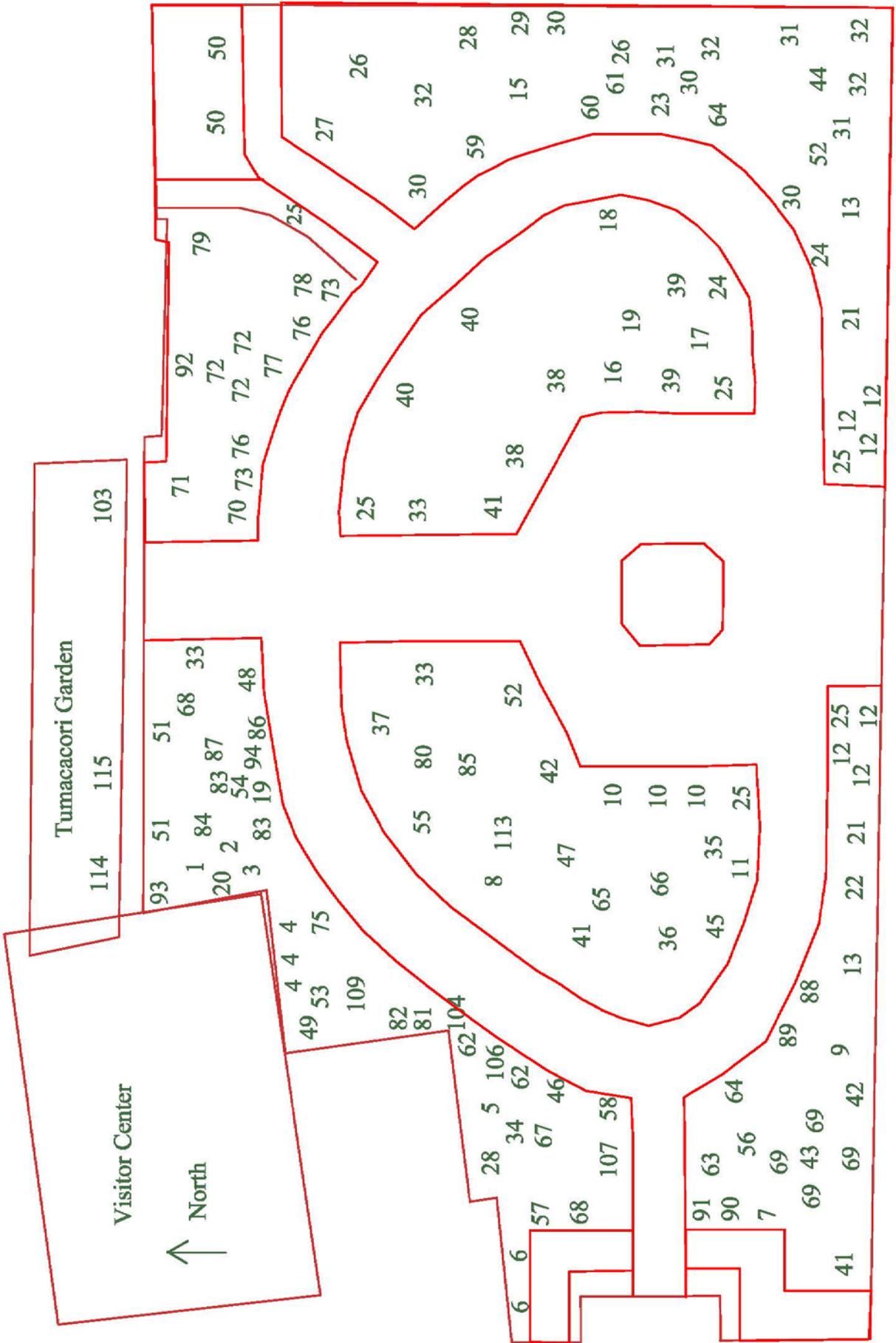




Courtyard Garden: Plant Origins & Historical Uses





1. MINIATURE BONANZA PEACH

Prunus persica

Rosaceae

Origin: Genetic studies suggest peaches originated in China.

Historical culinary uses: Eaten fresh, dried, or cooked.

Historical medicinal uses: Albertus Magnus in his 1517 essay “De Vegetabilibus et Plantis,” in his book *Parra Naturalia*, wrote that peaches were an aphrodisiac for men whose passion was waning. This belief was common in Europe for centuries.

Interesting facts: In 1987, Tumacácori preservation specialist David Yubeta was doing conservation work on the ruins. An adobe brick broke in half and there, in the middle of the brick, were peach pits. This interesting revelation helped to inspire the eventual planting of the Tumacácori heritage orchard. (This miniature peach is not a heritage variety.)

Peach trees still grew along the flowing mission *acequia* (irrigation ditch) into the 1940s. Wives of early park superintendents made jam with the fruit.

2. BORAGE

Borago officinalis

Boraginaceae

Origin: Mediterranean

Historical culinary uses: In Spain, borage was used as a fresh vegetable or dried herb to season soups and pastas. The blue flowers were used fresh in salads.

Historical medicinal uses: Metabolism and hormonal system regulation.

Interesting facts: This was one of the first vegetables brought to America by the Spanish; as early as 1494 it was being grown in the gardens of La Isabela, the first Spanish city founded on American soil.

Borage contains the most linoleic acid (omega-6 fatty acid) of any known plant.

3. TARRAGON

Tagetes lucida

Asteraceae

Origin: Siberia, brought to Europe in 13th century

Historical culinary uses: Aromatic leaves used for seasoning, salads and vinegars.

Historical medicinal uses: Digestive aid and appetite stimulant. The Greeks chewed tarragon for relief of toothaches. John Evelyn (1620-1706) said, “Tis highly cordial and friend to the head, heart and liver.”

Interesting facts: Written record of tarragon use dates back to 500 BC.

4. MISSION GRAPES

Vitis vinifera

Vitaceae

Origin: Spain

Historical culinary uses: Arizona's first varietal was known as "Palomino Negro" in Moorish Spain and "Listan Prieto" in the Canary Islands. These were the first grapes planted by Catholic missionaries to be made into altar wines in North America. The wines were low in acidity and high in sugar. A brandy, "vino generoso," was also made by the priests using the herb angelica, cloves, and cinnamon sticks.

Historical medicinal uses: "Vino Generoso" helped keep the priests in good spirits.

