

Lauren Peterson:

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Rosalee de la Forêt:

Hello and welcome to the Herbs with Rosalee Podcast, a show exploring how herbs heal as medicine, as food and through nature connection. I'm your host, Rosalee de la Forêt. I created this YouTube Channel to share trusted herbal wisdom so that you can get the best results when relying on herbs for your health. I love offering up practical knowledge to help you dive deeper into the world of medicinal plants and seasonal living.

Each episode of the Herbs with Rosalee Podcast is shared on YouTube, as well as your favorite podcast app. Transcripts and recipes for each episode can be found at herbswithrosaleepodcast.com or through the link in the video description. Also, in the video description you'll find other helpful resources. For example, to get my best herbal tips as well as fun bonuses, be sure to sign up for my weekly herbal newsletter. Okay, grab your cup of tea and let's dive in.

This week's Student Spotlight is on Anastasia Brencick in Washington state.

Anastasia is a vibrant community member and a dedicated student in several of our programs. She actively participates in live events, shares her herbal medicine journey and reflections in the course communities, and regularly supports fellow students on their paths as well.

We especially love how Anastasia brings her two young children along in her herbal journey—making teas, identifying herbs, and even sharing sweet drawings with the community. As she recently wrote, *"I think my kids feel a bit proud of their mom doing herbalism. It's pretty great to share the recipes with them, help them know what is growing*

around them, and making teas.” A true favorite moment? When she wrote, “I think I should name my front yard, ‘Herbs with Rosalee’s podcast garden.’”

To honor her contributions, Mountain Rose Herbs is sending Anastasia a \$50 gift certificate to stock up on their incredible selection of sustainably sourced herbal supplies. If you’d like to explore Mountain Rose Herbs’ offerings and support this show link in the show notes.

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.

I’m so excited to share this episode with you. I first met Lauren earlier this year while I was visiting Texas, and we immediately hit it off. First of all, we’re birthday sisters, same date, and fellow knitters. In fact, she and I are both wearing our hand knits for this interview.

I was also thrilled by the plant Lauren chose to share with us, yauhtli, also known as *Tagetes lucida*. This is a beautiful species of marigold with a long history of use in indigenous medicine. I learned so much from Lauren in this episode and left feeling totally inspired to grow this plant myself, along with my other marigolds in the garden. You don’t really often hear about herbalists talking about marigold medicine, so I think this conversation will open up some exciting new doors for you.

For those of you who don’t already know her, Lauren’s passion for plants grew from her desire to deepen her connection with the natural world and nurture relationships that allow healing

to take place. She began her herbal studies with Austin, Texas based Sacred Journey School of Herbalism in 2014, and now is a teacher and admin for the school. She founded White Deer Apothecary in 2015 and continues to craft local herbal medicines, teach medicine making classes, guide plant walks, and work with clients one-on-one. Her favorite place is to be outdoors, in the kitchen, and on the dance floor.

Lauren, I'm so happy to have you on the show. Thanks for joining me.

Lauren Peterson:

Thanks for having me!

Rosalee de la Forêt:

I'm truly excited to have you on the show because we got to hang out earlier this year in May. That seems like a very long time ago in many ways, and we hit it off. It was really fun. It was just a natural thing to have you on the show and I've been looking forward to like, "My friend Lauren is on the show. We're going to chat." It's been nice.

Lauren Peterson:

I've been looking forward to chatting more with you too.

Rosalee de la Forêt:

Oh, lovely. As always, I love to start hearing about the many ways the plants have called you on to this path and everything that has brought you here to us today.

Lauren Peterson:

I think probably with everyone, there's always—there's kind of like a winding path, you know. I wasn't born into herbal practice. Some people are I think, but I grew up in the suburbs of Dallas and ate a lot of Hot Pockets and stuff.

Rosalee de la Forêt:

Oh, Hot Pockets.

Lauren Peterson:

Oh, I loved them so much and ice pops, the neon colored ones. That was my summer, just Hot Pockets and icy pops.

Rosalee de la Forêt:

It's fair in Dallas.

Lauren Peterson:

Yeah. So, I didn't—I guess once I was in college and taking care of myself more, I just really remember the last time I took over-the-counter cold medicine like NyQuil or something. It made me feel worse. It made me stay up all night and feel really anxious, and crazy. Other things like allergy medicines didn't really work for me, so I started looking into herbs just for those minor things and found them really helpful. And then, I think what really pushed me though more towards herbalism was when I was 24, my dad had a really—a really bad stroke and wasn't able to be independent after that, and so I was his caretaker. I took him to all kinds of doctors, specialists from the VA to one of the top neurorehab programs in the country, and that whole experience was really rough. It was really—I was grateful for some of the doctors and some of the care, but overall, it was really disempowering. I had different specialists telling me the exact opposite things like, "You have to do this," and the other one would say, "That's the worst thing to do. Don't do that." I think I started out—I was young too and hadn't dealt with a lot of medical stuff and was just like, "Okay. The doctors know what they're doing. I'm going to trust them." It didn't take long to realize that they don't know everything, and it's not that I don't have some respect for Western medical doctors, but they don't know everything and they didn't know my dad. I knew him more than they did, and it was up to me to really look at him as a whole person because most of them weren't doing that.

It just felt—I just felt at the end of that experience or going through it, man, there’s got to be something more than this. There’s got to be something that feels more actually healing, that feels more like—some of this stuff isn’t going to get fixed. Some of these issues with his body aren’t going to get better. What can we find that feels more empowering, more healing, more—and more community-centered. I really realized when you’re a caretaker, and especially when you’re young and weren’t expecting to be, how much I didn’t really have a community. I mean I didn’t have a family nearby. I’m an only child. We had friends and stuff, but I just really realized how important community is for healing and health. So many things about it—the physical stuff was hard, but it was emotionally just that whole situation was a lot harder than I knew it would be when he was living with me and I was taking care of him, and so—there’s not really a short version of this. I was like, “I’m just going to do the short version.” There’s not really a short version.

