

Heather Luna:

It represents domestic medicine and I really—that's why I chose citrus peel. I wanted to bring back this element that we are in charge of our own health based on the foods that we eat, and that herbs are not separate from foods, and I really feel like citrus peel is exactly that. So, I'm always looking to how can I improve digestive function, how can we increase nutrient absorption. Citrus peel just targets that really, really well.

Rosalee de la Forêt:

Welcome to the Herbs with Rosalee Podcast, a show exploring how herbs heal as medicine, as food, and through connecting with the living world around you.

Chances are you've thrown away medicine this week without even realizing it. In this episode, I'm joined by Heather Luna to talk about citrus peel, the part of the orange most of us toss into the compost without a second thought. By the end of this episode, you'll understand why that peel deserves a place in your daily cup of tea, how it warms and supports digestion in a way many bitters don't, and why herbalists past and present have treasured it for the lungs and the heart. Heather also shares a recipe from her clinic that's so delicious, people eat it by the spoonful and come back asking for more. It's the kind of episode that will change how you look at a simple bag of mandarins.

If you enjoy this episode, please give it a thumbs up so more plant lovers can find us and be sure to stay tuned until the very end for your herbal tidbit.

Heather, I'm so thrilled that you're here with us. Thank you so much for being on the show.

Heather Luna:

It's my pleasure.

Rosalee de la Forêt:

Well, this has been a long time coming. We've been scheduling it for a while, so I'm excited that we're finally here, finally making it happen. I'm really excited to hear your plant story and how the plants have called you onto this path.

Heather Luna:

How the plants called me onto the path is one thing, and then how I got to be where I am now is a whole other thing.

Rosalee de la Forêt:

Let's hear it.

Heather Luna:

I think the plants called me when I was a child. I don't know where it started except for I had one key moment in my early years where I—I had someone pull off an aloe vera leaf and put it on my scabbed knee when I was about five years old, and that moment went, "You can do that? That's a thing? Are you serious?" That was the light bulb that I think just changed my reality, shaped the path that I would walk for the rest of my life.

I remember I was always a gardener. My family was always into plants. My grandmother grew orchids. There was always some kind of element of working with plants in my life. Then I got to be a teenager and I was like I'm going to seek out this herb thing. This is a thing. I'm going to seek it out. Of course, I started reading Rosemary Gladstar and doing what I could to get self-educated at a very young age. I remember going off to college and looking for herb classes, thinking that was going to be a thing. I'm like, where do I learn about this? I thought this is what I'm supposed to do. Where is it? I ended up taking classes in horticulture and whatever, but it was not—it wasn't what I was looking for.

To my father's dismay, I dropped out of college and joined herb school. He was like, "Aah." I just shunned the family. I originally went to one herb school, didn't work out there. I ended

up moving to Colorado and going to herb school there, and did a full three-year training, became a clinical herbalist. That time I was in my early 20s. The plants guided me the whole way. I just never had a doubt that this is what I was meant to do. After I finished herb school, I went right into practice. I also started teaching pretty early. I had a daughter. It was like I get to practice all the tricks when you have a little kid. Things you would never get to practice on a client, right? Like, “Oh, let’s try this.” And then, somewhere in my mid-twenties, I moved back to California which was where I was born and raised. I started—new town, new community, tried to get myself out teaching some classes and some herb walks just to get—see if we could drum up some business and start a new career path here. I did for a while—I just started teaching classes in my living room and got a few clients just here and there, and started practicing massage. It was a great way to get your hands on people and talk about herbs simultaneously. Some time—it was probably 2014, I got sick with chronic Lyme. It was like, oh, hmm. That was a major learning experience in my own path.

Rosalee de la Forêt:

Yeah.

Heather Luna:

I was bedridden for two years. I was trying all the herbs. I was doing everything. I was doing things that were supposedly right and they ended up not working, so I really had to find what worked for me through that whole chronic disease illness. I think that my coming out of it, coming on the other side, I did get 100% well and I no longer had any Lyme, and am completely symptom-free. But my path through that was I think the most important part of my education, a critical part of my learning what really works is not always what the book says. You sometimes have to try things and knowing your body is different or whatever.