Interesting facts: Mission grapes were introduced into Mexico by 1540 and were in the Jesuit and Franciscan missions in the northern Mexican deserts (Arizona) by 1620. The first grape vines were planted in Spain around 1100 BC.

5. BAY LAUREL

Laurus nobilis

Lauraceae

Origin: Originated in Asia Minor, spread to Spain

Historical culinary uses: The leaves and berries of this plant were used to flavor soups and stews in Mediterranean cooking.

Historical medicinal uses: The leaf oil of Bay Laurel was used to treat arthritis pain, lower back pain, earaches, and sprains. It is high in vitamin A, C and Folic acid.

Interesting facts: Lauric acid has insect repellent properties.

6. YARROW

Achellia millifolium

Asteraceae

Origin: Europe

Historical culinary uses: In the 17th century young yarrow leaves and flowers were a common ingredient in salads.

Historical medicinal uses: Fresh leaves were chewed to relieve toothache. It was a diaphoretic, a tonic, an astringent, a cure for the common cold and for hay fever. Yarrow tea was made from an infusion of the flower heads. "It opens the pores freely and purifies the blood, to be drunk warm for ague." (John Parkinson 1640, *Theatrum Botanicum*.)

Interesting facts: Dried and ground Yarrow was used as snuff, "old man's pepper."

7. LITTLE LEAF MOCK ORANGE

Philadelphus microphyllus

Hydrangeaceae

Origin: Southwestern U.S.

Historical culinary uses: The fruit was eaten. This plant could also be eaten by livestock.

Historical medicinal uses: The leaves are rich in saponins. When crushed and mixed with water, the leaves produce a lather similar to soap. A gentle cleanser is created which will remove dirt, but not oils.

Interesting facts: Native Americans used the stems for making arrows, bows, combs, tobacco pipes, cradles, and netting shuttles.

8. LAVENDER SPICE

Poliomintha maderensis, Mexican Oregano

Lamiaceae

Origin: Southwestern U.S.

Historical culinary uses: Frequently used as a replacement for oregano, although not botanically related. It is sweeter and less bitter than oregano. Used to flavor marinades, meats, tomato dishes, bean dishes, eggs, soups, and stews.

Historical medicinal uses: Used as a tea for respiratory infections, gastrointestinal tract disorders, nervous system complaints, and a palliative for sore throats. The plant was said to contain oils that had bacterial fighting properties.

Interesting facts: Hippocrates used oregano as an antiseptic, as well as a treatment for stomach and respiratory ailments.

9. DESERT CEANOTHUS

Ceanothus greggii

Rhamnaceae

Origin: Southwestern U.S. and northern Mexico

Historical culinary uses: Used by early pioneers as a substitute for black tea.

Historical medicinal uses: The leaves were used by Native Americans in an herbal tea for pulmonary problems and cough medicine. The flowers were used as a hair tonic and a shampoo.

Interesting facts: The nitrogen fixing nodules on the plants roots were used as a red dye. The leaves offered a source of protein and calcium to Native Americans.

10. CLEVELAND SAGE

Salvia clevelandi

Lamiaceae

Origin: Southern California and Baja California

Historical culinary uses: Used as a culinary herb. It counteracted some of the oily foods such as goose. Also used to flavor vinegar.

Historical medicinal uses: Since the Middle Ages people were aware of the medicinal qualities of the leaves. It was used as a potent astringent and antiseptic for mouth infections and bleeding gums. (1640 John Parkinson) Also used for gastrointestinal disorders, and as an aid to digestion.

Interesting facts: The leaf oils have a strong perfume. It has been used as incense and also put in fragrance sachets. The Roman writer Pliny recommended sage for snake bites. Samuel Pepys wrote of it as a toad repellent.

11. HUMMINGBIRD BUSH

Zauschneria latifolia

Ornagraceae

Origin: California

Interesting facts: An attractive low spreading plant with red trumpet shaped flowers. This plant attracts hummingbirds and butterflies.

12. LAVENDER

Lavandula dentate "Goodwin Creek"

Lamiaceae

Origin: Mediterranean

Historical culinary uses: Lavender flowers flavored desserts and baked goods. They were also a condiment in salads and dressings, candied as garnishes, and blended in teas for a floral sweet flavor.

Historical medicinal uses: Lavender infusions were thought to sooth insect bites, burns and headaches. Bunches and sachets of Lavender were used by European aristocracy to repel lice and mosquitoes. It was used as a sleep aid and for relaxation.

Interesting facts: Lavender has been found in Egyptian tombs and was extensively used by the Greeks and Romans. In Roman times flowers were sold for 100 denarii for the equivalent of a pound weight, about a month's wages for a farm laborer.

13. ARIZONA ROSE

Rosa arizonica

Rosaceae

Origin: Arizona

Historical culinary uses: Native Americans ate the fruit, seeds, leaves, stems, roots, and petals. A tea was made from dried fruit, bark, young stems, and leaves. Petals were added to a salad.

Historical medicinal uses: Rose hips were a good source of vitamin C.

Interesting facts: This is the only rose species native to Southern Arizona.

14. DAY LILY
Hemerocallis

Liliaceae

Origin: China

Historical culinary uses: Used in Chinese, Japanese, Korean, Thai, and Vietnamese cooking.

Historical medicinal uses:

Interesting facts: First mentioned in European writing in 1500s. By the 1600s, day Lily was in North America. It is now naturalized in most states. In 1629, day lily was mentioned by the London apothecary John Parkinson, as the finest of lilies for its beauty and sweet nectar.

15. CHOKECHERRY
Prunus serotina

Rosaceae

Origin: North American

Historical culinary uses: Chokecherries were among the most important berries for Native Americans. They were eaten dried, cooked or as an addition to stews. All parts of the cherry except for the flesh of the fruit contain poisonous hydrocyanic acid, which is destroyed by cooking or drying.

Historical medical uses: Native Americans used the berry juice to treat colds, coughs, sore throats and fevers. A tea was made from the bark and leaves and used as a blood tonic, sedative and pain reliever. It was used in sweat lodges as a cure for bile indigestion and jaundice.

Interesting facts: The wood has been used for many years in furniture making because of its luster and dark red tint.

16. BUSH CINQUEFOIL
Potentilla fruticosa

Rosaceae

Origin: Europe, introduced to America in the 18th century

Historical culinary uses: Native Americans made a tea from the dried leaves

Historical medical uses: The leaves are astringent. The juice of the root was used in the treatment of indigestion. Various parts of the plant were used for a variety of purposes including ceremonial.

