

REJUVENATING AROMATHERAPY:

Herbal Bath Bundles

BY JESS BUTTERMORE

Mood-lifting herbal bath bundles are simple to make and beautiful additions to your bathroom. They provide a rejuvenating aromatherapy experience each time you bathe or shower, improve the air quality of your bathroom, and absorb extra moisture in the air. Creating and hanging these in your bath is an opportunity to nourish yourself and stretch the lovely aromatherapy of fresh herbs regardless of the season.

The steam from your baths will release the beneficial oils of these plants and can extend the life of your bundles for up to six weeks before needing to refresh them. Alternatively, if you have a flat surface such as a windowsill or wall shelf in your tub or shower, adding this herbal bouquet in a vessel of water will have the same effect.

Here are my favorite herbs to include in an herbal bath bundle. While I grow all five in my herbal apothecary garden at home and enjoy the combination of fragrances and benefits, any combination of these five will blend together wonderfully. Simply gather what is available to you in your garden harvest or enjoy browsing your local grocer or farmers market for these ingredients.

5 Garden Herbs for Bath Bundles

EUCALYPTUS: The natural oils that steam releases from this plant are largely known to aid in respiratory ailments, such as bronchitis, asthma, and other respiratory distress, making it a wonderful option for a bath bundle. It is available at most grocers, florists, or markets that sell flowers. Because they hold water in their roots, they will easily outlast all other herbs in your bundle and are, therefore, considered a staple to herbal bath bundles.

LAVENDER: Lavender is a physical ally in many ways, particularly for its anti-inflammatory and antiseptic properties, but for the purpose of this project, lavender's fresh, clean, relaxing aroma has a calming, anti-stress effect when breathed in. It can often be found in plant form at your local nursery or grocer during the late spring and summer months, and your local lavender farm may have a U-pick option. Additionally, it is a hardy perennial in zones 5-9. >





LEMON BALM: I am a huge fan of lemon balm. It is a gentle nervine, calming and rejuvenating the nervous system through its vitamins, minerals, and bright scent. It is used to aid with anxiety, nervous tension, insomnia, and headaches. It rejuvenates those feeling exhausted and is often used to help calm restless, tired children. Its properties can also help ease respiratory illnesses. Lemon balm is easy to grow from seed, both outdoors and indoors in containers.

MINT: There is nothing quite like the invigorating fresh scent of mint! For this project, the uplifting, refreshing scent of its antimicrobial oils provide respiratory support and can ease congestion. Peppermint and spearmint are the most commonly used from the mint family and will be easiest to source in large bundles for this project. If you are considering growing mint, be aware that it has an incredibly strong root system that spreads rapidly. I recommend growing mint in a container to control the spread and to prevent it from overtaking other more vulnerable plants.

ROSEMARY: The fresh, pungent fragrance alone is reason enough to include this herb in your bath bundle; this herb's aromatherapy benefits also include enhancing cardiovascular circulation, brain function, and easing headaches and migraines. Symbolizing remembrance, rosemary helps increase memory and improve concentration. It can be found at most grocers and markets year-round. A perennial, this plant is relatively easy to grow, and can become very large in the right conditions.

Supplies

- Herbs
- Twine
- Scissors

To Make

Gather the herbs desired; wash, shake off, and pat them dry. Snip off any broken or blemished leaves. Make a bouquet starting with the tallest plants, bunching them together at the base. Layer this with shorter herb bunches, fanning them out slightly as you go. Secure with twine about 3 inches above the stem ends, tightly wrapping it several times. Tie a double knot and/or bow, leaving 8 inches or so of length on each end for tying to the shower head. Cut the ends of the stems to one even length for a clean finished look.

To use, hang the bundle upside down, and tie it around the neck of your shower head or bath faucet. Let the steam release the beneficial aromatherapy oils.



Tips

- Rejuvenation herbal bath bundles make lovely housewarming gifts. When gifting, include a craft paper gift tag letting the recipient know how to use it.
- To add a seasonal touch, include a few stems of fresh cottage roses or a small bundle of fresh chamomile to the front of your summer bundles, or some red velvet ribbon and dried citrus to your winter bundles.

Jess Buttermore is an artist and herbalist living in the mountains outside of Seattle, Washington. She invites you to visit her at cedarhouseliving.com and follow her on Instagram (@cedarhouseliving).

Photography by Jess Buttermore.

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