I had a really close friend at the time who had worked with Eliot Cowan for a long time. Eliot wrote *Plant Spirit Medicine*. He had apprenticed, trained with Mitchel, like medicine man in Mexico, and really got his blessing to share a lot of the core of those practices with us white Westerners who don’t know what we’re doing in this world. Anyway, my friend gave me *Plant Spirit Medicine* and I read that and ended up going to a program they called, “Healing Camp” up in Margaretville in New York at the Blue Deer Center with Eliot and other people there. That really was really healing and transformative. It didn’t fix everything in my life, but it gave me such a beautiful perspective and really encouraged me to connect more with plants. I didn’t grow up with a garden. We had a few—some landscaping plants like rosemary bush and stuff, but I felt like I had a black thumb. I did have a black thumb mostly with house plants. I’d never even tried to garden!

So after that, I joined the community garden in Austin where I was living and just helped on a communal plot because I had no idea, and really learned a lot there, and eventually, had my own plot. That’s how I met Ginger Webb in Austin because she would do plant walks there. Some of the other gardeners I think I really annoyed them because I did love the plants and “weeds” would pop up. I wouldn’t know what they were, but I was like, “It’s pretty and it has a

pretty flower!” and so I would leave it and people would get mad at me. “That’s a weed! You have to pick that! It’s going to spread.” I’m like, “But it’s pretty!” I had a little weed, kind of a groundcover, taking over part of my beds. I asked someone what it was and they said, “I don’t remember what it’s called, but I think it’s edible. Ask Ginger.” So, I was like, “Hey, Ginger. Can you tell me what this thing is?” and it was purslane. I had just kept that because the little, tiny flowers were so cute. It’s all succulent-looking and cute, and I’m glad I kept it. That’s how I met Ginger.

Rosalee de la Forêt:

That’s like the best meet cute. “We met over purslane.”

Lauren Peterson:

The other funny part is when I finally was like—when my dad wasn’t living with me anymore. I was still managing his care, but I was like, “Okay. I actually have time to maybe study herbs now.” I had learned about her school just when I met her. One day, I was just like, “I’m going to look it up. Maybe it’s time to do it,” and it was a week before class started. This was almost—this was ten years ago—and the class was full because it used to be in her living room. She was like, “I’ll put you on the wait list,” and then the night before, she was like, “No, just come. Just come. We’ll fit you in,” and then I never left.

Rosalee de la Forêt:

That’s a very defining moment for you.

Lauren Peterson:

Yeah, it really was. I started assisting Ginger with some stuff at the school. Now, I teach some classes at the school and help run the school. It’s just a really—I can’t imagine my life without hanging out with herb people, plant people. Every week it’s really beautiful.

Rosalee de la Forêt:

You know that is—that's something from my time in Texas in May, I was so struck with the community there. You all have something super special. I felt, personally, I was just so welcomed in a way that was beautiful, but it was also just a really beautiful thing to see you all in community. It made me think of that when you're saying early on with your dad and not having the community and how much community is a part of healing, that's been one of my biggest takeaways from my time in Texas this time around. It's just the incredible herbal community. I'm actually very inspired to work on a project of how do we keep growing as a community and having basically what you all have because it is powerful, meaningful and beautiful. I think, like you said, that is kind of the essence of healing there to have that kind of community.

Lauren Peterson:

Yeah, and I feel—I feel so lucky and grateful to be just embraced by them because I'm an only child too. I don't know. I feel like I'm not the best at creating community myself, and so I feel so grateful that I'm learning a lot. They've just invited me in, and there's all these really wonderful people that are great at community building.

Rosalee de la Forêt:

That was an interesting takeaway of there are different roles to play within building community and just how different people fill different roles within that. I can relate. I'm essentially an only child. I do have a half sister who is 11 years older than me, but I was essentially raised as an only child, so I can relate to that.

Lauren Peterson:

Yeah.

Rosalee de la Forêt:

Yeah.

Lauren Peterson:

I just realized I left one little piece of the “coming to herbalism.” After my dad didn’t live with me anymore, I really was like—had some free time or some space that I hadn’t had but I couldn’t get out of just this stress mode. I was really stuck in stress mode. I went to a Traditional Chinese Medicine practitioner, and got the mysterious powdered herbs and drank those, and they really helped. I was like, “Yay! Herbs work!” but I was like, “Wait, but I want to know the plants. What are these?” I think that also really pushed me to study with Ginger because I was like, I really want to know the plants that are growing here and have that direct relationship with them. Also, coming from a plant spirit medicine perspective—I mean, that’s what I love about the Western herbalism or whatever herbalism I’m practicing, is that combo of spending the time with the plants is part of the medicine, making the medicine is part of the medicine, and then the actual physical constituents are there, are part of the medicine too. It’s all together.

Rosalee de la Forêt:

That’s beautiful. Every time I hear somebody come and tell their story, every single time I’m like I just resonate with the story so much. There are aspects of that that speak to me. Both my—my maternal family is from northeast Texas. So, we got that. The one plant that I think of when I think of my mom is marigolds. That was her thing. She always grew them. We always have the dried flower heads all throughout the house, and so I was very excited to see that you chose this plant for our chat today. You were helping me out earlier with the pronunciation of this particular plant, so I think I’m going to do it. Yauhtli. Is that it?

Lauren Peterson:

Yes!

Rosalee de la Forêt:

Lovely! I’m really excited to hear about this plant from you.

