



D E C E M B E R

SPICE CLUB

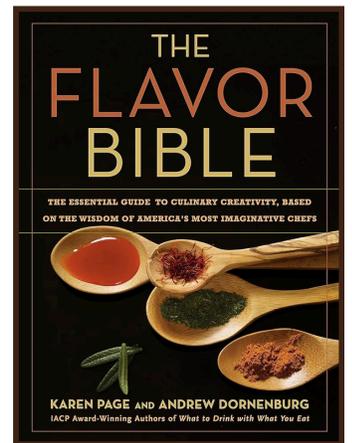
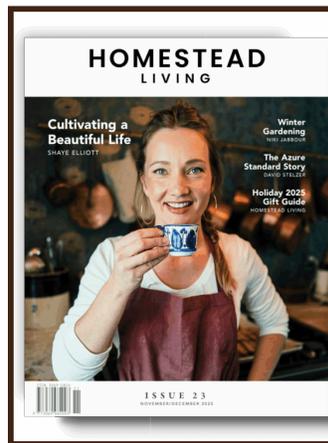
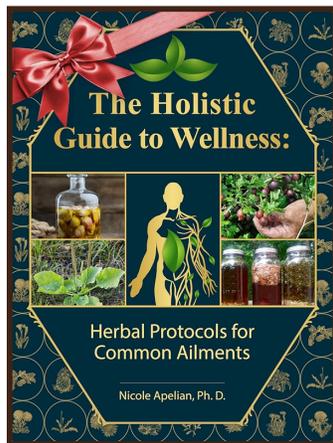
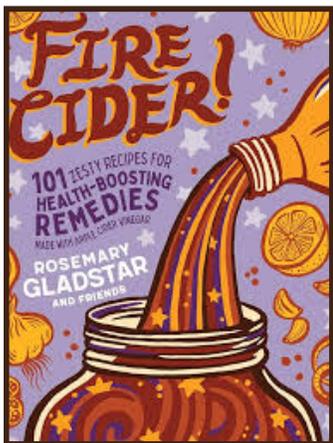
THIS MONTH'S SPICE IS

DRIED ELDERBERRIES



THE GREEKS USED ELDERBERRIES AND ELDERFLOWERS IN TONICS, TEAS, AND POULTICES. HEALERS BELIEVED THAT ELDER COULD REDUCE FEVERS, SOOTHE COUGHS, AND CLEANSE THE BODY OF IMPURITIES. ITS DARK BERRIES, HARVESTED IN LATE SUMMER, WERE BOILED DOWN WITH HONEY AND SPICES TO PRODUCE A THICK SYRUP THAT COULD BE PRESERVED THROUGH THE COOLER MONTHS —AN EARLY VERSION OF WHAT MANY STILL USE TODAY.

RECOMMENDED MATERIALS AT THE LIBRARY



ELDERBERRY TEA

A WARM AND SOOTHING DRINK THAT HELPS WARD OFF COLDS AND FLU. THESE INKY PURPLE BERRIES FROM THE SAMBUCUS TREE ARE LOADED WITH VITAMINS, MINERALS, AND IMMUNE-BOOSTING COMPOUNDS.

INGREDIENTS

- 2 CUPS OF WATER
- 2 TBSP DRIED ELDERBERRIES
- 1 CINNAMON STICK

DIRECTIONS

Elderberry tea is mild in flavor so feel free experimenting with juices, herbs, and spices to flavor it to your liking. Sometimes I'll boil ginger, turmeric, lemon, or even orange slices with the elderberry to give it a spicier or more fruity flavor.

You can also swap some of the water with unsweetened cherry juice for an additional shot of antioxidants, and up the cinnamon to help regulate blood sugar levels. If I happen to have some dried hibiscus flowers, I'll toss a few into the tea to deepen the ruby red color, and they may help lower blood pressure. If you like your tea with a touch of sweetness, try adding raw honey or maple syrup.

- **Combine:** Add water, dried elderberries, and a cinnamon stick to a small saucepan and stir well.
- **Boil:** Heat on high just until the tea starts to boil. Then, turn the heat down to medium-low and simmer for 15 minutes.
- **Rest:** Let the tea cool in the pot for 5 minutes.
- **Strain:** Strain the tea through a fine-mesh strainer into a mug and enjoy.