Of course, through that, people knew I was an herbalist in a community, they knew I’d recovered from Lyme. Then, of course, I got people asking me about Lyme so I started to change the way my practice worked, and I really started tunneling on chronic disease. I think for the next couple of years out of my own healing, I really focused on that, and that’s what

really grew my clinic. It was through my own illness that all of a sudden, my practice opened up.

All of a sudden, I realized the thing that people needed wasn't just herbs. It was that they needed education. I was like, "Okay, I can't tell you what to take unless you understand how and why to implement this, and why is it important." When you get the understanding and the knowledge, then you apply things a little bit differently, more that holistic approach and its—that's basically what started me running my school. So, I opened up my school. I had my clinic opened up. I started a school and I have been now doing that work for the last ten years. Kind of a long journey, but I really feel like that middle piece there around my healing from Lyme was a big graduate training for the clinical herbalist. But now, I've been practicing for 25 years, no intention of stopping. The plants are certainly my guides, all the way.

Rosalee de la Forêt:

Do you—and so you still have your practice and your school, or is it mostly your school now?

Heather Luna:

It's mostly my school now, so people come to me all the time wanting to see if they can see me privately. I'm—I have a couple of people I keep on my—I've been working with them for a long time, so I will continue to work with them, but I don't take on any personal new clients. I do think it's important for me to keep my hand in the game because I am now training clinicians, so I kind of have to know what they're going through and how they're managing. Now, that I do run three different programs and a clinic where I'm training clinicians and supervising their cases. It's a lot of work and I don't have a whole, busy private practice like I used to, but I like to keep my toe in the game and I am constantly learning because it never ends.

Rosalee de la Forêt:

I can appreciate that. Also, just what you said about feeling the need to be a source of education, not just—in order for people to be successful. It seems so important to herbalism

because we aren't giving out pills. We aren't like, "Take two of these. Call me in the morning." That's not the simplicity of herbalism for better or for worse. I'm wondering if you could expand on that anymore because that really piqued my curiosity of just like—maybe like how does that—what does that mean in real life? How does the education someone get then translate into them better able to take care of themselves with herbs?

Heather Luna:

It can be as simple as teaching them how to brew tea. You don't just hand them a bag of herbs and say, "Take this." No, it's a practice. It's not just one cup of tea. It's not one thing that you do. It's the little things you do every day. Coaching someone on how to brew tea, how to get all the nutrients they need in their diet, how—why is it important to do this? I think the "why" becomes the motivator for people to be willing to make a change. If you don't give them the why, then they're like, "Yeah, okay. That's cool," but if you give them an understanding of, "Gosh, you know, these plants can really help us, but if you take them in a certain context and you understand how the herbs work, you are now more motivated." That's I think the piece that people need. They need to know the why.

Rosalee de la Forêt:

There's a certain level of empowerment too, I think when we take on ownership of understanding the intricacies and not just the passivity of doing what someone told me to do.

Heather Luna:

Absolutely. Really, if you go back to the roots of it, that's our job as healers, is to be educators. Even if you're just working one-on-one with people, you're educating them about how the body works, how plants work with the body, how your life, how your food, how your sleep all plays a role in the path of healing. When they are empowered with the knowledge and they understand the concepts, they're like, "Oh, I want to be a participant," and that's really, like you said, it's empowerment. It's the—we are educators. That's the original word for doctor, is to be a teacher. Not that we're doctors, but we're educating our clients. We're teachers. I think that's really the most important thing about being an herbalist is that we're teaching

people how to heal themselves because you are your own healer. I can't come over, brew that tea and pour it down your throat. You have to do it yourself.

Rosalee de la Forêt:

That's true. That's so true.