Lauren Peterson:

Yauhtli is the Nahuatl name. I was first introduced to this plant as Mexican mint marigold. People—in Spanish, it's also “pericón.” People call it “Mexican tarragon,” “Texas tarragon.” The botanical—the Latin name is *Tagetes lucida*. Where I live, it's really commonly used as a landscaping plant. That's where I had seen it. Again, with Ginger, I was on kind of a plant survey with her where we were walking around somebody's land and just telling them what was growing there. This was in landscaping up by the house and—oh, yeah. I don't think I had ever—it's a really beautiful plant. It has tiny, little yellow flowers. If you think of the marigolds, we think of—when you say “marigolds” are the big, ruffly-looking flower heads. These are teeny, tiny yellow flowers, but the leaves are incredibly aromatic. They smell like anise or licorice. That's where it gets that tarragon name. It's not directly related to tarragon, but I had never actually smelt it before and then tasted it. I wish—I'm sure all the time you're wishing we had like “smell-a-vision.” I really wish we did because it's divine! I mean, the smell is so incredible. Those aromatics—you can't ignore them. They get your attention.

I was really excited to learn that this was medicinal. I think we just talked about—Ginger just talked about how you can drink it as a tea for a cold or a tummy ache. I think at a conference or something, another time, I saw someone selling the tincture of it and I was like, “Oh, that's cool!” I wish—I can't remember who this was, but they were telling me how this was a really sacred plant, a ceremonial plant in Mexica culture. I was like, “What? It's this little landscaping that's everywhere.” I love that about it. I think to me, that I came to it in that way that the plants that we just think are mundane are actually—I feel it has like a secret life that I didn't know about.

As I've gotten to know it more, I learned the name “yauhtli” from our student and friend Santa Akouatzin. That's the Nahuatl name and it means “an offered up thing” or “incense” or “cloud medicine.” So, it's traditionally used as an offering and for protection and has a lot of association with the energies of water and rain. Also, really a connection to calling in ancestors and dreaming, so it can be worked with as a dreaming herb. There are stories in history of it being used more as an entheogen, but it's something that's perfectly—you're not

going to be tripping if you drink it as a tea or—not really sure how that worked. I don’t know anyone who works with it that way today, but if you look it up, you might see some stories about that and be a little freaked out, but it’s amazing because it’s an herb that your grandma would have for a tummy ache or for a cold, and at the same time, it’s this really beautiful ancestor ally, just a really sacred plant.

Rosalee de la Forêt:

You’ve mentioned working with it as a tea and a tincture, so far. Do you work with it in both of those ways? Do you find that’s how you’re called to work with this plant in both ways?

Lauren Peterson:

My favorite way is actually the recipe I shared, as an infused honey, because the aromatics are just so strong. It’s delightful. It just makes me so happy. That’s really how I like to work with this plant. I actually had a head cold, a summer head cold last week. I’m like, “I probably should drink some yauhtli tea.” I was taking all kinds of other herbs, but it’s really just as this—it just makes me ecstatic to be around it. That’s what I love about it. I opened a jar. I brewed some tea before our meeting so I could be with it. Just opening the jar and smelling it is incredible.

So, tea is wonderful. It tastes sweet, not as sweet as licorice, but I feel like you don’t—I don’t really need to add anything sweet to it. I’ve tinctured it. I don’t work with it as much as a tincture, but that was just something I wanted to try so I have tinctured it. You can use it as a bath herb even for sore muscles and joints, things like that. It does have some warming properties and pain-killing properties. I want to try it as an infused oil, but I haven’t done that yet.

Rosalee de la Forêt:

I bet that would be so lovely with those aromatics.

Lauren Peterson:

The honey is really the main way that I—making an infused honey is the main way that I prepare it.

Rosalee de la Forêt:

I have a story about that.

Lauren Peterson:

Yeah!

Rosalee de la Forêt:

So, you are very kind and you sent me some yauhtli infused honey, and so, of course, we opened up the jar to give it a try. I tried it first and it was—oh, my gosh! I told my husband that he probably wouldn't like it and that I should just have the jar myself.

Lauren Peterson:

Like, "Don't just bother.

Rosalee de la Forêt:

So, he got a spoon out and he tasted it. Just to set the scene, my husband is French and he's very typical French, and he's very reserved. He's like not an American. He doesn't use exclamation points in writing or speaking. He has it and he goes, "Whoa! That's surprisingly good!" That's French speak for like, "Oh, my..." you know. I was like—I look at him and I was like—and I was like, "Is that a compliment?" because I also didn't—because he was like, "surprisingly good," like he was expecting it to be bad. I don't know. He was quite taken with it and he goes, "That is just a very intriguing taste." Again, this is like I wish you could know Xavier. It's really a big deal that he's saying this because he's not American. I was like, "Yeah, it's really good." I was like—I told him—I said, "I don't think I can put this in a tea." He was like, "No. This needs to be by the spoonful." So, he is quite taken with it and as someone who is not normally quite taken with things. His story does not end there though, Lauren.

Then, I come upstairs. The whole team at Herbs with Rosalee is on Slack. It's an app that allows people to communicate, so Xavier is on there. He's downstairs. I'm upstairs and I get a message from him. It is simply a link to Johnny's Seeds company for that plant. It was just hilarious to me, and so I wrote back. I said, "Is that a hint?" and I just got a cat emoji kiss thing.

Lauren Peterson:

Aww.

Rosalee de la Forêt:

So, I guess we're going to be growing this now.

Lauren Peterson:

Awesome! Speaking of growing it, I'm in Central Texas. I'm not good at remembering all the USDA zones. I think we're in Zone 8, I want to say. I've read different things. I've read anywhere from Zones 7 to 11 that it can grow in. I think it's just the cold. You want to protect it from the cold, so if you're from somewhere that-

Rosalee de la Forêt:

It will be an annual here.

