

How I Made a Holy Basil Tincture 1061

For those of you who have been patiently waiting to learn how I made a Holy Basil/Tulsi Tincture, today is the day that you have been waiting for! Over the weekend, I completed the process for making an alcohol-based Holy Basil tincture. If you haven't yet read my post about Holy Basil, feel free to check it out to learn more about this awesome super herb and its benefits.

Alcohol-based tinctures are very easy to make and they provide you with an extracted form of an herb that is convenient to carry. They can also be easily taken in water. My experiences thus far have primarily been limited to alcohol-based tincture making using fresh herbs that I have grown in my own garden, so that is the process that I am emphasizing here. For those who wish to avoid alcohol, you can also make glycerin-based tinctures, and even vinegar-based tinctures, but I have yet to try those methods myself.

The tincture making process is pretty simple:

- 1.) Chop up your fresh herbs and put them into a clean and dry glass jar with a tight-fitting lid. Mason jars work well for this, but you could certainly use any clean glass jar with a tight-fitting lid.
- 2.) Pour enough 80 to 100 proof alcohol (such as vodka, gin, brandy, or grain or grape alcohol) to cover the herbs by two to three inches.
- 3.) Cover the jar with a lid and store in a warm place for approximately 4-6 weeks. Shake daily to help infuse the herbs into the alcohol.
- 4.) After 4-6 weeks, strain off the spent herbs from the finished tincture and discard/compost the plants.
- 5.) Bottle your tincture as needed into a labeled dropper bottle.

The best scenario is to store your tinctures in a cool dark place, since ambient light can break down those super important medicinal compounds in the herbs that you want in the first place. My personal solution for this is to store my tinctures in a cupboard, and I make my own homemade "label sleeves" made from cut paper bags that I wrap around the jars and fasten with tape to help reduce the amount of light that they are exposed to.

According to Rosemary Gladstar, alcohol-based tinctures should stay good for many years, glycerin tinctures should stay good for about 2-3 years, and vinegar-based tinctures will keep for at least a year, and sometimes they will last even longer.

Dosages of tinctures are given in terms of drops or dropperfuls. While I cannot recommend specific dosages for specific herbal tinctures, I can give you a quick list of dropper dosage equivalents:

1 Dropperful (35 drops) = $\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon = 1 mL

2 $\frac{1}{2}$ Dropperfuls (88 drops) = $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon = 2.5 mL

5 Dropperfuls (175 drops) = 1 teaspoon = 5 mL

One of the trickiest parts to tincture making that I have encountered is how to keep from spilling them (and losing some of your work) when you are pouring the liquid tincture from one container to another. I have to admit that I have not yet figured out a foolproof method for doing this, but using funnels sure does help a lot. I use two different sized funnels that I have at home: one that has a very skinny end to allow for the tincture to be poured directly into the dropper bottle, and a larger one with a wide end that came with my canning kit that helps me to pour tinctures from one jar to another. I also place a clean bowl underneath the dropper bottle as I am pouring tincture into it to hopefully catch spills. This is not always 100% effective, however, and is more of an art form than anything else.