Hey, there. Just a quick note: if you'd like to hear from me in a more personal way, I'd love to have you in my free text community. I send a couple of texts every week, things like behind-the-scenes updates, herbal thoughts that I'm chewing on, and little sparks of joy I don't always share anywhere else. To join, just text the word ROOT to 1-509-383-8398, and if you ever want to break up, no hard feelings. Just text STOP to the same number and you'll be opted out immediately. My goal is to make it so juicy and so fun that you look forward to getting my texts each week. Okay, now back to the show.

Well, Californian, you have chosen citrus as your herb for today, which is lovely. I'm excited for it. I would like to ask just why did this jump out for you as what you wanted to focus on for this episode.

Heather Luna:

I chose citrus because—not just because I'm a Californian, but because it represents domestic medicine. It's food. It's something that's in everybody's homes. It's often discarded. We eat the fruit. We throw the peel and the peel has got medicinal parts. There's many aspects to citrus. You certainly can use the fruit, but it brings back to this food as first medicine, and using herbs as food. Eat your herbs. Make it a part of your daily practice. I'm a really firm believer from having experienced it in my own health, and in many, many cases, and in my student body, but it's the—the things we do everyday, the foods that we eat—it's the little things we do that make the biggest impact, and so something like citrus peel which is in our homes that we can just use. Other herbs similar like corn silk—these are foods; a food as part of the medicine. I think historically, if you go back and look at the old literature, you didn't see herbs separate from foods. You would see in the old books, like back in Hildegard von

Bingen, herbs and foods side by side in the materia medica. I really—that's why I chose citrus peel. I wanted to bring back this element that we are in charge of our own health based on the foods that we eat, and that herbs are not separate from foods. I really feel like citrus peel is—it's exactly that.

Rosalee de la Forêt:

I love it. I definitely—it's something, like you said, that it's so often discarded and so easy to pick up. Alright, so I'm excited to dive in. Where would you like to start in terms of how do you like to work with citrus peel?

Heather Luna:

I use it actually quite a bit more than most people would be—expect. People tend to think of it as a mild herb. It's like, okay, you can make something taste good. That's actually not true. It can be very bitter. I work with it in many, many ways. I use it in all kinds of formulas. I use it primarily as a digestive aid. That's probably the first most primary way that I'll apply it. I'll put it in gut-healing teas, actually. I'll put it into various gut-healing formulas. I make powder formulas. The recipe I'm going to share today is a food-like recipe, which has citrus and rose hips together for multiple reasons.

Citrus improves digestive fire, and that's one of its key elements. I think that today, most people have an issue with digestion at some level, and digestion really is the root of all health. If something is not right in the digestive tract, it's going to reflect in other parts of the body, so I tend to focus a lot on healing the digestive tract. That's one of the target tissues for health. What I love about citrus peel is it actually increases nutrient absorption through two mechanisms. It's aromatic. Everyone can smell—you can taste and smell citrus. It's sweet. It's lovely. It's aromatic. It's warming and it's also a little mood-uplifting, which brightens people. It's also got a bitter profile. That combination of the warming carminative, plus the bitter, is really specific for warming the digestive tract. One of the things—I like to use citrus primarily as a bitter because it's not too cold. It's a big push in herbal communities to use a lot of bitters, which they're great, but the digestive tract is actually supposed to be warm. It needs

to be warm to assimilate food and to function properly. I'm always kind of weary of, "Hey, not too much bitter." Bitter is good, but let's balance it with some things that are warming and carminative. Because citrus peel has that duality, if you've ever just taken a chunk of citrus peel, and it can depend on what species of citrus to experiment with – mandarins or navel oranges. We're talking about the orange variety from mandarins to clementines to navels, but mandarins themselves are a little more bitter in their profile. They still have the warming aromatics, whereas navels are a little sweeter in their profile with less bitter. You could moderate that.

