

ELIXIR COLLECTIVE NO. 14

Food is medicine is beauty. The enclosed offering is truly rooted in this philosophy, with an elixir that can flow with ease from your kitchen to your first aid kit to your skin care routine. Rooted Honey is a classic staple in my apothecary for its broad versatility and healing potency: a combination of three ingredients come together and augment one another for this immune-enhancing, disease-fighting, inflammation-reducing blend. Inspired by the turmeric and ginger harvest season in the first few months of every year, I infused raw local honey with both of these powerful roots (peeled & chopped by yours truly) to create this panacea in a jar.

RAW HONEY from Hawaiian Rainbow Bees serves as both a method of preservation and a delicious base for the herbs. Transmuted by honeybees from floral nectar, honey is truly a wonder of the natural world. Humans have benefitted from this miraculous substance for as far back as we can see: it is regarded as one of the first natural medicines of our ancient ancestors, with records of its use first dating back to a Sumerian tablet from around 2000 BCE. Due to honey's unique chemical structure, it has been demonstrated to possess strong antibacterial properties as well as some fungus-fighting ones; studies with medical grade honey have even shown it to be effective against pathogens with antibiotic resistance. The skin-healing properties are well documented due to its ability to regenerate tissue and prevent infection, and it can speed recovery from wounds, burns and other topical inflammations without scarring. In a beauty regimen, honey provides emollient moisture for all skin types. Nutritionally, honey is a prebiotic, meaning that its consumption contributes to the population of beneficial gut flora and therefore contributes to a healthy digestive system. A few different varieties are part of your Rooted Honey, sourced from hives pollinating a plethora of local flora including the endemic 'Ohi'a Lehua, Macadamia and Christmas Berry trees.

FRESH TURMERIC rhizomes, known as 'Olena in Hawaiian or *Curcuma longa* botanically, were organically grown on the North Shore of O'ahu by Counter Culture Farms. One of the few examples where traditional Chinese, Ayurvedic and Greek medicine intersect, turmeric is a classic remedy to heal inflammation of the liver and upper digestive organs. This orange antioxidant also helps to revitalize the blood by restoring coronary circulation and can dissolve fatty deposits. Due to these blood moving properties, is commonly used for painful menses to ease cramps (and pairs well with ginger for this purpose). Various studies have exhibited its cancer-fighting effects due to a tumor-suppressing active component, Curcumin. Turmeric also promotes tissue repair, reduces inflammation and fights pathogens; it can be applied topically aches and pains, wounds and minor infections. Added to your skin care routine, turmeric eases signs of aging while keeping the complexion clear, calm and radiant.

FRESH GINGER rhizomes grown on the Big Island add a bit of warming spice to your honey. Ginger — botanically *Zingiber officinale* and Awapuhi in Hawaiian — is actually included in most traditional Chinese herbal formulas for its ability to aid the digestion of other botanicals. A quintessentially 'hot' herb with antiviral and immune-boosting properties, ginger is a well known cold and flu fighter. The stimulating effect it has on circulation makes it effective for easing muscle aches and pains both topically and internally. Traditionally, dried ginger is generally used more for the digestive system, but both fresh and dry work well to dispel nausea, appetite loss and difficult digestion for better harmony at your core.

A FEW WAYS TO USE:

- Culinary: sweeten oatmeal, yogurt or tea, mix with apple cider vinegar to make a salad dressing, add to soy sauce for a healthy teriyaki, and spread on toast — it's delicious!
- Medicinal: add a spoonful to warm water and take at the first signs of a cold (ideally using the 'sweat' method detailed in the January box or on my blog); repeat 2 - 3 times per day until recovered.
- Topical: spread a thin layer over clean open wounds, burns or mild infections; wash & repeat daily until healed.
- Beauty: mix with yogurt, avocado, clay or apply on its own directly to face & neck as a mask; gently tap over your skin with your fingertips to encourage healthy blood flow and rinse clean after 5 to 10 minutes.

MAKE YOUR OWN:

This recipe is so easy to make at home — keep the jar and refill it when you're out, or use a bigger one!

- Use either fresh ginger & turmeric rhizomes or dried & powdered herbs. If the fresh rhizomes need to be washed, rinse a few hours in advance and let dry on a towel. You have the option to peel the skins off, as this is a matter of preference: the skins are edible but I peeled the ones in yours. Slice and chop finely.
- Fill a clean jar roughly 3/4 full with the chopped fresh herbs or 1/2 full with powdered ones; use your desired ratio (I used 1:1) and add other herbs if you choose — garlic makes a great addition to this blend!
- Add honey to fill the jar. Note that the flavors mellow & mingle with time. Ideally avoid introducing water into the jar and keep Rooted Honey (both my version and yours) in a dark cool place or in the fridge to preserve its life — well kept, infused honeys can last up to a year!