Interesting facts: People living at high elevations in the Himalayas used the leaves as a black tea substitute. Native Americans used the root for a dye and the plant for fragrance.

17. SIERRA MADRE LOBELIA

Lobelia laxiflora

Campanulaceae

Origin: Mexico

Historical culinary uses: Unknown

Historical medical uses: Native Americans used this to treat respiratory and muscle disorders.

Interesting facts: 1998 research indicates that this plant shows promise for its anti-inflammatory properties. In the Victorian “language of flowers,” Lobelia symbolized “malevolence.”

18. GOODING’S VERBENA

Glandularia goodingii

Verbenaceae

Origin: Sonoran Desert

Historical culinary uses: Herbal teas were made from this plant. Essential oils from Verbena have been used to flavor the French liqueur Vervains.

Historical medical uses: In 1652 Nicholas Culpepper discussed the folk uses of the plant in *The English Physitian*. It was used as a pain reliever, natural tranquilizer, an expectorant in the treatment of chronic bronchitis, and an anti-rheumatic to relieve joint pain.

Interesting facts: The herb has long been associated with supernatural forces. A quote from Aubrey’s *Miscellanies* in 1721: “Vervain and Dill / Hinder witches from their will.”

19. SONORAN HYSSOP

Agastache wrightii

Lamiaceae

Origin: Sonoran Desert

Historical culinary uses: Eaten, used to season salads, and brewed as a tea which had a sweet mint like smell with a hint of licorice.

Historical medical uses: Used to strengthen the lungs and the immune system.

Interesting facts: The resin was used to create “copal,” an incense of the ancient Maya.

22. FENDLER ROSE

Rosaceae fendleri, or Rosa woodsia Lindl

Rosaceae

Origin: North America

Historical culinary uses: Rose hips were a highly digestible winter and spring nutrition for Native Americans. Teas, jams, jellies and syrups were made from the fruit.

Historical medical uses: Native Americans used this plant for both medicine and for ceremonial purposes.

Interesting facts: The rose was named for Augustus Fendler (1813 – 1883), a German botanical collector.

23. WORMWOOD SAGE

White Sagebrush, Artemisia ludoviciana

Asteraceae

Origin: North America

Historical culinary uses: A long history of use in flavoring alcoholic beverages which goes back to at least the 15th Century in Europe. Fortified wines were made by steeping wormwood in wine. Herbal bitters date back thousands of years. Meats were cooked with wormwood for flavor. It was smoked mixed with tobacco.

Historical medical uses: The pioneers made a tea with this plant to cure Rocky Mountain fever. Leaves of wormwood were put in shoes as foot deodorizers. It was used as snuff for headaches. It was used for digestive disorders, to stimulate the liver, as a counterirritant for insect bites, and to reduce pain, and as an insecticide to repel flees and moths. The fragrant oils of the plant have both antibacterial and antifungal properties. The Miwok of California wore sprigs around their necks to protect from sickness.

Interesting facts: This was and is a very important ceremonial plant for many Native Americans. The dried leaves were tied in small bundles called “smudge sticks.” These bundles were burned, or “smudged,” to keep off evil spirits and the smoke purified a dwelling both physically and spiritually.

Extracts of wormwood are used to flavor both vermouth and absinth.

Tattoo ink was made from the soot of wormwood.

24. MOSS VERBENA

Glandularia pulchella

Verbenaceae

Origin: Southern Brazil

Historical culinary uses: The flowers were used in herbal teas and alcoholic drinks. They were also added to cakes and rice for flavor.

Historical medical uses: The plant was used in herbal infusions as a mild sedative to reduce anxiety and headaches.

Interesting facts: This is an attractive, deer resistant ground cover valued by gardeners.

25. IRIS

Iris

Iridaceae

Origin: Egypt, approximately 1479 BC

Historical culinary uses: Unknown

Historical medical uses: Pioneer medical doctors used iris to induce vomiting or to “cleanse the intestines.” Other treatments were for earaches, sore eyes, respiratory problems, liver ailments, urinary tract infections, and swelling and pain from bruises or sore muscles. The plant was used as a salve on open wounds.

Interesting facts: Iris takes its name from the Greek word for “rainbow.” The fleur-de-lis [iris] has for centuries represented French royalty.

26. MONK’S PEPPER, CHASTE TREE

Vitex

Verbenaceae

Origin: Mediterranean

Historical Culinary Uses: The seeds were ground into a pepper-like condiment used as a pepper substitute. An infusion was made from the seeds. In Morocco a classic spice blend “ras el hanout” contains vitex seeds.

Historical medical uses: Tinctures and herbal teas were taken by monks as an anti-libido medication to aid celibacy. In the 13th Century John Trevisa described vitex “for wyth smel and use it maketh men chaste as a lombe.”

Interesting facts: Vitex is mentioned in the *Historia Naturalis* by Pliny the Elder.

Vitex branches were used to make fences and basketry.

27. VIOLETS

Viola

Violaceae

Origin: Mediterranean

Historical culinary uses: Violet flowers have been crystallized as candy or confectionary decoration. The flowers have been used to decorate salads, flavor stuffing for poultry or fish, and flavor desserts. The French make a violet syrup from the extracts of the flowers. The leaves were used in stews as a thickening agent, also eaten raw in salads.

Historical medical uses: Violets have been used medicinally for thousands of years. The plant contains the antioxidant anthocyanin. The leaves, roots and flowers, rich in vitamins A and C, were made into a tea for use as a general tonic. The plant was used also for its anti-inflammatory and diuretic properties.

Interesting facts: The violet family, *Violaceae*, is one containing between 520-600 different species.

Victorian ladies would use a handful of violet flowers steeped in a cup of milk to moisturize and tone their skin.

28. LOVAGE

Levisticum officinale

Apiaceae

Origin: Mediterranean

Historical culinary uses: The plant was eaten as a salad and as a vegetable. The stems were used for flavoring and confectionary. As an herbal tea, it had a “pleasing aromatic odor.”

Historical medical uses: Infusions were made from the root to treat jaundice and urinary trouble. It was said to relieve flatulence and colic, bladder and kidney problems, and gout. It was said that an infusion “dropped into the eyes taketh away their redness or dimness, the distilled water is good for quinsy.”