I love to add citrus peel to teas. That's one of my—every gut-healing tea gets a little pinch of citrus peel in there, usually, and it's because it has that duality of carminative and bitter, so it's mixed, it's complex. Those two actions together warm the digestive tract and act with bitter properties. We call it an "aromatic bitter." It's not too cold. It helps, actually, at the surface level of the gut to improve nutrient absorption. I think that's a really big thing today. Nutrition is such a key, fundamental determinant of health; ability to absorb what nutrients we get from foods down to nutrient deficiencies being prevalent in the food supply not just by food choice, so I'm always looking to how can I improve digestive function, how can I increase nutrient absorption. Citrus peel just targets that really, really well. It's free. It's everywhere. Just buy yourself a bag of mandarins and peel them.

Rosalee de la Forêt:

Hey, friends. It's Rosalee. If you've been nourished by this podcast, if it has helped you feel more connected to the plants or more grounded in your own herbal path, then I'd love to invite you to join the Herbs with Rosalee Podcast Circle. This special membership helps make the podcast possible. It supports everything we do behind the scenes, and it gives you a chance to go even deeper with the content that you love. Inside the circle, you'll get exclusive herbal resources, live classes each season with some of my favorite herbal teachers, and a private space to connect with fellow plant lovers. It's where the heart of our herbal community continues to grow. To learn more and join us, visit HerbalPodcastCircle.com. Your support means the world and it helps this podcast continue to bloom.

Let's talk about that real quick. There's two things that come to mind with that. One is that people are often familiar with using the zest versus the peel. I was hoping you could be very specific about that.

Heather Luna:

Thanks for making that point, it's very important. We want the whole peel. If you take the whole peel—the zest is just the orange part that you would take on the outside. Actually, if you take the whole peel, there's that white side and the orange side. They have a different spectrum of phytochemicals in them, flavonoid constituents mostly. There is more bitter on that white side, and then a little bit more of that aromatics is on the orange side, but there's also different antioxidants there on both sides so the whole peel is what we would really like, ideally. Peeling that orange, tearing it up into little bits or I use scissors to cut it up and lay it out to dry. What's in the orange side is certain flavonoid constituents. If I got it right, I think it's mostly hesperitin, and there is quercetin in there, which are anti-inflammatory and antioxidant. On the white side, I think it's rutin. I might have some mix up there because I'm pulling this out of my memory bank. Anyway, all three of those are combined with both sides of the peel. The idea there is these are important nutrients. They're not just—they're antioxidants is what we think of them, but the flavonoid compound that's in both sides—there's actually a more concentrated antioxidants on the white side than on the outside. They got them both, but those flavonoids improve tissue integrity, elasticity of the blood vessels. They actually will tone and nourish the respiratory tract. They're important for connective tissue, and they help to moderate inflammation. It's like everyday food stuff. Let's just make candied citrus peels and make it a regular snack.

Rosalee de la Forêt:

I'm curious what your practice is with this. I can just like—I have this image now of you having your orange for the day, and then cutting that up, and constant orange peel drying going on, and then that just gets tossed into whatever, your teas. As you're mentioning, grind some up for powder.

Heather Luna:

It is an on-going practice, yes. A bag of mandarins comes in. Around here in California, we have this big citrus season, but it does go on for a while. During citrus season, it is non-ending. We have the bag of mandarins on the counter, and then there's an empty basket on the counter. Whenever you peel a mandarin, you throw the peels into the basket. That's just how it goes. And then I periodically go through the baskets, it's like my chore of the day. I break up—because the peel is kind of whole and they don't dry well whole, so I got to go through there, pick up the whole peels. I get my scissors out and cut them to little bits, and then spread them out so they'll dry evenly. Once they're dry, I got to pull them out and make room for the next wave to come in. It is a constant tending, but it's easy.

