



Botanical name: *Urtica dioica*

Family: Urticaceae [includes other shrubs + trees used for fibers]

Common name: Stinging Nettles

Spanish, Nahuatl + Mayan names: ortiga, *tsitsikas tli*, *zicaztli*, *atzixicaztli*, *tzitzicazquiltl*, *chichicaztli tlaltzit*, *la'al*

Other names: nettles, weed of mars, devil's claw, devil's apron, devil's leaf, devil's plaything, burn nettle, burn hazel, burn weed, ancha, wergulu

Parts of the plant used: leaf + stems; roots + seeds used different than leaf/stem

When to harvest: leaves + stem can be harvested in spring + summer before flowering; harvest leaf + stem about 1ft high young for food; seeds collected at the end of summer [this ancestor stings, wear gloves + ask for tons of consent before harvesting]

Herbal actions: nourishing tonic, astringent, diuretic, anodyne, pectoral, rubefacient, analgesic, styptic, anthelmintic, nutritive, antioxidant, alterative, emetic, antirheumatic, anti-allergenic, anti-lithic/lithotriptic, haemostatic, stimulant, decongestant, herpetic, febrifuge, kidney depurative/nephritic, galactagogue, hypoglycemic, expectorant, antispasmodic, antihistamine, genitourinary tonic, antimicrobial

Active constituents: galacturonic acid, vitamin C, histamine, 5-hydroxytryptamine, choline and acetylcholine, vitamins A,B, C, D and E, iron, sodium, potassium, phosphorus, calcium (29 x> spinach), magnesium, silica, trace minerals and protein

Planet: Mars

Energy: Cooling + earth

Element: Fire

Taste: Salty, Slightly bitter

Habitat & ecology:

Originally from cool + humid climates like so called northern Europe, Asia + Turtle Island. Presently grows on all continents, but Antarctica from urban to rural soils. They enjoy plenty of sunlight, growing by waters + areas impacted by human destruction, such as ditches + abandoned building.

Ethnobotany (People + the plant ancestor):

- Mesoamerican nations have been allied to nettles for centuries. It is documented in the *Badianus Manuscript: An Aztec Herbal, 1552*, that a nettles variety can treat nose bleeds: *Atzitzicaztli*, *Urtica chichicaztli* (Water nettle). It reads, "The juice of nettles, ground with salt in urine and milk, poured into the nostrils stops the flow of blood from the nose. The water nettle, sometimes called *chichicaste*, grows throughout Mexico, Central America, the West Indies, and tropical South America.
- Elder nettles makes an appearance in Native American folklore, as the trickster for those who rush or are not attentive. Many native communities eat nettles in salads + soups by boiling the leaves and discarding the water (it's a spicy treat!) Nettles has been supportive in treating skin ailments.
- Uses by native tribe: Cahuilla + Kawaiisu (analgesic, for pain relief, especially headaches + neck



pain), Mahuna (external for inflammation), Pomo (counterirritant)

- Ceremonially, stinging nettles were most important in the Pacific Northwest, where men rubbed nettles on their bodies in fishing, whaling, and seal-hunting rituals. This was variously said to provide strength, protect against weather, or mask human odors.
- In the Kawaiisu tribe of southern California, stinging nettles were one of several herbs considered to be a source of dream power, and a person who wished to have a medicine vision might walk through nettle plants so that the stings would prepare them for the dreams.
- Cultivated for food and other industries in European countries such as Scotland, Denmark and Norway. For example the Ancient Greeks juiced this plant ancestor.
- On the stem and leaves are the small stinging hairs, called *trichomes* which if touched or brushed against, break off in the skin giving a stinging itchy skin rash. They are hairs of protection from grazing animals. Where you stung? Rub dock/mint/rosemary/sage leaves on the area affected.

Plant magick

- Calls in clarity
- Sharpens focus
- Opens the heart to fierce divine love
- Brings lessons on honoring nourishment
- Teaches us how to create boundaries
- Casts maternal + metaphysical protective shield around us
- Blankets created from nettles stems are shrouds of protection + clarity
- Breaks negative curses + spells
- Sings you to action
- Allied with the deities Agni, Blodeuwedd, Hades, Horus, Cernunnos, Jupiter, Osiris, Pluto, Thor, Vishnu, Serpent deities + Vulcan
- Nettles carry the medicine of laying birds, peacocks, red admirals, caterpillars, insects, moths + butterflies

Form: dried plant, flower essence, powder

Medicinal uses:

- Nourishes + restores the body's systems
 - Increases nutrient consumption
 - Bringing vital + necessary vitamins + minerals to all organs
 - particularly to the musculoskeletal system, urinary tract, kidneys, digestive tract, liver, endocrine system, reproductive system, and respiratory system.
- Promotes circulation + rejuvenates veins + arteries
- Purifying + detoxifying to all body organs, riding of waste, especially the blood (depurative actions)
- Strengthens adrenals, kidneys + lungs
 - Replenishes energy by building the strength + capacity of the adrenals giving us energy when we are depleted
 - Dissolves kidney stones
- Immune boosting, especially if you are susceptible to colds
- Supports rheumatism (inflammation + pain in joints + muscles, such as arthritis) as well as the bone damage incurred by inflammation
- Treats issues with water retention by promoting regulating urination flow, supportive to urination problems such as enlarged prostate, nightmare urination pain when urinating, bladder infections
- As a haemostatic, they stop blood flow + support with hemorrhaging (internal, such as nose bleeds, menstrual cramps, organs bleeding out)
- Lowers blood sugar
- Aids with skin imbalances such as rashes, eczema
- Builds + strengthens milk production
- Builds an appetite and feeds one experiencing anemia
- Treats stomach aid, diarrhea, dysentery
- Protects against and enlarged spleen + endocrine disorders
- Allied with goldenrod for season-based allergies



- Also known to care for muscle aches

Recipes + Allies

Nourishment: linden, oatstraw, alfafa, red clover, chickweed

Common cold: garlic, elderberry, mints, yarrow, ginger, turmeric, reishi

Urinary tract infections: echinacea, yarrow, usnea, dandelion, corn Silk, juniper berry, blueberry leaf, pine/evergreens, cranberries

Seasonal depression: siberian ginseng, nettles, astragalus, ashwagandha, schizandra berry

nourished bits

- 2 part nettles
- 2 part red raspberry leaf
- 1 part motherwort
- 1 part mugwort
- a pinch of roses

Let steep for 25 minutes. Add a little bit of sweetness + love: honey, molasses, or agave.

spring tonic tea

- 2 part nettles
- 1 part burdock
- 1 part dandelion
- 1 part red clover

nettles pesto

- 3 cups of fresh nettle leaves
- 4 garlic clove (or more!)
- ¾ cup of nuts (pine, walnut, even cashews are lovely)
- ¼ cup of olive oil (or oil of your choosing)
- ½ tsp of salt
- 1 tbs of lemon juice
- ¾ cup of cheese (if you do dairy)

To remove the nettles sting, boil your nettles in warm water, strain + dry before blending your goodies.

Preparation:

tisane, infusion, tincture, tea, poultice, food (soups, smoothies, juice)

Recommended dose:

- Infusion: steep 1 leaves or roots in 1 cup water
- Tincture: 2-3 dropper fulls/3x

Photos of the plant ancestor:





created + blessed by xóchicoatl of [la mala yerba](#)
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