Interesting facts: Medieval travelers tucked Lovage leaves into their shoes because of the antiseptic and deodorizing properties.

29. EYELASH LEAVED SAGE

Salvia blepherophyllia

Lamiaceae

Origin: Mexico

Historical culinary uses: Sage is considered one of the four essential herbs in cooking. Having a savory, slightly peppery flavor, it is often used to stuff poultry and cook pork.

Historical medical uses: Used as an infusion, or chewed for treatment of the respiratory tract, mouth, gastrointestinal tract, and skin. Inhalation of sage fumes treated asthma and upper respiratory tract infections.

Interesting facts: Sage was one of the ingredients of Four Thieves Vinegar, a blend of herbs which was supposed to ward off the plague.

During the Carolingian Empire (800-888) sage was cultivated in monastery gardens.

30. AUTUMN SAGE

Salvia greggii

Lamiaceae

Origin: Mexico

Historical culinary uses: The leaves of this sage species have been used in Mexico as a seasoning. The flowers were used in salads.

Historical medical uses: Salvia, as the name suggests (“the savior” or healer in Latin), was a remedy to promote longevity and wellbeing. Sages were most commonly used in the treatment of respiratory problems, infections, coughs, colds. and sore throats.

Interesting facts: In the 9th Century, Charlemagne recommended the cultivation of sages on the imperial farms in central Europe. In 16th Century England, sage tea was a popular beverage before conventional tea became commonplace.

31. HOLLYHOCKS

Althea rosea

Malvaceae

Origin: Asia

Historical culinary uses: Although a native of China, the plant was taken to Europe in the 16th Century. Its edible flowers became very popular and were added to batters, soups, and stews. Monks used the red flower petals as a food dye to color both wine and medicine.

Historical medical uses: Hollyhocks were used to sooth the mucous membrane and treat coughs, colds, and bronchitis. They were also used to soothe skin inflammation and rashes. In the 16th and 17th Centuries, hollyhock tea was very popular for many health problems.

Interesting facts: Hollyhock species have been used since 300 BC to treat earache, mucus issues, hay fever, and allergic rhinitis.

32. WRIGHT'S BEE BUSH

Aloysia wrightii

Verbenaceae

Origin: Arizona

Historical culinary uses: This is Mexican oregano, or *oreganillo*. The leaves are used in cooking both fresh and dried to flavor meats and various dishes.

33. ROMAN MYRTLE

Myrtus communis

Myrtaceae

Origin: Mediterranean

Historical culinary uses: The berries, both whole and ground, have been used as a pepper substitute.

Historical medicinal uses: Prescribed for sinus infections.

Interesting facts: Myrtle played an important role in both Greek and Roman mythology. The plant was an indispensable feature of Roman gardens.

34. DAY FLOWER

Commelina erecta

Commelinaceae

Origin: Southeast Asia

Historical culinary uses: Used in Chinese and Indian cooking. The stems, flowers, leaves, and seeds are all edible. Day flower was eaten raw in salads, steamed like spinach, stir fried, and added to soups as an herb.

Historical medical uses: The plant has anti-inflammatory and diuretic effects. It has been used to treat sore throats.

Interesting facts: In Japan the flowers were used for a blue dye.

35. APRICOT

Prunus armeniaca

Rosaceae

Origin: China? (origin disputed)

Historical culinary uses: Eaten fresh, dried or cooked. The kernels inside the pits of apricots from central Asia and the Mediterranean are so sweet that they are frequently substituted for almonds. The liqueur amaretto is flavored with extract of apricot kernels rather than almonds.

Historical medicinal uses: Cyanogenic glycosides are found in the seeds, bark, and leaves of apricots. In England in the 17th century apricot oil was used to heal tumors, swellings, and ulcers. Apricots were considered an aphrodisiac in the time of Shakespeare, and were mentioned as such in “A Midsummer Night’s Dream.”

Interesting facts: Apricot kernels contain between 2.05% and 2.40% hydrogen cyanide, but normal consumption of apricots is insufficient and unlikely to produce any serious effects. The origin of the apricot is controversial. Some sources attribute them to India in about 3000 BC; other sources suggest China, Persia, Japan, Armenia, and the Caucasus.

36. PLUM

Prunus x domestica

Rosaceae

Origin: Western Asia and Caucasus mountains (Russia, Georgia, Azerbaijan, and Armenia)

Historical culinary uses: Eaten fresh, dried, or cooked. The damson plum was introduced into North America by English settlers in the northeast and by the Spanish in the southwest. Most often used for cooking and making preserves, the fruit was usually served with braised and roasted meats and fowl. Distillation of the fruit made a wine similar to port, also a type of gin, and distilled plum spirits.

Historical medicinal uses: The aromatic resin from tree trunk wounds was used medicinally. Bark extracts were thought to reduce some forms of inflammation.

Interesting facts: The plum was thought to have been brought to Britain and Europe by the Romans. It was a favorite tree of both the English and Spanish settlers and today can be found growing wild in many states.

As with other pitted, or “stone” fruits (apricots, cherries, peaches, pears, plums and prunes), the kernels within the pits contain small amounts of cyanide.

37. PEAR

Pyrus communis

Rosaceae

Origin: Asia

Historical culinary uses: Eaten fresh, dried, cooked into jams, compotes, pies and cakes.

Historical medicinal uses: The fruit was considered an excellent source of fiber and was used in the treatment of constipation and intestinal inflammation. Pear extract was said to cure cystitis and kidney stones.

Interesting facts: Pears have been found in Neolithic and Bronze Age archeological sites in Europe. In 50 BC the Romans knew of forty pear cultivars; by the 1600s there were almost 1,600 cultivars.

38. OLIVE

Olea europaea

Oleaceae

Origin: Mediterranean Region, Western Asia

Historical culinary uses: Olives and olive oil were the main ingredients in Mediterranean cooking. The oil was used for cooking and also lighting, and in religious ceremonies. About 90% of harvested olives were turned into oil. The remaining 10% were eaten green or black as table olives.

Historical medicinal uses: Olive leaves were used in the Mediterranean region for thousands of years to reduce fever, fight infection, speed wound healing, heal rashes, and cleanse the liver. They were also considered a remedy for high blood pressure, high blood sugar, and anxiety. Olive oil was used on the body and in the hair for grooming and good health.