Lauren Peterson:

It will be an annual or if you want to protect it—but yeah, so, here it's a perennial, which also makes me so happy because it does just die down to sticks in the winter. Every year, you'll go like, "I don't know. Is it going to come back?" and then it does and it's amazing! Where I live, we have a lot of deer. It's pretty deer-resistant. I will say I was told the deer won't eat it, but I had some little baby plants that I had just set out to see, "Is this where I want to plant it?" The deer tasted it, but since it was little, it was gone! If you deal with deer, you might want to wait until it's bigger. Once it's bigger, they don't really mess with it or they might browse and then go, "Okay, that's not really my style." It likes full sun. It likes well-drained soil. I'm not an expert gardener or anything-

Rosalee de la Forêt:

You're better than black thumb though now-

Lauren Peterson:

Oh, yeah. I'm not black thumb anymore, but plants that don't need a lot of attention. I don't grow tomatoes. No. They just require—I guess I have grown cherry tomatoes. I like plants that are good doing their own thing, and it is good doing its own thing. It flowers. In books, it always says it flowers in the fall, but sometimes here, it starts flowering in the spring and flowers through the fall, which is also amazing and it makes me so happy. That's part of the reason people love it in landscaping too. I'm determined to just have all our landscaping plants be medicinal plants. What's the point of even growing it if it's not-

Rosalee de la Forêt:

Absolutely.

Lauren Peterson:

You want to eat it or drink it or make medicine with it.

Rosalee de la Forêt:

I'm wondering if you'll walk us through making this infused honey because—and then I have—I don't know that you'll know this, but I have a question. I don't yet grow it. Apparently, I'm about to start growing yauhtli, but I do grow a bunch of marigolds, mainly. It is like medicine for me to grow them because they remind me of my mother. I grow the cempasúchil, which is the big orange ones that are used for Día de los Muertos celebrations. I have this kind—I think it was just labeled “citrus marigold.” They are small flowers like the yauhtli, but very aromatic and lovely. They're my favorite. I grow them every year from seed. I just keep collecting the seed and keep growing them. They're just so fantastic. I'm wondering—now, I'm like, “Ooh, can I use that citrus marigold to make into a honey?”

Lauren Peterson:

So, that is probably the *Tagetes lemmonii*. I'm guessing. I don't know all the different species, but that does sound like it. If the botanical name is *lemmonii*, I could see how they would call it citrus marigold. That is also—I haven't worked with that plant. I think where I live people also call it "Copper Canyon daisy." You can work with that one medicinally too.

Rosalee de la Forêt:

That would be lovely. I grow it every year. I have no idea what the botanical name is on it. The smell on it is just so fascinating. What I do is every time I walk by, every single time I run my fingers through it so I can smell it.

Lauren Peterson:

I haven't heard of any *Tagetes* species that are unsafe.

Rosalee de la Forêt:

Neither have I.

Lauren Peterson:

I think the only caution is just to avoid it during pregnancy because they're warming and moving. Just out of an abundance of caution.

Rosalee de la Forêt:

I feel like my mind is open now because now I'm like, "Can I make tea with it? Can I infuse it into oil?" It's just very exciting. Okay, but back to yauhtli infused honey.

Lauren Peterson:

It's aromatic, but it's not the same as the yauhtli.

Rosalee de la Forêt:

No. Completely different.

Lauren Peterson:

If you know what—the *Tagetes erecta*, the marigolds we all think of smells like—it’s nothing like that. They’re all very different in terms of their aromatics. I think their—just their energetics too other than they’re all warming.

Rosalee de la Forêt:

I love the organoleptic situation of just like we really have to smell and taste these-

Lauren Peterson:

Yes, I know what you mean. You should grow it.

Rosalee de la Forêt:

You should grow it, smell it, taste it, try it.

Lauren Peterson:

It’s an interesting one because it’s not—to my knowledge, the big herb companies don’t sell it. If there is a Mexican herb shop where you live, I’m sure they would have it. I’ve always grown it or known someone that grows it, so I’ve never purchased it, but I know it’s out there in the world too if you want to try it and you’re not growing it yet. I’m just not sure exactly where.

Rosalee de la Forêt:

I was telling you earlier that before we started recording that sometimes marigolds get called “calendula.” So, just a frequent question I’ve gotten over the years is, “Can I use marigold, the *Tagetes*, in the same way I would use *Calendula officinalis*?” I’ve always just been like, “I don’t know,” but this conversation just makes me realize how nuanced even the *Tagetes* species—or genus—is because of all those different aromatics.

Lauren Peterson:

I know the *Tagetes erecta* people I’ve had had some—had that infused into oil that someone gave me and it is a face oil. It’s lovely for your skin. It’s not the same as calendula, but it

definitely has some skin benefits. The pericón I think infused into oil—sorry—the yauhtli infused into oil is more—maybe more for sore muscles and things, a little bit different. I haven't messed around with it that way yet, but I think I need to.

Rosalee de la Forêt:

Lovely.

Lauren Peterson:

It's also just like the other—all the marigolds dye. The flowers are used as a dye as well. It's a really pretty yellow dye, which I also have not done yet, but I've played around with some natural dye. That's on my list too.

Rosalee de la Forêt:

That could be fun. Dye up some yarn, make it into a sweater.

Lauren Peterson:

A yauhtli sweater? Oh, my gosh.

Rosalee de la Forêt:

That would be beautiful, yeah. Alright, so now, let's talk about the infused honey. Just walk us through how you would go about making this.

Lauren Peterson:

I love making infused honeys because we get to use the sun. Every other herbal preparation I make, I'm trying to keep it away from the sun. We have really intense sun, so in the summers, I'm like, "Yes! We make all the infused honeys." Basically, you just get a clean jar. You can use—I've done it with dried or fresh. Some people get kind of freaked out when I say "infusing fresh plants in honey" because they're worried about it fermenting or going bad. If it ferments, that's not necessarily bad. I haven't had any issues with them going bad, but if that

concerns you at all, just use the dried yauhtli. It works great, especially if you have harvested it fresh and dried it yourself, it's still super aromatic.

