
Make Herbal Tinctures with Arina from BellaCreme

Chapter 1 - Make Herbal Tinctures

Overview

- I'm Arina Soler, owner and operator of BellaCreme, an all-natural skincare company operating out of the Hudson Valley. In this class, I'm going to introduce you to the basics of making your own herbal tincture. Tinctures are a dietary supplement that allows you to choose your favorite herbs and introduce it to your health and wellness routine. I know the word tincture may sound intimidating but I promise you, the process is really easy. It involves alcohol and your favorite herbs. And in this class, I'm going to show you three different recipes. One of the best benefits about taking this class is that it's introductory. So, once you learn the process, you can pick and choose the herbs that are suitable to meet your needs. Nature has made all of these wonderful things for us to love, appreciate, and value. And you can capture them and bottle them in this tincture for your use, to share with your friends, your loved ones. It really is amazing. And I know you're going to love this class. (relaxing music)

Materials

- We're going to be making three herbal tinctures. They are echinacea and red clover, calendula and marshmallow root, rose hip and elderberry. We'll also need three jars to store our tincture while it sits and waits for us to unveil it. Three dropper bottles. Amber is the best, it helps to protect what you've worked so hard to create. A funnel, a measuring cup, a mortar and pestle to grind up any of our herbs, especially a whole rose hip, a strainer, a coffee filter, and our scale to make sure we have our measurements complete, especially when we break up our whole rose hip. We're using an 80 proof vodka today. However, you can use gin, you can use brandy. It's all going to be up to you when you create your tincture how you want the finished product to taste and what you want the overall benefits to be. I chose 80 proof because it is readily accessible and sometimes it's hard to source a higher content, full grain alcohol.

Ratios and the percolation method

- Let's discuss ratios. We're doing a 1:3 for the rose hip and elderberry, 1:4 for the calendula and marshmallow root, and a 1:5 for the echinacea and red clover. What that means is that you're going to have less herb to alcohol, and while that's always true, depending on your potency, you're going to choose your ratio in this way. So the one in the ratio represents the herb that you're working with. The three is represented by the alcohol. Elderberry and rose hip, this combination here for the tincture that we're making will be more potent, it'll have more herb in it. The 1:5 will have less herb and more alcohol. If you're unfamiliar with tinctures, tinctures are a perfect way to introduce a holistic healing process to your body using all of nature's beautiful components. You have an echinacea and red clover which help you with hormonal balance, you have the elderberry and rose hip, which has a high vitamin C content, and again, will support your immune system and your overall health and wellness, and then you have calendula and marshmallow root, which offer you a great, soothing benefit, especially for people who are suffering from any sort of digestive issue. It's a great way to manage those symptoms without outside pharmaceuticals. Let's make our 1:3 rose hip and elderberry tincture. Are you ready? So I have whole rose hip here, which is specifically why I have my mortar and pestle and I'm ready to work. We're just gonna crunch these up a little bit, we