Interesting facts: Olive trees can live to a great age. There is a tree in Alentejo, Portugal that is 2,000 years old according to radio carbon dating. In 1560 the first seedlings from Spain were planted in Lima, Peru by Antonio de Rivera. In about 1769 the first olive trees were cultivated at Mission San Diego Alcalá.

39. POMEGRANATE, ORNAMENTAL

Punica granatum

Punicaceae

Origin: Central Asia and Iran (formerly Persia)

Historical culinary uses: None; ornamental varieties bear either no fruit or small inedible fruit.

Historical medicinal uses: The tree's bark may have been used for the same medicinal reasons as the fruiting varieties (see plant #50), but ornamental varieties were primarily grown for their showy double flowers.

Interesting facts: Many ornamental varieties grow only to three or four feet tall and have been hybridized in Japan for use as bonsai specimens.

40. GOLDEN COLUMBINE

Aquilegia chrysantha

Ranunculaceae

Origin: Southwestern U.S.

Interesting facts: The word columbine comes from *columbinus*, Latin for dove, referring to the flowers' resemblance to a group of five doves: the flowers' spurs are the heads, their sepals are the wings, and the petals are the bodies

41. VELVET MESQUITE

Prosopis velutina

Fabaceae

Origin: Southwestern U.S.

Historical culinary uses: Mesquite pods were a protein-rich food for native peoples and settlers. Toasted, dried pods were ground into a meal and mixed with water for a beverage, or formed and dried into cakes. The fresh pods, but not the seeds, were chewed as a sweet treat.

Historical medicinal uses: A tea made from the tree's clear sap and inner red bark was used for sore throats. Stomach aches were treated with a tea made from the leaves. Dried sap was also chewed to aid digestion. The black sap that oozes from wounds to the tree trunk and large branches was mixed with herbs and applied to the scalp in hopes of preventing hair loss.

Interesting facts: A dendrochronology (tree ring) study was done of this tree in 1998. A core sample was taken, but the tree rings were so close together that they couldn't be sufficiently distinguished for an accurate count. A scientific estimation put the tree at no younger than 115 years old and most probably 125 years old at the time of the study. For an easy reference point, by this estimate the tree would have been 127 years old in 2000.

42. QUINCE

Cydonia oblonga

Rosaceae

Origin: Iran (formerly Persia), Turkey, and possibly Greece

Historical culinary uses: Quince has a high pectin content and was prepared in many Old World countries as a jam or marmalade. Hispanic countries in the New World still produce a reddish paste called *dulce de membrillo* that is often eaten with manchego cheese.

Historical medicinal uses: As early as the Roman Empire, quince was used to aid digestion. A gel produce by boiling the seeds was used to treat sore throats and skin rashes.

Interesting facts: Some ancient texts identify Eve's fruit of temptation as the quince. In ancient Greece, a quince was given as a ritual offering at weddings.

43. SOUR ORANGE

Citrus aurantium

Rutaceae

Origin: Southeastern Asia

Historical culinary uses: The sour or Seville orange was used to make marmalade, because it has more pectin (a thickening agent) than the sweet orange. While the fresh fruit was not eaten due to its acidity, the juice was valued as a marinade for fish and meat.

Historical medicinal uses: A tea from the leaves was used for a stomach tonic. The aromatic flowers were used in potpourri for their calming effect.

Interesting facts: The white, inner wood is used for woodworking and joinery in Mexico, and in Cuba to make baseball bats.

44. WHITE SAGE

Salvia apiana

Lamiaceae

Origin: Coastal and inland California

Historical culinary uses: The seeds were ground into a meal that was mixed either with water for gruel or with wheat flour for unleavened biscuits.

Historical medicinal uses: Leaves of the plant were brewed into a tea and used as a stomach tonic and to treat colds and sore throats. Applied externally as a poultice, the leaves were used to relieve the pain and redness of burns.

Interesting facts: Native peoples and New Age spiritualists continue to use this plant, burning dried leaf bundles in purification ceremonies.

45. GLOBE MALLOW

Sphaeralcea ambigua v. ambigua

Malvaceae

Origin: Southwestern U.S. & northern Mexico

Historical culinary uses: Native peoples used the flowers to make a mildly tart, but refreshing tea.

Historical medicinal uses: Globe mallow is related to okra and contains the same starches. The slippery mucilage produced from the stems and leaves was used to soothe irritated skin.

Interesting facts: This plant has evolved two adaptations to its arid environment: tiny hairs on the leaves hold water vapor near the plant to keep it hydrated, and the gray coloring of the stems and leaves reflect sunlight to keep the plant cooler and reduce water loss.

46. ROSE GLOBE MALLOW

Sphaeralcea amgibua v. rosacea

Malvaceae

Origin: Southwestern U.S.

Historical culinary uses: Same as plant #45.

Historical medicinal uses: Same as plant #45.

Interesting facts: Care should be taken not to rub your face while working around this plant. Tiny hairs on the underside of the leaves can irritate the eyes, giving it the nickname of *sore-eye poppy*.

47. WHITE PLUMBAGO

Plumbago scandens

Plumbaginaceae

Origin: Arizona, Texas, and Florida

Historical culinary uses: None; eaten in sufficient quantities the plant can be poisonous.

Historical medicinal uses: This plant, also known as doctorbush, was used as an external poultice to stimulate tissue healing and to help remove splinters.

Interesting facts: The family name of leadwort comes from *wort*, an Old English word for herbaceous plant, and *lead* referring to the petals having lead-like or bluish color.

48. DAMIANITA

Chrysactinia mexicana

Asteraceae

Origin: New Mexico and Texas

Interesting facts: This plant's essential oils are being studied as an antifungal agent for use in the commercial growing of corn and cereal grains.

49. FIG

Ficus carica v. Black Mission

Moraceae

Origin: Mediterranean

Historical culinary uses: The fig is one of the first plants domesticated by man; it cultivation predates wheat. Remnants of figs have been found in archeological diggings that date from 5,000 B.C. Figs were eaten fresh, dried, or made into a jam.

Interesting facts: Two crops of fruit are produced each year. The first, the *breba* crop, comes in the spring on the previous year's shoots. The main crop, which is larger and has better fruit, ripens in the fall on the current year's shoots.

50. CORAL or HUMMINGBIRD HONEYSUCKLE

Lonicera sempervirens

Caprifoliaceae

Origin: Eastern U.S.