Rosalee de la Forêt:

Yeah, yeah. I buy it in the wintertime. During citrus season, I buy boxes of mandarins from California, have them shipped up from a farm. I have that same kind of concentrated effort. What I find is that I save a lot of the peels, dry them and everything, but I always have so much leftover. I use them. I put them in vinegar for cleaning. I really like to do that, and then I just—I don't know. I think I just use them here and here. Right now, I'm just feeling really inspired of like, I should just be throwing orange peels in every tea I make, like my morning tea that's just for funsies. Every tea—much less a specific digestive tea. Yeah, just throw those babies in. I should go through them, stop collecting them.

Heather Luna:

Absolutely. A daily tea where citrus peel—we all need extra flavonoids. As a daily practice, we all need a little extra digestive support. We all need a little bit of cardiovascular tone, inflammatory relief – all of the things that citrus peel does, it's not limited. I actually put it in a number of different formulas. I put it in teas. I do powder it as well. I'll powder it and stir it into honey. That's just spoonfuls of yummy citrus peel honey. Actually, that's a very nice mood booster, by the way. You kind of feel bright and yummy and sunny after you have some citrus peel.

Rosalee de la Forêt:

Which is nice in January when it's citrus season.

Heather Luna:

It really is. It's really nice. I also make citrus peel into syrups. Citrus does help improve elasticity and tone for the lungs. Actually, in Chinese medicine, they say it supports lung qi, citrus peel, so I put it into cough syrup remedies. I make a citrus thyme cough syrup. I also make a formula called "gut flora food," which is prebiotic starchy things with burdock powder and citrus peel powder. That's another wonderful way to use it. I actually put it in a—one of my better formulas called "respiratory rescue," which is for like heavy lung stuff, and a bunch of other expectorants in there, but I feel like the citrus peel is a carrier. It adds and augments and it can round out just about anything. I could go on and on because I do use it a number of ways, but I think the point is that people should just use it more.

Rosalee de la Forêt:

Yeah. I'm feeling inspired for that because you're saying like, sure, when digestive stuff comes up, when respiratory stuff comes up, but also just in a daily practice.

Heather Luna:

A daily practice.

Rosalee de la Forêt:

Now, Heather, let's talk about the recipe that you're sharing with us today.

Heather Luna:

The recipe, actually, is—we use it all the time in my clinic. We call it—we call it the "flavonoid bomb." I didn't know that the general public would understand that because you need education about flavonoids to understand why that's cool or a good thing to do. So I renamed

it for this purpose as the “Rosehip Citrus Jam,” which sounds more like anyone can get on board.

Rosalee de la Forêt:

Sounds respectable.

Heather Luna:

“Oh, that sounds yummy!” And it is. It is really yummy. I was talking about citrus peel and its flavonoid content, and flavonoids being important for—in moderating inflammation, for tissue integrity, elasticity of the lungs and the blood vessels, that pairs so nicely with rose hips because rose hips are another spectrum of flavonoids. I think the two together—that’s the core of the formula, the rose hips and the citrus together. They do so much. It’s not just supporting cardiovascular health or respiratory health. The two together actually contain pectin. Pectin is really cool because it helps the microbiome—microbiome support as far as nourishing and replenishing. You actually need a certain amount of pectin for a healthy microbiome. Both rose hips and citrus peel have those, and they’re both flavonoid-rich. And it’s delicious! It’s yum.

This recipe, essentially, started many decades ago now when I had taken some rose hips just by themselves, and I had put them in a bowl. I just poured a splash of orange juice on them and let it soak overnight. The rose hips, those crunchy little hard shells, they just plump up and they get soft, and it turns into jam. Eat it with a spoon. That’s medicine! It’s not just food! It’s medicine. Eat it by the spoon! It was so delicious. I was talking about it with Paul Bergner and he took it and ran with it, and he says, “Well, maybe you could throw in some citrus peel chunks. Maybe you could throw in some goji berries or you could throw in other flavonoids. What about”—so it’s a loose recipe. You can augment it however you want. You could throw goji berries in there if that feels good to you and you have them. But just simple rose hips and citrus peel together, you could put them in a jar or bowl. You can pour some blueberry juice over it to augment the flavonoids. You could pour just a squeeze of some lemon juice because that’s augmenting the pectin profile and more flavonoids. You can play with it. And then, of

course, you can't stop there. You add a little bit of cinnamon or a little bit of cardamom or a little bit of both, and now you've got something that's more like a chutney, and it's really delicious. It's—it's the best medicine ever. We dispense them—I actually dispense them in our clinic and we'll just dispense the little bag of the mixed herbs in a pouch, and say, "Take this home, put it in a bowl and pour some other citrus juice or some blueberry juice over the top of it, let it soak and eat it.