want to break them open and get to the shell. You don't discard the seeds, save them for later, something else, you can use them for an herbal infusion or you can use them for tea, so many uses. When you get into the process of making your own products, your own supports for health and wellness, you realize how much is out there and how much can be used from one little thing such as just one whole rose hip. I'm just cracking them open, it makes it easier to get to the berry of it all, right? If you have any that stay whole, it's not a big deal. I have .2 here, can move this to the side. And then I have my premeasured elderberry, it's going to be .3. The nice round, even numbers make it easier, although it's .25 for the recipe, if you wind up at .2 or .3, .1, .4 ounces, as long as it's .5 ounces total combined. For our alcohol, we're doing 1.2 for the 1:3 ratio. Every time that you change containers when you're using your scale, always remember to zero it out. Perfect, 1.2. Now we're going to add this to our herb. Shake it up a little bit. And then we're going to cover it. If you plan to let your tincture sit for greater than six weeks, I want you to use a piece of parchment paper or cheesecloth, something to separate the metal base of your canning jar from your actual finished product. We don't want any rusting or anything of the such. And this is our first tincture, it's complete. Next is our calendula and marshmallow root. Calendula is one of my favorite herbs to work with, don't tell arnica. I love the scent of it, it's mild, it gives you a nice, pretty color, and it's really, really soothing. I love adding it to tea because it makes me tired. It's a good way to unwind after a long day, even a short day, whichever one. We're doing a little bit of calendula in here. This is 1.3. I did drop some, don't worry, if your surface is clean, you can just scrape it up and put it in there. No need to start over. Sometimes with the fluffier roots, it may take a little bit of time. If you find that when you've covered it with your alcohol, it's not quite sitting down, you can increase the amount of alcohol, but you can also just give it some time to become saturated and it will fall below the level. This is premeasured so that the total herb is half an ounce. I just added .25 of marshmallow root. Now we're going to measure out our alcohol. We're aiming for 1.6. If you're curious as to why this number's different, it's because we're working with a 1:4 ratio for our marshmallow root and calendula tincture. As you change ratios, your alcohol amount is going to increase, but your herb amount, the one, is going to remain the same. I'm pouring 1.6 of alcohol. As I mentioned before, sometimes your alcohol won't sufficiently cover your herb, and that's really important. If you have time, you can make a new calculation, but you can also just increase the amount, so we're working with 1.6, and we can double that to 3.2, and that would now make our ratio a 1:5. I suggest that once you reach a point where you're at a 1:6 ratio, that's where you should stop. Give it time to sit. But, we are fortunate, look at that. Our last tincture is our echinacea and red clover. Red clover is really easy to source, especially if you live on the East Coast, it just grows in yards all over the place, they taste really good, they give you a little bit of a licorice flavor when you bite into them and chew them, and I like them a lot. Let's measure out our alcohol. This is going to measure out to two ounces. As you get into your own feel for tincture making, you'll learn which herbs you like to work with, you'll learn which herbs submerge easily, which don't, which herbs are more woody, which ones you may need to grind down, that is also an option if you run into an issue where you feel like the bulk of the herb is what is stopping you from making it submerge under the alcohol or what's stopping it from being submerged in alcohol. You can always grind it up, you can throw it in a blender if you don't have a mortar and pestle. You can break it into little pieces if it's easy to do that. Totally up to you. I'm really excited for you, I think you're gonna love this process, I think you're gonna love learning that you can tincture almost anything. So we have another bulky herb here, but we're going to see how this goes. Do you have any favorite herbs? What do you like? Do you have anything that you feel smells particularly delicious, tastes delicious, something that you use as a

tea? Because that's where your tinctures come in, that day when you're running out the door and you didn't get to have your echinacea tea, couple of drops sublingually, meaning under your tongue, you hold it for about a minute or so, and then that's it, you swallow and you go about your day. It's really easy. I've added a total of .5 in herbs, that's .25 of echinacea and .25 of red clover. Another thing I want you to know, I measured out everything specifically for this class, but if you don't have any measurements available or you don't have time to make the measurements, and you're using a canning jar, which has very obvious separation, you can fill your herb this much of the way, let's say half or a third, and then you cover the rest with alcohol. And that applies to any of these. If you find that you're working with your herb, it's not quite submerging the way that you want it to, and you just need to find a balance, picture that 1:3 in your mind. What does it look like? It's one small amount at the bottom and then you fill the rest with alcohol. As long as your herb is submerged, so let's not always worry about the numbers, but it's a good rule of thumb, especially if you are working with smaller amounts. It's only been a few short minutes, but you can already see the elderberry and rose hip going to work, even have some color change here on our calendula and marshmallow root. Ideally you want these to sit for six weeks, so that all of the benefits from the herbs are fully extracted. Then you can strain it out, you put it into your amber dropper bottle, and it's safe and ready to use. You can store the remainder of your tincture in a cool, dark place and leave it there until you're ready to tap into it again. I have a few tinctures that I prepared ahead of time. I want to show you how to strain them. If you have a stainless steel mesh strainer, that's perfect. I suggest also using a coffee filter. We don't want any bits of herbs or botanicals getting into your tincture, they may clog your dropper, and then it defeats the purpose of having a few drops a day, now doesn't it? This is the elderberry and rose hip tincture. You can give your filter a little squeeze, a little push, these are bigger pieces, so it's a little easier to manipulate them. That can be tricky with the smaller herbs and botanicals that may break through the mesh or the coffee filter, so use your discretion. Isn't this pretty? Look at that, and it has a beautiful scent. I can't wait to see which herbs you're gonna choose for your tincture, hopefully the same ones, but I want you to experiment. A funnel, a funnel is good, we don't want to waste anything. This is your hard work, this is your medicine, this is for you. And you've done a great job. You're one step closer to taking control of your health and wellness day by day, drop by drop.