Interesting facts: This vine was planted here in the 1990s to attract hummingbirds and butterflies.

51. POMEGRANATE, FRUIT- BEARING

Punica granatum

Punicaceae

Origin: Central Asia and Iran (formerly Persia)

Historical culinary uses: Arab traders, and subsequently Spanish explorers, used pomegranate juice as a beverage on long trips across arid lands. A pomegranate can be up to 80% water, and its juice replenished the minerals lost during perspiration. The juice was also used in cooking sauces, fermented into a wine, and processed into jelly.

Historical medicinal uses: Pomegranate juice was used by the Greeks and Romans as a general cure-all. The fruit rind and tree bark were a remedy for diarrhea and stomach problems. The seeds and juice were considered a tonic for the heart. Currently, the antioxidant properties of the fruit are being studied as treatment for and prevention of cancer, cardiovascular disease, and diabetes.

Interesting facts: References to the pomegranate are found in Christian, Islamic, and Jewish religious manuscripts, and in ancient Hindu and Chinese medicine systems. The first record of pomegranate cultivation appears in 2200 B.C. near the Tigris and Euphrates Valleys in what is now Basra, Iraq.

52. PIPEVINE, NATIVE

Aristolochia watsonii

Aristolochiaceae

Origin: Arizona and New Mexico

Historical culinary uses: This plant contains a toxic acid and should only be used externally.

Historical medicinal uses: A salve made from plant's root was used externally for treating snake bites.

Interesting facts: The flower's scent mimics the aroma and appearance of a rodent's ear, which attracts flies that inadvertently pollinate the plant.

53. EPAZOTE, JESUIT TEA

Chenopodium ambrosioides

Amaranthaceae

Origin: Southern Mexico

Historical culinary uses: Epazote has been used in Mexico since the 16th century as a cooking herb and green leafy vegetable for bean dishes, soups, and stews.

Historical medicinal uses: When used fresh, epazote breakdowns down hard-to-digest vegetable proteins, reducing the flatulence produced by bean dishes. It was also used to treat intestinal worms.

Interesting facts: The plant has a pungent smell that some liken to gasoline or kerosene. The older leaves are stronger in smell and taste. The newer leaves are best for cooking, but even they can be an acquired taste for those unfamiliar with the plant.

54. RUE

Ruta graveolens

Rutaceae

Origin: Southern Europe

Historical culinary uses: Leaves were used to flavor meat and fish dishes. The seeds were used *ground?* to make porridge.

Historical medicinal uses: A poultice made from the leaves was applied externally for gout and arthritis pain. The leaves were brewed as a tea to improve digestion and relieve gas.

Interesting facts: During the Middle Ages, rue was thought to provide protection from the Black Death (bubonic plague).

55. SCARLET BETONY

Stachys coccinea

Lamiaceae

Origin: Arizona, New Mexico, & Texas

Interesting facts: Scarlet betony is a favorite plant of hummingbirds.

56. SHOWY FOUR O'CLOCKS

Mirabilis multiflora

Nyctaginaceae

Origin: Southwestern U.S.

Historical culinary uses: The powdered root was mixed with water and made into cakes.

Historical medicinal uses: A tea made from the powdered root was drunk to relieve digestion problems.

Interesting facts: This is not the species of four o'clock commonly sold by seed companies, which is a species native to Peru. Spanish conquistadors took that plant back to Europe in the 16th century, and it returned centuries later to the Western Hemisphere as a garden plant known as the *Marvel of Peru* (*Mirabilis jalapa*).

57. ROMAN CHAMOMILE
Chamaemelum nobile

Asteraceae

Origin: Mediterranean

Historical culinary uses: The flowers were brewed into an herbal tea.

Historical medicinal uses: As an herbal tea, roman chamomile was used to ease tension and to aid in digestion. A rinse was applied to the hair and scalp to kill lice and mites.

Interesting facts: The use of chamomile dates back to the ancient Egyptians. It was used as a strewing herb in the Middle Ages, because a sweet apple-like fragrance is released when it is stepped upon. One story of how the plant got its common name is that an early botanical explorer found it growing in the Roman Coliseum.

58. MEXICAN OREGANO
Poliomintha maderensis

Lamiaceae

Origin: Southwestern U.S. and Mexico

Historical culinary uses: This plant is not the “true” or European oregano, but was as similar spice.

Interesting facts: This plant is often mislabeled in nurseries as *Poliomintha incana* or *Poliomintha longiflora*, which is commonly called Desert Rosemary. To confuse matters even more there are two other plant species native to the southwestern U.S. that are commonly called Mexican oregano, but which are in the Verbena family: *Lippa graveolens* and *Aloysia lyciodies*.

59. CRIMSON SAGE
Salvia henryi

Lamiaceae

Origin: Arizona, New Mexico, and Texas

60. BUTTERFLY MIST, NATIVE
Ageratum corymbosum,

Asteraceae

Origin: Arizona, New Mexico, and Texas

Interesting facts: This ageratum species is a favorite nectar plant of the Queen Butterfly.

61. ANISE HISSOP
Agastache foeniculum

Lamiaceae

Origin: North America

Historical culinary uses: The anise-flavored leaves were brewed for an herbal tea, and used as a seasoning and salad herb.

Historical medicinal uses: Early Native Americans used the plant as a tea for coughs and fevers and as a poultice for healing wounds.

Interesting facts: The genus name *Agastache* comes from two Greek words: *agan*, meaning much and *stachys*, meaning ear-of-grain, both referring to the number and shape of the plant's flower clusters.

62. THYME

Thymus vulgaris

Lamiaceae

Origin: Mediterranean

Historical culinary uses: Thyme was among the kitchen garden herbs grown as early as the 4th Century B.C. by the Greeks. Prior to refrigeration, it was also used as a meat preservative.

Historical medicinal uses: Oil of thyme was used on bandages to aid healing; it was later learned that the oil contains thymol, which is an antiseptic.

Interesting facts: Today, thymol is an active ingredient in many mouthwashes and alcohol-free hand sanitizers.

63. MILK THISTLE

Silybum marianum

Asteraceae

Origin: Mediterranean

Historical culinary uses: The roots were boiled or roasted before eating. The leaves, once trimmed of thistles, could be eaten like a salad green or substitute for spinach.

Historical medicinal uses: In traditional Chinese medicine, milk thistle was used to cleanse the body, particularly the liver and kidneys, of toxins. The plant root was also used to treat mushroom poisoning.