Rosalee de la Forêt:

Pomegranate?

Heather Luna:

Pomegranate, there you go.

Rosalee de la Forêt:

This is exciting. I'm really into this.

Heather Luna:

Your options are endless. You can play with it. The goal is to eat the whole jar, and people do. They will—it's so delicious they'll just eat the whole jar! And then you feel really satisfied and nourished afterwards. You're like, "I guess got my flavonoid and antioxidant hit for this week, and now I'm good." Anyway, it's the—

Rosalee de la Forêt:

I love that. I love how simple you make it for folks too—just send them home with a bag of dried herbs that they can hydrate. It's lovely.

Heather Luna:

Exactly. Just add juice.

Rosalee de la Forêt:

Thank you so much for sharing this recipe. I have no doubt it's going to be popular. I love hearing from folks when they've tried the recipes, so when you try this recipe, let us know. Hit us up in the comments, email us, whatever. We want to hear about it. You can download your recipe card by checking out the link in the show notes or you can head over to herbswithrosaleepodcast.com. We have a beautifully illustrated recipe card with this, which will be another inspiring reason to make this yummy, yummy treat. Thank you so much, Heather.

Heather Luna:

My pleasure. I'm so glad to inspire people to eat their herbs.

Rosalee de la Forêt:

Yeah, I love it. Well, is there anything else you'd like to share about citrus peel before we move on? Oh, you know one thing I wanted to mention: do you have a take on whether people should prioritize organic versus non-organic?

Heather Luna:

Oh, that! I'm so glad you brought that up. That's actually a huge deal when it comes to citrus because citrus are very much sprayed, so I do recommend organic. I don't even think about it in my personal paradigm because it's like I just go to a local orchard and I get organic, but for most people, it is a huge issue. So, yeah, you don't want to be—citrus, in particular, are heavily sprayed. If you bring—just washing the peel is not enough. They actually saturate into the peel, so you definitely do want to make sure you're getting organic citrus peels, organic oranges. If it taste a little funky, like chemicals, it's probably because there are chemicals on the peel. Yeah, organic is probably the safe—it's a safety issue. I would only recommend organic.

Rosalee de la Forêt:

Alright, thank you.

Heather Luna:

The thing I will add about citrus peel, which is another reason I chose it for this talk, is that it's really safe. It really doesn't have any contraindications. It's safe with any constitutional type. It's even safe for people taking medications, and I think that that's an important thing when we're talking about herbs in the general public, is to make sure that this is something that's—it's safe. It's food. It's—eat it. There's no contraindications that anyone has to worry about.

Rosalee de la Forêt:

Wonderful. Thanks for mentioning that as well, and for sharing all of your orange citrus love and knowledge. I'm feeling—this is the problem with having this podcast is that every single episode I'm like, "Oh, I need this herb really badly now," but now, it's nice because I have all the citrus that I dried this year, and I'm feeling really inspired to maybe make the jar that I have of it closer to my tea-making stations so I can just more readily put that in.

Heather Luna:

I'm curious how much citrus peel do you end up with at the end of a season.

Rosalee de la Forêt:

Oh, my gosh. It's been like that before because I order boxes of mandarins. I'm like, why throw any of this away? I keep all of it, but over the years, I've gotten less. Right now, I got a pretty good sized jar.

Heather Luna:

Nice.