I would just fill the jar about a third of the way with your dried yauhtli, maybe a third to half, and then you're just going to cover it in honey. You just want to make sure you have a clean jar. I poke it around with a chopstick or the handle end of a spoon or something to just make sure there are no air bubbles; that the honey is getting all in there. Put a tight lid on it, label it, and stick it out in the sun. I usually let it sit for 10 days to 14 days, something like that, and bring it in. If you bring it in to strain it while it's still warm from the sun, it's pretty easy to strain, so that's a good tip. I just strain it through a mesh strainer into a bowl, jar it up, and then lick the bowl when you're done. Get every drop of honey! Or the jar it was in—sometimes I'll make some kind of tea to put in there to swish it around. I just don't want to waste a drop of it because it's so delicious.

Rosalee de la Forêt:

Yeah.

Lauren Peterson:

And then that honey is, again, you can just eat it by the spoonful. You can eat it for the energetics or because it makes you happy. You can have some at night. You can just mix some in hot water to make an instant tea if you want. You can have it at night if you want to work with it for dreaming purposes. If you do have a cold or a sore throat, the honey is excellent for that, or tummy ache. You can work with the honey really in all the ways. I haven't done this with the yauhtli honey, but I've used other infused honeys too as a face mask. It's really hydrating. That sounds lovely. What else was I going to say?

I just—when you're making infused honeys, get the best honey you can. Get local honey. Get it from a real beekeeper. Just be careful. If honey is really cheap, it's probably because it's not totally real honey. It's adulterated. If it crystallizes, that concerns people, but that's totally normal. Raw honey is supposed to crystallize. You can just—you don't want to directly heat

honey, but you could put your jar in warm water. It might take a while. You might have to change it out a few times, but it will eventually uncrystallize. Or you can just eat it crystallized, it's okay. I just see people get freaked out all the time about honey crystallizing, and that's good. That's what they are supposed to do. If you do it with fresh plant, I also just loosely fill the jar about halfway. Doing it that way, I've never had it ferment. Not with this plant. It's not—it doesn't have a super high water content, so I haven't really had an issue with that.

Rosalee de la Forêt:

I will have to say again that the honey is absolutely fantastic, and I will have some every night and probably morning. Just by the spoonful, it's so lovely.

Lauren Peterson:

I'm glad you're doing it.

Rosalee de la Forêt:

Absolutely. I've had a couple of your honeys actually, because we had some at the retreat. I believe there were some out, and then I was—after I saw you, I was going to visit my family, so I bought several honeys to give to them. That was hard. That was a really hard thing. I remember just like—I mean, I'm not even joking. I was there looking at the honeys to put them in their little gift bags. I was like, "But will they love these enough? Will I love them more? Will they even know if I don't give them the honey?" I ended up giving it to them, but I asked to taste it, one was lemon balm, I believe.

Lauren Peterson:

Gosh. Lemon balm makes me so happy. I've made a tea with tulsi, lemon balm, and yauhtli, and it's mind-blowingly good.

Rosalee de la Forêt:

That sounds really lovely.

Lauren Peterson:

The honeys—I love making infused honeys. In terms of medicinal extraction constituents, they're not going to be the strongest medicine in that way. However, honey is really good at capturing those aromatics. We can taste those aromatics. You're getting that medicine and they—I feel like people understand them. I love tincturing the intense plants that only herbalists like, and then I love having medicine that anyone can understand and appreciate even if you're not super into herbs, or they don't realize they're super into herbs.

Rosalee de la Forêt:

I like that about infused honeys for that exact same purpose. I make a lot of rose petal infused honey with our apothecary roses. Oh, my gosh. You can't tell me that's not medicine. It's like ambrosia for the soul. It's so lovely, but I don't have people turn that down. People aren't like, "Is this from that weird herbalist again?" They're more like, "Where's the infused honey this year?"

Lauren Peterson:

And you know, pleasure medicine is important. Sometimes I take those infused honeys and use them to sweeten elixirs and things too. Actually, with the yauhtli honey, I make an elixir called "Mystic Summer Elixir." It's extracted in Mezcal No. 1. It's hibiscus, *schisandra*, sumac berries, so a lot of sour, cooling herbs, and then the yauhtli honey added to that. My intention when I made it was I want these sour herbs for the summer, and then it just turned into something else. It just takes you to another place. It's amazing.

Rosalee de la Forêt:

That sounds amazing. It really does.

Lauren Peterson:

Yeah.

Rosalee de la Forêt:

I'm feeling very excited about—because apparently now, I'm going to grow yauhtli. I'm also excited to work with the *Tagetes* that are already in my garden as well too, so I'm feeling inspired for that. Is there anything else you'd like to share about yauhtli before we move on?

Lauren Peterson:

You know, I just am so happy that it grows here. I just want to acknowledge that this has been a sacred plant to generations of people for a long time, and a culture that I'm not a part of, but I just adore this plant. I want more people to know about it and have a relationship with it, and I feel like—if you see it, if you smell it, if you're around it, I feel like it calls to you. Yauhtli is just like a really beautiful friend that I want people to know about.

Rosalee de la Forêt:

I know that mission has already been accomplished because, like I said, my husband sent me the seed order link, which I can tell you he has never done that before. So, this is kind of like him being like, "Okay. We're going to grow this herb." I'm excited. If other listeners are going to be growing this or you already do, we'd love to hear about it in the comments and how you like to work with it. Everyone can also get their own beautifully designed recipe card with Lauren's recipe for Yauhtli Infused Honey in the show notes or by visiting herbswithrosaleepodcast.com.

Lauren Peterson:

That's great. I just want to say a really good source of information on some traditional and contemporary uses of the different *Tagetes*, the marigolds, is in *The Curanderx Toolkit* book.

Rosalee de la Forêt:

Oh, cool. That's lovely.

Lauren Peterson:

By Atava Garcia Swiecicki.

Rosalee de la Forêt:

Thank you for that.

Lauren Peterson:

She's awesome and I've learned a lot from her too.

Rosalee de la Forêt:

That's wonderful. I will definitely check that out. I would love to hear what kind of projects you have going on, Lauren. What are you up to these days in the herbal world?