Interesting facts: The plant is toxic to cattle and sheep because it contains potassium nitrate which is converted by their digestive systems into a chemical that combines with hemoglobin and eventually deprives the animals of oxygen.

64. MARJORAM

Origanum marjorana

Lamiaceae

Origin: Mediterranean

Historical culinary uses: Fresh or dried, the leaves were used to flavor soups, sauces, and meat dishes.

Historical medicinal uses: A tea made from the leaves was used to aid digestion and to relieve nausea. Applied topically, a poultice of the leaves relieved inflammation.

Interesting facts: There is often confusion between oregano and marjoram. All marjorams are oreganos, but not all oreganos are marjorams. Oregano is the genus (*origanum*) and marjoram is one variety of fifty types of oregano.

65. VIRGIN'S BOWER, OLD MAN'S BEARD

Clematis drummondii

Ranunculaceae

Origin: Southwestern U.S.

Historical medicinal uses: Fresh leaves were chewed or brewed into a tea used to ease headaches.

Interesting facts: The leaves, stems, and roots were used for a dye.

66. SUGAR BUSH, SUGAR SUMAC

Rhus ovata

Anacardiaceae

Origin: California, Baja California, and Arizona

Historical culinary uses: The mature fruits were soaked in water to make a refreshing drink similar to lemonade. The sugary filaments on the outside of the fruits, which gave the plant its common name of sugar bush, were scrapped off and used as a sweetener.

Historical medicinal uses: Leaves were boiled to make a tea to treat coughs and colds, and to ease a woman's labor pains. The tea was also used to treat colic in domesticated animals.

Interesting facts: Leaves collected in the autumn can be used to make a brown dye and to serve as a mordant (substance to enhance staining ability and fix dyes).

67. CHILTEPIN

Capsicum annuum v. glabriusculum

Solanaceae

Origin: Mexico, southern Arizona

Historical culinary uses: This "mother of all chilies" (believed to be the wild ancestor of all domesticated peppers) was used to flavor salsas, soups, and stews. The fruits are very hot, but have a short-lived burn.

Historical medicinal uses: A powder from the dried chilies was mixed with water and applied externally to ease joint pain in the old and to discourage thumb-sucking in the young. Internally, the pepper was used to treat colic and colds. A single chiltepin was placed on an aching tooth to deaden the pain.

Interesting facts: A common name for the chiltepin is "bird pepper," because birds love to eat the fruit and serve to distribute the plant's seed. The pea-sized fruit ripens in October and November, giving late season, bright red color to xeriscape gardens. They are found naturally growing under the filtered shade of mesquite trees.

68. ROSEMARY

Rosmarinus officinalis

Lamiaceae

Origin: Mediterranean

Historical culinary uses: Fresh or dried, the plant's leaves were used to flavor soups and sauces. Due to its fragrance when heated, it was used to flavor roasting or barbecuing meat.

Historical medicinal uses: A tea made from rosemary was drunk after eating to aid digestion. The leaves heated with salt and applied externally were used to treat head and ear aches.

Interesting facts: According to legend, the Virgin Mary is said to have laid her blue cloak over a white-blossomed rosemary bush, and while she rested, the flowers turned blue—the color associated with Mary. The bush then became known as Rose of Mary.

69. YERBA MANSA

Anemopsis californica

Saururaceae

Origin: Southwestern U.S.

Historical medicinal uses: The O'odham used an infusion of dried roots for coughs. The leaves were made into a poultice and applied externally to relieve muscle inflammation and to cleanse wounds.

Interesting facts: When dried and placed in muslin bags, the flowers can be used as a long-lasting and fragrant room or shoe deodorizer.

70. HOHOKAM AGAVE, MURPHY'S CENTURY PLANT

Agave murpheyi

Agavaceae

Origin: Arizona and Mexico

Historical culinary uses: *Agave murpheyi* were cultivated by the Hohokam for food and fiber. Terraces for the cultivation of agave have been found in the Tucson area with check dams and piles of rock to harvest water and discourage rodents. This agave may have been bred for human consumption, as it is less acidic than other agaves of the region.

Interesting facts: The agave's leaves were dried and pounded yielding fiber for cordage used to make carrying baskets.

71. SOTOL, DESERT SPOON

Dasyllirion wheeleri

Liliaceae

Origin: Southwestern U.S. and Mexico

Historical culinary uses: Similar to agave, the plant core was cooked and fermented into a drink by the Tarahumara and Apache. The cooked heart was also pounded into a pulp and made into cakes. Flower stalks were roasted in fire ashes and eaten as greens.

Interesting facts: Both the flowering stalks and the leaves were valued for weaving baskets and sleeping mats.

72. PARRY'S AGAVE, ARTICHOKE AGAVE

Agave parryii

Agavaceae

Origin: Arizona, New Mexico, Texas, and northern Mexico

Historical culinary uses: When they reached the size of basketballs, plants were trimmed of leaves and the heart was pit-roasted and eaten. The roasted agave was also pounded into cakes, dried, and stored. Juice from the leaves was boiled down to make a sweetener.

Historical medicinal uses: Pulque, described below, was used as a tonic and a pick-me-up while laboring.

Interesting facts: When the central bud of an agave is removed, the cavity fills with a fluid called aguamiel (honey water). If the aguamiel is fermented, it becomes an alcoholic drink known as pulque. When the pulque is distilled, it becomes tequila.

73. CENTER-LINE AGAVE

Agave lophantha

Agavaceae

Origin: Southwestern U.S.

Historical culinary uses: Like other agaves, this species could be roasted for a beverage and for eating. (See 72.)

74. QUEEN VICTORIA'S AGAVE

Agave victoriae-reginae

Agavaceae

Origin: Mexico

Historical culinary uses: Like other agaves, this species could be roasted for a beverage and for eating. (See 72.)

75. MEXICAN TARRAGON

Tagetes lucida

Asteraceae

Origin: Mexico and Central America

Historical culinary uses: The fresh or dried leaves were used to flavor soups and sauces; it has a mild flavor of tarragon.

Historical medicinal uses: An anise-flavored tea was brewed from the dried leaves and flowers as a digestive aid.

Interesting facts: The dried plant was burned as incense and to repel insects. The Aztecs may have used it as an ingredient of a powder blown into the faces of human sacrifice victims.

