

THE ORDER OF THE STILLROOM

A group dedicated to the study of herbs and all of their uses through the ages. Members are encouraged to learn the historical importance of plants in general and herbs and spices in particular and experiment (within safe and legal bounds) with the cultivation, processes of preparation, and use of herbs and spices with particular interest in the Medieval context of this Art.

This Guild is to serve as a Hub of Knowledge, where members can come to learn what they do not know and share what they have already discovered. We are here as kindred spirits with a common interest. Membership is open to all Citizens of the Empire, regardless of branch affiliation.

LEADERSHIP

TITLE

DOYEN / DOYENNE

SELECTION OF GUILD LEADER

The selection of a new Guild Leader is at the discretion of the current Guild Leader. If the Guild Leader has been removed or is unable for any other reason to make this choice, the new Guild Leader will be chosen by a majority vote by the Adepts and Elders of the Guild. The new Guild Leader should be chosen from the Elders of the Guild.

REMOVAL OF GUILD LEADER

A vote for removal of the Guild Leader may be called for by five or more Elders of the Guild.

- Request for removal must be presented to and approved by the Crown.
- The vote must be approved by the Crown.
- Vote is made by all Adepts and Elders of the Guild, as well as the Crown. Vote must exceed 51% to pass.

ADVANCEMENT

A member of the Guild shall keep a Journal of some sort (a d-ring notebook is recommended). This will be made available to Guild Elders as a visible proof of study and something concrete by which to judge progress. This journal will include the herbs studied and may include such notes, pictures, printouts as the member chooses to include.

Knowledge of required research topics will be evaluated by oral interview with an Elder by what means are most expedient (in person, or via phone or other electronic means).

Practicum projects will be evaluated in one of the following ways (in order of preference):

1. By the nearest Elder OR
2. By the nearest higher ranking Guild member OR
3. By the nearest group (two or more) of Guild members of rank equal to the member being evaluated OR
4. By the nearest Guild member of rank equal to the member being evaluated OR
5. By self evaluation if there are no other Guild members within a reasonable distance of the member being evaluated.

Evaluation must always be done by the most preferable method available. Criteria for evaluation may be found in the Guild Library.

LEVEL ONE REQUIREMENTS - ENTRANT

JOURNAL-

A Member of the Guild will keep a journal of some sort (d-ring notebook is an excellent choice for this purpose). This will be made available to Guild Elders as a visible proof of study and something concrete to judge progress on. It will include:

Herbs studied (10 required, choice of herbs determined by the Entrant) - Information on each herb to include:

- Latin binomial of plant
- Common names of plant
- Description/picture of plant
- Origin of plant
- Culture of plant
- Historical medicinal uses of plant
- Historical culinary uses of plant
- Historical magical or religious uses of plant (if any)

see Guild Library for format and resource suggestions.

RESEARCH-

- Understanding of historical timeline of documented herbal use.
- Basic familiarity with influential historical herbalists and their works.
- Basic familiarity with influential historical epicures and their works.

PRACTICUM-

- Choosing herbs from the ones you studied make:
 - a tisane (5 tisanes using 5 different herbs)
 - a decoction (1 herb)
 - a tincture (1 herb)
- Describe your experience making each one.

Make 2 recipes from an historical cookbook or redacted by a reliable source. Describe your experience with each recipe.

Design a useful herb garden.

It could be medicinal, culinary, specialized to another purpose, or some combination of the foregoing. Discuss the infrastructure of the garden used during the period of your choosing (in other words, don't just list plants. how would the garden be constructed when it was being created?)

LEVEL TWO REQUIREMENTS - SEEKER

Level Two requires completion of all Level One requirements plus:

JOURNAL-

Herbs studied (10 additional required, choice of herbs determined by the Seeker, different herbs than those studied in level one). Information on herbs to include:

Latin binomial of plant

Common names of plant

Description/picture of plant

Origin of plant

Culture of plant

Historical medicinal uses of plant

Historical culinary uses of plant

Historical magical/religious uses of plant (if any)

RESEARCH-

Basic understanding of the arts of both simpling and apothecary.

Historical herbals

Historical cookbooks

Forms of cultivation of herbs practiced during the period of your interest

Understanding of the world during the period of your interest. (flat? inhabited by strange beings? a network of trade agreements?)

See Guild Library for resources.

PRACTICUM-

Obtain fresh herb. Dry it. Make a Tea of it. (describe the experience. what herb was used? what would the tea have been used for historically?)

Choosing herbs from your level two list, make:

A tea blend designed for Seeker's choice of uses. (list the purpose of the blend, each ingredient used in it and its purpose in the blend).

An herbal infused oil (list purpose of the oil, each ingredient used and its purpose in the blend. Be certain that all ingredients and methods are period)

An herbal infused vinegar (list all ingredients and their purpose)

Make two meals designed to promote health or alleviate an ailment from period recipes. Explain the purpose of the meal. List ingredients and purpose of each in the recipe. Be certain to only use ingredients modernly understood to be wholesome for ingestion. Describe your experience.

LEVEL THREE REQUIREMENTS - ADEPT

Level Three requires completion of all Level One and Level Two requirements plus:

JOURNAL-

Herbs studied (10 additional required, choice of herbs determined by the Adept, different herbs than those studied in levels one and two). Information on herbs to include:

Latin binomial of plant

Common names of plant

Description/picture of plant

Origin of plant

Culture of plant

Historical medicinal uses of plant

Historical culinary uses of plant

Historical magical/religious uses of plant (if any)

RESEARCH-

Systems of herbal healing (define the concepts of at least three)

Art and History of the Apothecary

Essential oils and their historical use.

Tools of the medieval herb user (medicinal, culinary, fiber)

PRACTICUM-

Create an herb blend suitable for use in an electuary. (list the purpose of the blend, the herbs used and their purpose in the blend)

Make an electuary (list the purpose of the electuary, ingredients used and their purpose in the blend)

Make a salve from start to finish (fresh herb to infused oil to finished salve describe your experience)

You have a choice here: either write a short paper on the equipment and process of making essential oil/hydrosol OR you may actually do so. Describe your experience.

Design your dream stillroom. Where is it? How is it equipped? What supplies do you have? From where do you obtain them? (The term "stillroom" has become something of a stereotype. Keep in mind that there are as many forms of it as there are herb folk. Solidify the vision of YOUR space. Have fun with this one!)

FINAL PROJECT-

Create a class on some aspect of herbs or historical herb use to be entered into the Guild Library for the education and use of all Guild members. It can be a paper or a video. Remember that all Guild members, present and future, will have access to this. Make it informative, make it easy to follow, make it fun. Enjoy the process!

One who has successfully completed all requirements of Levels One, Two, and Three and has received approval from the Guild Leader will have the status and obligations of an **ELDER**.

ELDERS' OBLIGATION TO THE GUILD

Elders will volunteer their time and expertise assisting the Guild by reviewing Entrants', Seekers', and Adepts' journals; advising and assisting Entrants, Seekers, and Adepts in their endeavors; administration of the Guild on a local and Kingdom level; and serving as ambassadors to the Empire and Public at Large for the space of at least one month. This month may be served at any time within the first year after elevation. If the obligation is not met within the first year, the elevation will be revoked and they will be returned to Adept status. The Guild Leader must be petitioned to reinstate it and may do so without invoking penalties if there were extenuating circumstances. The Guild Leader will be under no obligation to reinstate the standing if there was no valid reason for not fulfilling the requirement and may choose to invoke reasonable penalties before reinstatement in that case. Either way, the obligation must be met in order to enjoy Elder status.