Lauren Peterson:

As I mentioned, I work with Ginger Webb with Sacred Journey School of Herbalism. We're based in Austin, but we have online classes as well. Our main program is a nine-month program, that's September through May each year. Part of it is online and then we meet approximately one weekend a month in person at different—just different land all within an hour or so of Austin. That's our Foundations of Herbalism program that just really has my heart and getting to spend that much time with students in different places with the plants is amazing. So, if people are interested in really starting on their journey or going deeper, that's where I started. Like I said I never left, so-

Rosalee de la Forêt:

Something I really appreciate about Ginger and the school is I really got a sense of just how focused it is on the plants that grow in the area, and just how knowledgeable Ginger really is about those native plants or whatever else, but Ginger is not necessarily the one who is talking about *rhodiola* maybe. I'm sure she knows about *rhodiola* but I'm just saying she really knows the native plants. She works with them. If you live in that area, that is where you want to get your education from.

Lauren Peterson:

For sure. As I said, it was designed to take the whole thing together, which is there's an online part that's called "Intro to Herbalism" and then the outdoor part is Wild Texas Herbalism. We have a lot of people—most people take those—both of those pieces together, but we have some people that just do the online part or just do the outdoor part, or do one at a time. Because usually, if they just did the online but they're in the area, they want to come back and do the outdoor. It's incredible. There's just—where we live too, there aren't as many books that are like, "Here are the plants that grow here, and how do you make medicine with them, and which ones are medicinal." One day, Ginger will have a book.0

Part of my role in the school, I really love making medicine. I just love making things, in general, and food, but I love making medicine of all kinds. That's one of my big roles in the school is doing a lot of the demos of the medicine making. I also teach classes that we call "kitchen witchery," where it's a full weekend, just all the medicine making. We have one that's called "Kitchen Witchery 101." It's usually in January in Austin, in-person. We just go through teas, tinctures, syrups, salves, honeys. What else do we do? I remember there's another—vinegars. We do all that in one weekend. I usually do another one in the spring that's beyond the basics where we do also cleaning with herbs. We do a face cream and some other fancy oils, body butters. We do herbs for kids like gummies and things like that. What else? Also, in October I'm teaching an herbs and honey class with Two Hives Honey, which is a wonderful group of beekeepers outside of Austin in Manor, Texas.

Rosalee de la Forêt:

Cool.

Lauren Peterson:

Yeah.

Rosalee de la Forêt:

I think it's very much worth mentioning, Lauren, that not only do you teach medicine making, but you make a wide range of herbal—lovely herbal things. Not just—not only the infused honeys, but we've been enjoying your medicines because, again, I stocked up when I was in Texas. One thing I brought home from White Deer Apothecary was the ashwagandha, which I should have looked at it. Because I know the bottle is still around, but it was like ashwagandha with orange and spices.

Lauren Peterson:

Yes.

Rosalee de la Forêt:

Is that right? I brought that home for Xavier. Whenever I see ashwagandha out in the world, I bring it home for him, and he really enjoyed that. That was one that went down very easy, so that was a really good one. Tell us about your own products and how folks can find them—including your yauhtli infused honey.

Lauren Peterson:

Yes. WhiteDeerApothecary.com is my website and there's a link to the shop on there. I make a lot of tinctures, single herb tinctures, elixirs, bitters, a lot of salves. I also really love making infused oils and salves, infused honeys. One kind of special fun thing I make is this fire cider bouillon.

Rosalee de la Forêt:

I was hoping you'd mention that, yes, yes, yes.

Lauren Peterson:

Did I send you some of that?

Rosalee de la Forêt:

You did! I'm so excited because we talked about it in May, and I was so enamored with the idea, so yes, please tell everyone about it.

Lauren Peterson:

I call it "fancy ramen powder," but it's healthy. After I press my fire cider, I take the marc, so all of these really pungent herbs that have been soaked in vinegar, they're still really strong. I dehydrate them, and then grind them up into a powder. That is a labor of love, by the way.

Rosalee de la Forêt:

Yeah.

Lauren Peterson:

And mix it with nutritional yeast, maitake mushroom powder, a blend of a bunch of different seaweeds, some real salt. I think that's it. It's just so flavorful and nutritive. It makes a nice broth by itself, but how I mostly use it is just adding it into soups or rice or beans. Just anything that I'm simmering, I pretty much put that in, and it's just like a really wonderful boost of flavor and nutrients.

Rosalee de la Forêt:

Oh, my gosh. It's incredible. I remember you telling me—this is obviously like small batch medicine, like you just have so much of it every year. I feel very honored I got some. Thank you. Do you also sell it or [crosstalk]

Lauren Peterson:

I do. It's on my website too. It's definitely a small batch. I had someone be like, "Oh, my gosh. You need to go into big production." I'm like that's a lot of fire cider.

Rosalee de la Forêt:

You need a whole other equipment for that.

Lauren Peterson:

If someone who has a big production of fire cider wants to collaborate, that's cool. I usually make about three to five gallons of fire cider a year, so it's a good amount. I'm using the marc from that, but you know, you dehydrate it and...

Rosalee de la Forêt:

It gets smaller and smaller.

Lauren Peterson:

Not infinite but—and then I also have to have some. One time, I sold it all and I was like, “Okay, hold on.” [crosstalk]

Rosalee de la Forêt:

That's too much a labor of love, not to reserve some.

Lauren Peterson:

That's a really fun thing to make and it's delicious. What else? I don't know. I just love—I love—I do Farmers Markets and other herbal markets and things. People are like, “What do you have?” I'm like, “All the things you can make.” Electuaries. I do really love honey, obviously. I also love making electuaries. Reishi rose electuary, that's one of my favorite.

Rosalee de la Forêt:

Oh, my gosh.

Lauren Peterson:

Rose, that's really—reishi is just amazing, amazingly supportive. Really great immune support, but also I love that combo for grief, for moving through grief.

Rosalee de la Forêt:

Thank you for sharing that.

