



**Botanical name:** *Dysphania ambrosioides* (formerly *Chenopodium*)

**Family:** Chenopodiaceae/Amaranthaceae (includes quinoa, spinach, beets)

**Common name:** Epazote

**More names:** Wormseed, *Epasote*, *Ipaztoe*, *Pasote* [Spanish], Quinoa, Mexican Tea, Goosefoot, *Epazotl* [Nahuatl], *Lukum-xiu* [Maya], Wormweed, Semen contra, Jesuit's tea, Payco, Paiku, Paico, Amush, Camatai, Cashua, Amasamas, Anserina, Mastruco, Mastruz, Sie-sie, Jerusalem tea, Spanish tea, Hierba hormiguera

**Parts of the plant used:** whole plant, including roots + seeds

**When to harvest:** as soon as leaves come out, the more you harvest young leaves at the beginning of their growth, the bushier the plant will become!

**Herbal actions:**

amebicide, antifungal, antiparasitic/vermifuge, antibacterial, antimicrobial, anti-inflammatory, antitumorous, insecticidal, molluscicidal (kills snails), antihepatotoxic (liver detoxifier), antiseptic, antispasmodic, antiulcer, carminative, contraceptive, diaphoretic, analgesic, diuretic, mild laxative, digestive, nervine, galactagogue, vulnerary (wound healer), hepatoprotective (liver protector), laxative, lactagogue (promotes milk flow), emmenagogue/menstrual stimulant, sedative, tonic

**Active constituents:**

Volatile oil (up to 90% ascaridol, plus geraniol, cymene, limonene, terpinene, myrcene and methyl salicylate) alpha-pinene, aritasone, butyric-acid, chenopodium, d-camphor, ferulic-acid, geraniol, l-pinocarvone, limonene, malic-acid, menthadiene, menthadiene hydroperoxides, p-cymene, p-cymol, safole, saponins, spinasterol, tartaric-acid, terpinyl-acetate, terpinyl-salicylate, triacontyl-alcohol, trimethylamine, urease, vanillic-acid.

**Energy:** Warming

**Element:** Fire + Water

**Taste:** Bitter, Pungent

**Meridians/Organs affected:** liver, kidneys, spleen

**Habitat + ecology:**

*Epazotl* is an annual native to Mexico and the tropical regions of Central and South America with long histories of uses in Belize, Brazil, Ecuador, Haiti, Mexico, Panama, Peru, Trinidad, Turkey, Venezuela + Turtle Island.

**Ethnobotany (People + the plant ancestor):**

- In the Yucatan, indigenous clans use epazote for intestinal parasites, asthma, excessive mucus, chorea (a type of rheumatic fever that affects the brain) and other nervous conditions.
- The Tikuna natives in the Amazon use it to expel intestinal worms and as a mild laxative.
- The Siona-Secoya and Kofan Indian tribes in South America also use epazote for intestinal worms (usually by taking one cup of a leaf decoction each morning before eating for three consecutive days).
- The Kofan natives also use the plant as a perfume-tying it to their arm for an 'aromatic' bracelet.



- The Wayapi use the plant decoction for stomach upsets and internal hemorrhages caused by falls.
- In Piura a leaf decoction is used to expel intestinal gas, as a mild laxative, as an insecticide, and as a natural remedy for cramps, gout, hemorrhoids, intestinal worms and parasites and nervous disorders.
- In Mexica communities bathing in a decoction of epazote is used to reduce fever and will also throw a couple of freshly uprooted green plants onto their fires to drive mosquitoes and flies away.

#### Plant magick:

- Brings our strength + warrior back into our body
- Brings external protection from toxicity
- Offers feelings of safety, security + familiarity
- Expels colonizing entities from our physical + spiritual body

Form: spirit, incense, spiritual bath\*

#### Medicinal uses:

- Household remedy used to rid children and adults of intestinal parasites, worms + amebas [internally]
- Treats external skin parasites as well including lice and ringworm
- Wound healing to bruises, cuts, scrapes, fractures
- Stimulating to digestion
- Eases the nerves + offers relief for toothaches
- Prevents intestinal gas if the leaves are cooked and/or eaten with beans and other common gas-forming foods
- Tones, balances, and strengthens the liver, stomach and bowel
  - Supportive to acid reflux, intestinal gas, cramping, chronic constipation, hemorrhoids, sluggish digestion etc
- Topically can relieve arthritis, soak leaves for several days in water [Brazilian Amazon]
- Treatment for coughs, asthma, bronchitis, and other upper respiratory problems, including throat inflammation, drying to excessive mucus
- Promotes circulation + also slows down hemorrhaging
- Traditionally used as a contraceptive and to induce abortions
- Epazote oil can be used topically to repel insects
- May be supportive in fighting cancers

**\*Contraindications:** Avoid use during pregnancy or while nursing or consuming oil of epazote [considered extremely toxic internally]

#### Recipes + Comrades

Parasites: chaparral, black walnut, wormwood

Food medicine

Add to soups + stews

Combine with cilantro, oregano, thyme, chilies

#### Mole Verde

6 servings

##### Ingredients

1 cup pepitas  
 1 cup roughly minced garlic  
 1 tbsp vegetable oil  
 ½ lb tomatillos, husked  
 2 jalapeno peppers  
 1 cup packed coarsely chopped cilantro  
 ½ cup parsley leaves [optional]  
 2 tbsp oregano  
 2 cups chicken stock  
 Salt, to taste

1. Prepare all herbs first and set aside. In a medium heavy skillet over medium-high heat, toast pepitas until they pop and turn a light golden brown. Toss constantly so they won't burn. Transfer to a blender and process until finely ground. You will have to stop the blender every few seconds to redistribute.
2. In a heavy saucepan, heat the oil + sauté the onion until it starts getting translucent. Add the garlic. Add the tomatillos and jalapeno and cook, stirring frequently until soft.
3. Transfer the sautéed vegetables to the blender jar with the pepitas and the herbs. Add one cup of the chicken stock and puree until well combined. This may take a couple of minutes.
4. Return the blended mixture to the saucepan and put it over medium heat.



Meanwhile rinse the blender jar with the remaining cup of chicken broth and add to the pot. Reduce heat and simmer for 10 to 15 minutes to let the herbs release their flavors and the flavors to blend. Stir frequently.

5. Use immediately or transfer and store in refrigerator for up to 3 days, reheating before use.

**Preparation:**

food, infusion, tincture, vinegar, oil, salve, sitz bath, warm compress

**Recommended dosage:**

½ cup of epazote tea taken in the morning on an empty stomach for three consecutive days to help clear the intestines of parasites. That same half-cup of herbal tea can be consumed for digestive, menstrual or respiratory problems.

**Photos of the plant ancestor:**





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2020