

Nutrition – Nature's Way

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Chaga may look unattractive but this type of fungi is loaded with nutrients that are essential to our health. Validated by Moscow's Medical Academy of Science in 1955, chaga was extensively used by many people. If my sources are correct, chaga was once one of Russia's state secrets for power and strength and was heavily used by champion Russian athletes. Russian researchers discovered what people for centuries already knew, chaga helps to regulate the digestive, nervous, cardiovascular and respiratory systems, and they discovered that in some cases it slowed down the growth of tumours. (Chaga is being used as one natural remedy in helping to treat cancer.)

There is a long history of chaga which includes the ancient Romans who sent people into Europe to collect this birch fungus.

In addition to containing a wealth of vitamins and minerals, chaga contains flavonoids, phenols, minerals, and enzymes. It is a dense source of pantothenic acid, and this vitamin is essential for us to have healthy adrenal glands. (Continued.....)

CHAGA
(*Inonotus obliquus*)



- *Vitamins B1, B2, B3, B5, D2, K*
- *Calcium*
- *Copper*
- *Iron*
- *Manganese*
- *Potassium*
- *Selenium*
- *Zinc*
- *And many other health nutrients*



New chaga growth

Chaga has been named the “Gift from God” by the Siberians as well as the “Mushroom of Immortality.” The Japanese call it “The Diamond of the Forest,” while the Chinese deem it “King of Plants.” One of the reasons for this is because chaga contains the enzyme, superoxide dismutase. This enzyme is powerful because its function is to halt oxidation.

Birch trees are what you are looking for if you hope to find this nutrient-rich fungi. Once collected, be sure it is dried thoroughly, break it down as best as you can as it is very hard and then make tea! Cook your rice with the tea or grind it down to add into soups and other culinary dishes!

Catkins



Red pine (male) catkins

Catkins are considered by many as a survival food. Many trees produce catkins and they are a source of protein. Birch catkins also contain beta carotene and trace minerals.

Catkins can taste somewhat bitter depending on your taste buds, but they are edible. Many hikers have nibbled on these raw, added to soups, stews, or made into a tea. If you want to try these in a more pleasing manner, you can bake with them or dry them out, grind them into a powder and use in cooking to add protein into your meal.

Make a tempura batter and add lots of spices that you enjoy. Dip the catkins into the batter and bake them on a baking sheet at about 350 degrees Fahrenheit until crispy.

Edible catkins include those from the Alder (White, Red, Mountain varies), all Birch trees, Cottonwood and all Pine trees. The willow tree also produces catkins but eating these is not recommended. Ten to fifteen of these catkins are the equivalent of about two aspirins.

If you have allergies then be aware that this may not be for you because catkins contain pollen.



Health Nourishing Vinegars

Once you have a jug of organic apple cider vinegar your ability to create health-nourishing vinegars is only limited by the imagination. I know I have spoken about this in a previous newsletter but I can never stress enough how amazing apple cider vinegar is to our health.

When diluted with water (50/50) it can be used as a facial toner (be sure to avoid eyes). When this vinegar is added to bath water it helps alkalize the skin. It can treat dandruff and restores the PH balance of the scalp; apply a 50/50 mixture of water and vinegar to the scalp and let dry. Now, imagine using herbs that help support skin health to make vinegar. Your body will thank-you. Chamomile, rosemary and horsetail are herbs that help keep skin healthy (see photo).

When edible plant matter (or edible fungi) is placed (not stuffed) in a jar the apple cider vinegar extracts the nutrients allowing them to infuse into the vinegar. Once in jars, cover but not with a metal lid as it may start to rust. Let sit anywhere from 6 weeks to 4 months and then strain. Use your vinegars to make your dressings, add a tablespoon to a glass of water to drink, or as a skin tonic. It's easy and inexpensive to make and nourishing for your body!

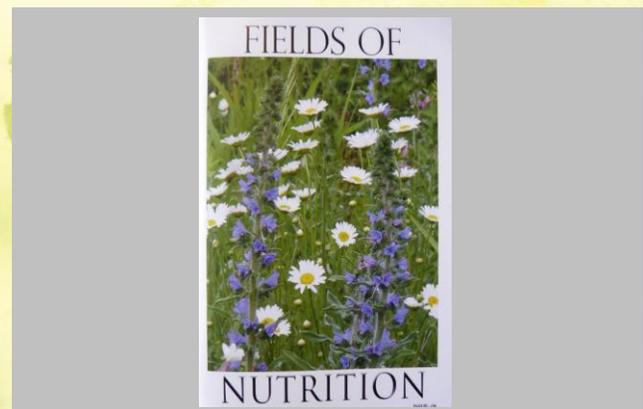
For those of you who notice the birch bark and the twigs in the image on this page, this vinegar is great for bone health.

FIELDS OF NUTRITION

Last but not least, here is this month's special. Fields of Nutrition is a comprehensive guide with thirty common plants that includes their nutrient information. This who order Fields of Nutrition in February will not have to pay postage! [Click here to order now!](#)



Homemade vinegars



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