind of just naturally evolved into maybe we could start out before even conceiving of the book, like this YouTube podcast series.

We had a few different iterations of that, and then all of a sudden, it just came to us, Herbalists After Hours, essentially like this community-based project, podcast, etc. where we're not necessarily talking to the herbalist about what-herb-is-good-for-this and that kind of stuff, which, again, I love that. I've been consuming that type of content for years and years and years, but really, what I've fallen in love with, and I know you have as well, is the herbal community because the herbal community is just made up of all sorts of characters – lovely characters, quirky characters, etc. So, really, it's just going to be us having fun talking to these herbalists and getting to know them, what they're up to, projects they're excited about, but really just having fun, and shooting the shit with some people. I don't know if that does it justice or not.

Rosalee de la Forêt:

It does.

Mason Hutchison:

We're hoping to do each one in person. Potentially, we're releasing one per month, so it's kind of a lower lift that way, and then we'll release, at least, parts of them on both of our YouTube Channels and on our podcast feeds.

Rosalee de la Forêt:

That's kind of interesting to hear you talk about it, like "Yeah, yeah." This has evolved slowly. We've been talking about this for a long time. I remember calling you from the Austin airport with an idea about it. You called me with an idea like—it's like we've just been building it slowly. Next month, we're going to take the plunge for certain because we're going to Great Lakes and IHS, so we got folks lined up to interview, so-

Mason Hutchison:

For now, it feels like that stage where those bands, all they do is name them and they come up the logo, and they're like, "Alright, mission accomplished."

Rosalee de la Forêt:

We're working on the logo.

Mason Hutchison:

Exactly. But really, I do see this coming to fruition and I'm very, very excited for it.

Rosalee de la Forêt:

We have logo. We have music. Well, partial logo.

Mason Hutchison:

Partial music.

Rosalee de la Forêt:

Partial music. It's all coming together.

Mason Hutchison:

We've got an idea, but it's going to happen.

Rosalee de la Forêt:

And we have more ideas.

Mason Hutchison:

Totally, so sweet!

Rosalee de la Forêt:

And then, I already mentioned the book.

Mason Hutchison:

Yep.

Rosalee de la Forêt:

I never mention my coloring book.

Mason Hutchison:

Yeah! Let's talk about that. Oh, we don't have a copy here, do we?

Rosalee de la Forêt:

We can put on B roll.

Mason Hutchison:

Okay, there we go.

Rosalee de la Forêt:

That was a cool project that just came out this year. I teamed up with my handsome French husband and Caitlin Cordell, who's my tattoo artist, and she is the illustrator for the coloring book. That was very much a ecology-based coloring book that hopefully will inspire folks to take their love of the outside world indoors with the coloring outdoors very much rooted in our local ecosystem as well.

Mason Hutchison:

Well, you don't have to live in the Methow Valley to enjoy it.

Rosalee de la Forêt:

No, yeah.

Mason Hutchison:

Maybe we should even drop a link in the description.

Rosalee de la Forêt:

Okay.

Mason Hutchison:

Whatever. Alright, this is not my show. My bad. Okay.

Rosalee de la Forêt:

I'm always taking suggestions from you. I would actually say that's like new projects on the rise. It's been fun to collaborate with you, Mason. You've been giving me great ideas for the podcast. I'm doing reels now.

Mason Hutchison:

Yeah. Look at you go.

Rosalee de la Forêt:

Doing videos and stuff.

Mason Hutchison:

TikToks--all the youngsters out there.

Rosalee de la Forêt:

That's actually been going on.

Mason Hutchison:

Totally. So, we'll start wrapping up here. Where is the podcast heading and are you going to be doing 200 more episodes?

Rosalee de la Forêt:

I'm loving the podcast. It feels such an honor. I get to meet so many new folks that I wouldn't necessarily get to meet because they're just all over the world. I get to hang out with people I know too. That's fun, so I love it. It's super fun. I'm so proud of my Production Team and everybody that's working on it. I absolutely love it. I hope we're around for 200 more episodes. People, keep listening.

Mason Hutchison:

That's right. Keep showing up.

Rosalee de la Forêt:

Keep showing up. Keep supporting us, then absolutely, we want to keep doing that. I'm also interested in growing. I've grown a lot in these first 200 episodes. Things we talked about, just confidence, and skills improving. As I just said, you've been giving me a lot of ideas, so I hope— I'm not looking for another 200 of the same episodes, but that I can keep growing with the podcast as well, and we can see how that evolves as well. Doing these in-person things are fun. We do these other series, Herbalists After Hours. It's like I'm excited for it to keep going and keep evolving. Again, with the podcast membership, we're going to be listening to folks and be like, "What do people want?" I'm very much into hearing what other folks want to hear as well. I think I'm excited to keep going and I'm excited to see just how it naturally changes and evolves with time too.

Mason Hutchison:

I'm very excited for you and see where it goes, yeah, exactly. Alright. Well-

Rosalee de la Forêt:

Are you going to interview me for the 400th? Five hundredth, maybe.

Mason Hutchison:

Book it. Book it, 500th, yeah. That would be fun. So, why don't we end the show how we end every 200th episode around here with the final question? And that's: What's your dream for the future of herbalism?