Lauren Peterson:

I like making medicine that tastes good. I make some strong, “get the job done” tinctures, but I love making medicine that tastes good. I did really learn that from Ginger.

Rosalee de la Forêt:

She has now sold her tincture company to a lovely person that’s going to be on the show soon too. I stocked up on a bunch of stuff then too, but I love her evening primrose. Ginger was on the show talking about evening primrose, which is evening primrose elixir. What I like to do with that is that I add it to my other tinctures. I’ll put my tinctures in water and then I add a bit of that, and it just rounds it out and makes everything taste better.

Lauren Peterson:

I think if you’re looking forward to taking your medicine, that’s great.

Rosalee de la Forêt:

Yeah, it does help.

Lauren Peterson:

If you’re really enjoying it, that joy in delighting our senses is good for us too.

Rosalee de la Forêt:

Yeah. I’d also want to check in with you because you’re very close to the recent flooding that just happened in Texas. We were talking briefly about just how the herbalists are organizing around that. I would love to hear more about that. I always find that when these tragedies strike, it’s obviously very sad. There’s just a lot to wade through in these situations and it’s also such a beautiful thing to see herbalists come together and support a community that’s been stricken, going through so much grief, going through so much trauma. I would love to hear anything you’d like to share about the process and what it’s been like.

Lauren Peterson:

Really close to me, the Guadalupe River is about less than two miles from my house. There's this beautiful—I live in Kerrville, Texas. The beautiful river park there is unrecognizable, which is that's crazy. The loss of life and just people losing everything they had as well, has been really, obviously, devastating and heavy. The shining light has been how much people have wanted to help, and immediately, the herbal community—I mean I had so many people reaching out to me asking what they could do, what they could do. I think right away after a disaster like this, there was a lot of support coming here to Kerrville. I think some other areas weren't getting as much, but at first, we just had to stay out of the way while they're doing search and rescue. But now, this is going to be ongoing for a long time. I think our whole community, lots of communities, whether they were directly affected or not, are traumatized by it. There's a lot of heartbreak, just a lot of healing that's going to need to happen in the long term.

It's been a few weeks now. I think just about a week ago, we finally got a list together of what would be helpful because, again, everyone wants to help and just start sending stuff. What we really want is to find out what's needed, so it took a minute to get there to see what is actually helpful. Our local—the Wildflower School, Herbalists Without Borders chapter, got together and had conversations. A lot of those people had worked in recovery from other tragedies, so they had a really good idea. It's mostly grief support. What else? Most of those kind of herbs, so things like oat straw, rose, passionflower, things like that, also topical things, things for baths, aromatics, either inhalers or sprays. We're focusing on making kits with those kind of herbs, and then also, things for the recovery. Basically, search and recovery workers and people doing all the clean-up. They're out here in Texas in the summer. It's hot. It's nasty. There are bugs. I did a little bit of clean up at a local nature center, and the residue from the floodwaters is pretty gross. Just a day of cleaning that awful stuff, I was like, "Alright, I need to get home and take my agarita, just antimicrobial." Anyway, we're working on those kind of kits too. It wasn't just Kerrville, there are lots of other areas around that were affected.

People can—I don't know if we can share links or anything, but the Wildflower School Herbalists Without Borders Chapter has a donation link if people want to donate funds. Or if you have any of those grief support herbs that you want to donate, you can get in touch with our coordinator. Sorry, I don't have that info in front of me.

Rosalee de la Forêt:

That's okay. You just get everything to us. We'll be sure to put that in the show notes.

Lauren Peterson:

And there's a list of specific requests because everyone—but everyone has just been so generous and just immediately asking how they can help. Hunt is a town near us that was really hit the hardest in this area. Just spoke with some people who live there at the Farmers Market. They barely got out of their house. The flood was up to the—they were just floating in the little eave. They just had that much room to breathe. They were really excited to hear about getting some herbs and things as well.

Rosalee de la Forêt:

Something that recently my friend, Emily Han, shared. Emily lives in L.A. They had the big fires there this year. She's been a part of the effort of making medicines and giving them. She said part of it is the medicine itself. It's helping with people's breathing, helping with grief, helping with trauma, helping the nervous system. There's also the act of being cared for in a time when everything is so scary and just how reassuring it is to feel there's a community that's like, "Now, we got you and we're here for you." I thought that was just really beautiful too. Just the act of giving something is also just really beautiful medicine.

Lauren Peterson:

Yeah, and we're hoping to organize once we have kits and things, there are some places in town like our nature center here. There's actually a yarn store called the Rogue Skein. That's really sweet people, that once we have those kits, we can have a little—just a little gathering to let people know they're here. "Come by. We can drink some tea together,"

just to have some face-to-face too because—I think for me too, I haven’t lived in this area that long, so I’m not as plugged into the community and wasn’t sure how to find the people that want the herbs and that’s been really eye-opening too because Austin is a little bit different scene than out here. I just wasn’t sure how many people want this kind of care, and a lot of people do.

Rosalee de la Forêt:

That’s lovely. As we also were chatting about just briefly the healing from this goes on for so long. It’s so disruptive to people’s lives. I know that from where I live, we have wildfires. I’ve watched friends lose their homes to fires and watched them take five years before—they’re never back to “normal.” They move on, but it can take that many years to re-home and feel settled again after something like this.

Lauren Peterson:

Just thinking about the land too. We were, a week later, able to go down by the river. There’s this beautiful park and it’s honestly my favorite part of living here is that river park. It’s really unrecognizable the way the landscape has changed. We have these giant cypress trees and most of those are still there. Some of them were knocked over, but most of the smaller trees are just gone. We had a lot of—they’re just gone and just so much material was moved, like rocks and silt, and everything. I couldn’t figure out where we were at on the trail. It doesn’t look anything like it. Just like the land, I think healing or reconfiguring. I know we have some mention of someone coming to do a ceremony and then offering for the land too. And then there are some plants—our native mugwort, there’s a lot of that by the river. It’s fine. It’s totally fine.