Rosalee de la Forêt:

I also make—I love to make bitters with citrus as well, but then, I'm generally using the whole fruit fresh. I'll just cut up the whole fruit fresh and put that in to make my bitters blends.

Heather Luna:

You can just take the whole citrus and bite into it like an apple.

Rosalee de la Forêt:

Personally, I don't know about the navels. That doesn't sound so pleasant, but the thin-skinned clementine mandarins, I do like that.

Heather Luna:

Actually, it was in—both the physiomedicalists and in Chinese medicine, they were really specific about the medicinal properties for a citrus was the bitter mandarin. They actually wanted the bitter in there. If you do try a navel, they're lovely. There's way less bitter in a navel. I don't think there's a preference as far as flavonoid content, but for the digestive components to increase between absorption and turn up digestive fire, that little bit of bitter in the mandarin is the preferable one.

Rosalee de la Forêt:

I just find that mandarins and clementines are more reliably yummy. I don't know. I've had just a lot of bad navels in my life to the point where I'm like if it's good, great, but I feel like there's a lot of tasteless ones, and that could be because I live in the North?

Heather Luna:

Have you tried the Cara Caras though?

Rosalee de la Forêt:

Probably not.

Heather Luna:

Oh, my God. It's a new hybrid. It's navel mixed with the blood orange.

Rosalee de la Forêt:

Oh.

Heather Luna:

They are probably the most delicious, and then the peels on those are the most epic dried peels ever.

Rosalee de la Forêt:

Okay, Cara Cara, like C-A-R-A?

Heather Luna:

C-A-R-A.

Rosalee de la Forêt:

Okay, I'll look for that this winter, absolutely.

Heather Luna:

Just throwing a tip out if you get any of those.

Rosalee de la Forêt:

Nice, nice. Well, I would love to hear what you have going on in your neck of the woods. What are your herbal offerings these days? What do you got for us?

Heather Luna:

I got all kinds of stuff. The big thing that's going on in our world right now is that our school is celebrating its ten-year anniversary, which I think—I feel like that's a big moment.

Rosalee de la Forêt:

It is! Congratulations!

Heather Luna:

Thank you. We've had to go through a big transition. We started out as this little, tiny in-person classroom in downtown Nevada City and then the pandemic hit and we had to move online, and then we grew into this big international school. Now, we have an international clinic, and so we decided we've gone through some twists and turns, and we've really done some cool stuff. We're going to do a showcase to celebrate the cool stuff we've been doing. In August, there's a—August 8, we have an online virtual event. We're calling it Milestones in Vitalism. It's going to be a great place to hear some key stories. Some key studies from our clinic are going to be presented. Paul Bergner is going to come and do—he's going to do a talk on leaky gut, liver fire and women's health. I'm going to talk about the healing crisis because if you're going to embark on being an herbalist in the vitalist tradition, you encounter the healing crisis. I thought it would be a good thing for people to learn about. We're going to have a bunch of our students and alumni offer some presentations, some case studies from the clinics, what they're doing now that they're outside of Acorn, what are they doing in their lives. I think that's a really great thing for people to see is, "What does an herbalist do when they finish herb school?" They all find their own way, so it could be an inspiring thing if anybody wants to sign up for that. [crosstalk]

Rosalee de la Forêt:

Where can they sign up for that? We'll put it in the show notes, but if there's an easy way to share, audio as well.

Heather Luna:

There's a link to it on our website, acornherbschool.com/milestones.

Rosalee de la Forêt:

Cool. We'll get that on the show notes as well.

Heather Luna:

Thanks.

Rosalee de la Forêt:

Congratulations! It sounds like a wonderful celebration.

Heather Luna:

Thank you. It's a big one. I'm really so proud of our—our clinicians who've worked so hard in the clinic this year, and some of them are going to be presenting at this event. Some of the case studies that we come across are phenomenal. This year we had three cases of SIBO, one of them still under wraps, but one of them completed. She did the whole diet change, gut-healing change, herbal protocols. She was singing our praises, walked out the door completely symptom-free. That's what lights me up and keeps me coming to work everyday.