Rosalee de la Forêt:

Oh, man, so many things. I truly believe that herbalism can change the world. I truly do. I—I don't think that it's going to change the world because it helps someone's constipation. That's true, like triphala's amazing for constipation—but I think it's how we practice herbalism that

could be transformative not just for our personal health, but for our communities and for our local ecosystems. To me, that means things like, the more we love the plants, the more we show up for them. The more that we truly believe that our well-being is enmeshed in the world behind us, the more we will make better decisions, and we will hold other people accountable for their decisions. When I say that, I mean more like corporations. I think that we do that through love, through this deep love and joy of the plants. My hope for herbalism is that we continue to love the plants, that we continue to grow together as a community, and that we keep reaching for the joy of it, and the love of it. I think that can be truly transformative. I get so inspired—I mean, every herbalist that I have on the show, I’m inspired by their story, inspired by what they do in whatever way, shape or form that is. All these community herbalists showing up in some way, shape or form for their communities, and whether that’s clinicians who are helping people or these community gardens that people are doing. But basically, just helping—this was in your episode. You were shown a dandelion and it was like, “Oh, you can eat that,” and that forever transformed your life.

Mason Hutchison:

Yeah.

Rosalee de la Forêt:

The more people we have doing that, I think the better, by far. Just think of that one person said that to you and look at the impact you’ve had, how then you can’t count how many people that you’ve impacted, and how many people they’ve impacted all through this love of plants. Again, when we rely on those medicines outside our doors, our landscape shifts. We make different choices. I think the more we can keep making those better choices for a diverse ecosystem for a healthy, thriving ecosystem, not just the plants, of course, but all those beings out there from the mycorrhizal networks, to the insects, to everything. I think that’s where herbalism can be truly transformative. I think we need to get together and share ideas. I think we need to collaborate. Rosemary talks about that when she talks about formulation. She says, “People ask me how did I have such a big impact.” She says, “I didn’t do it alone. I created the formula of people to create things like United Plant Savers and

Traditional Medicinals,” her herb stores, and everything. So, I think the more collaborative we can be to build different ways of being—you know, I have this vision that’s like—we’re in Salem right now. What if Salem—Salem is pretty big. I mean, to me. I live in a town of 200 people, so it’s really big. What if there is like one or five or ten community herb gardens where those communities, those neighborhoods could go there and get the herbs they need for the health and well-being of their family, whether that’s for a tummy ache, or for avoiding a sickness, or for addressing insomnia. Whatever it is, just really accessible where people get to connect with the plants themselves and get to make the medicines. There’s just so much potential for how we can make herbalism a part of our everyday lives in a way that, again, is transformative, because of how we bring the plants into our lives, and I have no doubt we’ll retain the magic of it all too. That’s kind of my dream where herbalism is accepted as everyday life, but also, still appreciated for this beautiful, magical thing that it is.

Mason Hutchison:

That’s a beautiful way to wrap up the show.

Rosalee de la Forêt:

Wonderful.

Mason Hutchison:

That’s a keynote, by the way. That’s the seeds of a keynote for you right there. I think that’s wonderful. Thank you for sharing everything. I love you very much, Rosalee.

Rosalee de la Forêt:

I love you too, Mason.

Mason Hutchison:

Proud to call you a friend. Excited to see what’s next for the show. I don’t know if I want to have the final words. I don’t know if you want to address the audience in any way before we wrap up and get out of here, but this was awesome!

Rosalee de la Forêt:

Yeah. I hadn't planned on—you were like the host, so you have the final word. It just makes me feel—I really just want to say thank you to everyone for listening for 200 episodes, whether this is your first episode or your 200th. Thanks for listening, especially in the beginning. It was really rough. It's just been such an honor to host the show. It's been such an honor to have so many guests come on. They dedicate so much of their time. Again, it's an honor to have the team supporting me as well, so I'm just feeling a lot of gratitude that we have made it to 200 episodes and looking forward to seeing what's going to transpire in the next, so thanks everyone.

Mason Hutchison:

Awesome! Thanks everyone for tuning in and see you in the next episode. Good job, Rosalee!

Rosalee de la Forêt:

Thank you.

Mason Hutchison:

Yeah.

Rosalee de la Forêt:

Thank you much for listening! If you're not already subscribed, I'd love to have you as part of this herbal community so I can deliver even more herbal goodies your way.

This podcast is made possible, in part, by our awesome students. This week's Student Spotlight is on Gerri Gassert in Pennsylvania.

Gerri is enthusiastically enrolled in five of our programs and brings a generous spirit to each one—offering thoughtful questions, insightful answers, and beautiful reflections. In the Herbal Energetics Course she explored chickweed as her herbal ally in the Salty Module through infusions, salves, and garden connections. She even shared it with her

chickens—I approve! Her sensory descriptions are striking—like how nettle infusion felt “like nutrition” and chickweed tasted of “spring rain and earthiness.” She’s even begun her own fresh vs. dried nettle tincture experiment based on what she learned about mineral extraction.

To honor her contributions, Mountain Rose Herbs is sending Gerri a \$50 gift certificate to stock up on their incredible selection of sustainably sourced herbal supplies. Mountain Rose Herbs is my go-to for high-quality organic spices, herbal remedies, and even hard-to-find botanicals. They ship all over the U.S. and have a massive selection of products to fuel your herbal adventures. Thank you so much, Mountain Rose Herbs, for supporting our amazing students! If you’d like to explore Mountain Rose Herbs’ offerings and support this show, you can find the special link in the show notes.

Mason Hutchison:

Test, testing. Tori Amos rocks.

Rosalee de la Forêt:

Tori Amos rocks. Tori Amos rocks.

Mason Hutchison:

Tori Amos rocks. Okay. Tori Amos rocks.

Rosalee de la Forêt:

Tori Amos rocks.

Mason Hutchison:

Cool. Testing, testing. Tori Amos rocks.

Rosalee de la Forêt:

Tori Amos rocks.

Mason Hutchison:

Test.

Rosalee de la Forêt:

Tori Amos rocks.

Mason Hutchison:

Tori Amos rocks. We're not using that.

Rosalee de la Forêt:

We are. It's so going in the blooper.