Rosalee de la Forêt:

Mugwort, aww.

Lauren Peterson:

You couldn't even tell anything happened. It was completely submerged in water for a while. It's super resilient and beautiful. Seeing that little thing made me happy, but I feel kind of ungrounded. That's where I would go for solace—was to go walk around the river. I don't know where to go now. That's the least of all the issues, but still, I think everyone is affected in some way. We all love that river.

Rosalee de la Forêt:

Thank you so much, Lauren, for sharing just a little bit what it's been like. We'll be sure to get links of support out to folks as well. Thank you to everyone who is doing the work of supporting people who are going through this, including yourself. I appreciate that.

Before I let you go, I have one last question for you.

Lauren Peterson:

Okay.

Rosalee de la Forêt:

And that question is, "How do herbs instill hope in you?"

Lauren Peterson:

Oh, my gosh. I think in so many ways, some of it is that the herbs—I always say this about our classes—herbs just draw the most wonderful people. I feel so honored to get to spend time with really open and just caring people. I think the herbs are healers and then they call the healers. They call the people that just want to help and be of service in this world, and that's really beautiful. I just remembered too when the pandemic first started and we were all like, "What is going on?" Everything just felt mixed up and scary. Just feeling I can go spend time with the plants—my husband was working on a small farm then. I just remember also sitting up against this big pine tree and just being like, "Okay. The herbs, the plants are always going to be here as long as we make sure. They're here as long as we protect them too,

but they're here for us all the time." Just feeling like wherever you go, you can see a plant friend. You just have friends wherever you go.

Rosalee de la Forêt:

That's very true. I was just traveling in Ireland and I felt so many of my favorite plants are there. It's such like a welcoming feeling. I will say when I was there earlier in May, there are so many Texan plants I don't know. I feel like—I'm like I know all the plants. Not really, but there were so many that it's like a whole other world down here.

Lauren Peterson:

It's a pretty different environment. My husband is a plant person too. He has grown up as a farmer. He grew up on a farm and did a lot of farming, and now he's doing more landscaping with native plants. Whenever we go on vacation, we love just hiking and talking about plants. We went to Northern California a couple of years ago for the first time to see the redwoods and everything too. That was pretty cool for us to see such different plants, but also some of the same ones that we recognize that are different, like the wood sorrel that's gigantic. Our wood sorrel is teeny tiny and we're like, "That's gigantic sorrel! That's so cool!" That's just a fun thing to share too. I will say the plants brought me—brought us together too, so I'm forever grateful for that.

Rosalee de la Forêt:

Absolutely. This has been so lovely, Lauren. Thank you so much for sharing about yauhtli, for sharing about your path, and for sharing what it's been like with this post-flood recovery as well. I really appreciate it and really inspired about the *Tagetes* genus as a whole. Looking forward to growing my own. Anyway, I'm leaving this feeling super inspired and really grateful to you for spending the time with us. Thank you very much.

Lauren Peterson:

Thanks so much for having me. I'm so happy to get to talk about yauhtli any chance I get.

Rosalee de la Forêt:

Wonderful.

Lauren Peterson:

I can't wait to hear what you start creating and making with it.

Rosalee de la Forêt:

I feel like I'm not going to be the only one. There's going to be lots of us who just can't wait.

Thanks for the inspiration, Lauren.

Lauren Peterson:

Yeah, of course.

Rosalee de la Forêt:

Thank you so much for being here. Don't forget to head over to the show notes at herbswithrosaleepodcast.com to download your beautifully illustrated recipe card. There you'll also be able to sign up for my newsletter, which is the best way to stay in touch. You can find more from Lauren on Instagram @whitedeerapothecary. If you'd like more herbal episodes to head your way, then one of the best ways to support this podcast is by subscribing on YouTube or your favorite podcast app.

I deeply believe that this world needs more herbalists and plant-centered folks, and I'm so glad that you're here as part of this herbal community. Also, a big round of thanks to the people all over the world who make this podcast happen week to week:

Emilie Thomas-Anderson is the Project Manager who oversees the entire podcast operation from guest outreach, to writing show notes, and on and on. I often tell people I just show up! Emilie does most of the heavy lifting.

Nicole Paull is the operator for the entire Herbs with Rosalee School and Community. She keeps an eagle eye view on everything to ensure it's running smoothly.

Francesca is our fabulous video and audio editor. She not only makes listening more pleasant. She also adds beauty to the YouTube videos with plant images and video overlays. Tatiana Rusakova is the botanical illustrator who creates gorgeous plant and recipe illustrations for us. I love them and I know you love them. Once the illustration is ready, Jenny creates the recipe cards, as well as the thumbnail images for YouTube.

Alex is our behind-the-scenes tech support and Social Media Manager, and Karin and Emilie are our Student Services Coordinators and Community Support. If you've written in with a question, undoubtedly, you got help from them. For those of you who like to read along, Jennifer is who creates the transcripts each week. Xavier, my handsome French husband, is the cameraman and website IT guy.

It takes an herbal village to make it all happen, including you. Thank you so much for your support through your comments, reviews and ratings.

One of my very favorite things about this podcast is hearing from you. I read every comment that comes in and I'm excited to hear your thoughts.

Okay. You've made it all the way to the end, which means you get your very own gold star and this herbal tidbit:

While many gardeners plant marigolds for their beauty or sometimes even their supposed pest-repelling powers, yauhtli has another beautiful role to play. As Lauren shared, it can be a late season bloomer offering nectar when many other flowers have already called it quits for the year. This makes it a treasured food source for pollinators, especially monarch butterflies as they make their long migration south. So, if you're growing this plant in your garden, you're not just cultivating herbal medicine, you're helping support the great monarch journey.

I really love that image: A butterfly pausing to sip from this golden marigold carrying the season's last bits of sunlight on its wings.

Thank you for joining me on this herbal adventure. I'll see you next time.

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