Rosalee de la Forêt:

Yeah, absolutely.

Heather Luna:

So, I want to give a shout out to our clinicians. I'm so proud of them. What they're doing is so meaningful.

Rosalee de la Forêt:

The world needs more herbalists. That is something I deeply believe. Thanks for all of your work and your school's work, and helping more herbalists get out there, because yeah, how many people out—are there out there with SIBO or fill-in-the-blank form of dis-ease where herbalism and the holistic vitalist approach could be really the thing that turns things around for them?

Heather Luna:

Yeah, that's so true. It's one of the miracles—I don't see—not everyone gets 100% well every time, but it happens often enough that it's-

Rosalee de la Forêt:

It's just coming back.

Heather Luna:

Wow! We could see that again. Herbs really do work. It's a joy.

Rosalee de la Forêt:

Yeah. Thank you so much, Heather. Before you go, I do have one last question for you, and that is, what do you think herbs are especially good at teaching humans right now?

Heather Luna:

I think they can be amazing teachers to help us be still. I think stillness is what the world needs most right now. There's this overwhelm, overstimulation, busy modern life that just has us people drowning in too much—too much of everything. It's really—sitting with the plants. They teach us to be still. They're not going anywhere. They're as still as can be. If you want to have a communication discussion with a plant, you have to be still enough to hear them. To brew tea as a practice in stillness. I think that all of the ways – being in nature, being around plants regulates our nervous systems. That sense of stillness I think is probably one of the most valuable teachings that we can get from plants at this particular point in time; not that they don't have a million other things they can teach us. That to me is I—I really resonate with that. Let everyone take a moment to sit outside with a plant on a daily basis. Everyone take a moment to brew a cup of tea on a daily basis. I think that brings us back to our center. It makes us a little more still, taking time for us despite all the chaos and it really doesn't take long. It's like the "I can't" syndrome because they're too busy. I'm like, "But you can. If you just do this one thing for yourself, you'll actually handle all that other stuff much more easily."

Rosalee de la Forêt:

That's so true. There's a saying that says if you don't have five minutes to meditate, meditate for an hour, which I think I don't think that meant—is meant to be disempowering, but just

actually, you need this more. So, kind of a similar thing. You're so right. When we take that time, it actually fulfills us in such a way that we get to expand. With that, I'm going to go sit in my garden. We had talked about before we hit record that I had not spent time in my garden yet today. You had, I hadn't, so I'm going to spend some time with my garden, and then after dinner tonight, I'm going to make a tea and I'm going to put some citrus peel in there. It's going to be lovely.

Heather Luna:

Thank you so much, Rosalee. What a pleasure it is to chat with you today.

Rosalee de la Forêt:

Likewise, Heather. Thank you so much. It's been absolutely wonderful and I feel deeply inspired now about citrus all over again, so thank you.

Heather Luna:

Sunny and mood-boosting, enjoy your citrus. Thanks, Rosalee.

Rosalee de la Forêt:

Thank you.

Thanks so much for listening. You can download your illustrated recipe card from today's episode. Just head over to herbswithrosaleepodcast.com or check out the show notes for a link. 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.

Alright, you've made it to the very end of the show, which means you get a gold star and this herbal tidbit.

In Chinese medicine, dried mandarin peel is called "chen pi," which literally means "aged." Unlike almost everything else in your kitchen, the peel is prized for getting older. The finest

grade is aged about ten years or more because the older the peel, the greater its medicinal value is considered to be. The most treasured peels come from one small district and are sun-dried and aged anywhere from 1 to 30 years, with the oldest commanding these luxurious prices. Well-aged chen pi is treated less like a pantry item and more like a fine tea or wine, something you keep and tend, and maybe even pass on. There's something really lovely about that; like the thing that most of us discard held long enough becomes a treasure. It's really a beautiful continuation to Heather's invitation to stop throwing those peels away.

As always, thanks for joining me.