



Early American Herb Recipes

Alice Cooke Brown

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For early American households, the herb garden was an all-purpose medicine chest. Herbs were used to treat apoplexy (lily of the valley), asthma (burdock, horehound), boils (onion), tuberculosis (chickweed, coltsfoot), palpitations (saffron, valerian), jaundice (speedwell, nettles, toad flax), toothache (dittander), hemorrhage (yarrow), hypochondria (mustard, viper grass), wrinkles (cowslip juice), cancers (bean-leaf juice), and various other ailments. But herbs were used for a host of other purposes as well — and in this fascinating book, readers will find a wealth of information on the uses of herbs by homemakers of the past, including more than 500 authentic recipes, given exactly as they appeared in their original sources. Selected from such early American cookbook classics as Miss Leslie's *Directions for Cookery*, Mary Randolph's *The Virginia Housewife*, Lydia Child's *The American Frugal Housewife*, and other rare publications, the recipes cover the use of herbs for medicinal, culinary, cosmetic, and other purposes. Readers will discover not only how herbs were used in making vegetable and meat dishes, gravies and sauces, cakes, pies, soups, and beverages, but also how our ancestors employed them in making dyes, furniture polish, insecticides, spot removers, perfumes, hair tonics, soaps, tooth powders, and numerous other products. While some formulas are completely fantastic, others (such as a sunburn ointment made from hog's lard and elder flowers) were based on long experience and produced excellent results. More than 100 fine nineteenth-century engravings of herbs add to the charm of this enchanting volume — an invaluable reference and guide for plant lovers and herb enthusiasts that will "delight and astound the twentieth-century reader." (*Library Journal*).

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