76. ARIZONA BARREL CACTUS, FISHHOOK BARREL CACTUS, COMPASS CACTUS
Ferocactus wislizeni **Cactaceae**

Origin: Southwestern U.S. and northern Mexico

Historical culinary uses: The flowers and fruit (yellow when mature) were eaten raw or cooked. The fruit's nutritious black seeds were dried and ground into a meal.

Interesting facts: In Old West lore the juice from the barrel cactus' internal pulp was supposed to be an emergency water source. However, the cactus juice contains oxalic acid, which can cause diarrhea and vomiting, leaving the drinker more dehydrated than before.

77. ALOE VERA
Aloe barbadensis **Aloaceae**

Origin: North Africa and coastal areas surrounding the Mediterranean Sea

Historical culinary uses: Aloe vera was used as a dietary supplement and as a treatment for digestive disorders.

Historical medicinal uses: Aloe vera was widely used in the traditional medicine practices of many countries. It is often referred to as the "first aid plant." The gel from the plant's leaves is effective in treating burns, scalds, and sunburn.

Interesting facts: Aloe vera was known in Egypt as the "plant of immortality." Cleopatra used aloe vera as a part of her beauty routine. It is now a common ingredient in lotions, soaps, cosmetics, sunburn relief products, and shampoos. It is the most commonly grown medicinal plant in American households.

78. BEARGRASS, SACAHUISTA
Nolina microcarpa **Liliaceae**

Origin: Deserts of Utah, Arizona, New Mexico, and Northern Mexico

Historical culinary uses: Native Americans used buds, fruit and roasted stalks for food and ground the seeds into flour for bread.

Historical medicinal uses: Poultices of shredded beargrass were used to reduce arthritic joint pain.

Interesting facts: Beargrass is used for thatching, basketry, mats, brushes, and cooking tools. It forms the core of the coils for O'odham basket weaving.

79. THORNLESS DESERT SPOON

Dasyilirion quadrangulatum

Liliaceae

Origin: Deserts of Utah, Arizona, New Mexico & Northern Mexico

Edible uses: Once a major food source for Native peoples of the southwest, bulbs were roasted in rock-lined pits and pounded into cakes. “Sotol,” a strong alcoholic beverage is distilled from the baked and fermented bulbs.

Interesting facts: Leaves were used to weave baskets and mats. “Dasyilirion” is from the Greek word “dasy,” meaning thick or dense. “lirion” means “white lily,” referring to the white flower spikes this plant produces.

80. BLUE SAGE

Salvia azurea v. grandiflora

Lamiaceae

Origin: Sacred to the ancient Greeks and Romans and cultivated in Northern Europe since Medieval Times, it was brought to America in the 17th Century.

Historical medicinal uses: Used to treat sore throat, coughing & respiratory infections. Also used as a relief from indigestion.

Interesting facts: As early as A.D. 50-70 sage/salvia was used to control bleeding in wounds. There are over 900 species of salvia worldwide. This variety, also known as “Pitcher Sage,” produces abundant nectar for bees and hummingbirds.

81. BRICKLEBUSH

Brickellia californica

Asteraceae

Origin: California and Arizona

Historical medicinal uses: Used to treat digestive disorders.

82. EARLEAF BRICKLEBUSH

Brickellia amplexicaulis

Asteraceae

Origin: American Southwest, Mexico, and Central America

Interesting fact: Contains a high amount of essential oil which acts as a natural insecticide.

83. BLADDERPOD

Peritoma arborea

Cleomaceae

Origin: California, Baja California, Mexico, and deserts of the southwestern U.S.

Historical culinary uses: Seeds were used as a substitute for capers in cooking.

Interesting facts: Produces a strange odor which has been described as smelling like “burnt popcorn.” This substance that produces this odor protects the plant from being eaten by insects.

84. DESERT LAVENDER

Hyptis emoryi

Lamiaceae

Origin: Arizona, southern California, Baja California, and Sonora, Mexico

Historical culinary uses: When crushed, it has a lavender scent used to flavor tea.

Historical medicinal uses: Used to treat acid reflux, gastritis, flu, allergies, asthma, and toothache.

Interesting facts: This plant has many uses, as an astringent, antioxidant, antifungal, anti-inflammatory, and sedative.

85. NODDING ONION

Allium cernuum

Amaryllidaceae

Origin: Eurasia and northern Africa

Historical culinary uses: Leaves and bulbs are pickled, eaten raw or boiled, or used as a seasoning.

Historical medicinal uses: Native Americans used this plant to treat colic, croup, fevers, and colds.

Interesting facts: This plant is also cultivated for its attractive flowers. Flowers bloom at the ends of long, erect, leafless stalks which “nod” in the breeze.

86. BLACKFOOT DAISY

Melampodium leucanthum

Asteraceae

Origin: U.S. midwest and southwest

Interesting facts: Plant is drought tolerant and has a long blooming period from March to November. The city of Chicago gets its name from the Algonquin Indian name for this plant, “chigagou.”

87. DESERT COTTON

Gossypium thurberi

Malvaceae

Origin: Sonoran desert and Arizona

Historical medicinal uses: Used to treat human reproductive issues.

Interesting facts: This plant is a species of wild cotton. Flower petals were used for brown and yellow dyes.

88. MEXICAN HAT

Ratibida columnaris

Asteraceae

Origin: American Great Plains

Historical medicinal uses: Native Americans made a tea from the leaves to draw out rattlesnake poison and also to treat poison ivy.

Interesting facts: Cultivated as a garden ornamental.

89. BEE BALM, BERGAMOT

Monarda didyma

Lamiaceae

Origin: Eastern North America

Historical culinary uses: Used to infuse flavor into tea and beverages. It can be added to salads as an edible garish. As a spice its leaves can be used interchangeably with Mexican or Greek oregano.

Historical medicinal uses: Used to treat minor digestive problems, bronchitis and sore throat.

Interesting facts: After the Boston Tea Party in 1773, “Oswego Tea” replaced tea imported from India in American households.

90. MOUNTAIN OREGANO

Monarda austromontana

Lamiaceae

Origin: Northern Mexico, Arizona, Texas and New Mexico

Historical culinary uses: Used to flavor salads and teas.

Historical medicinal uses: This plant was used as a painkiller, antibacterial, and antifungal. It was also used to treat digestive problems.

Interesting facts: Linnaeus named the genus *Monarda* to honor a 16th century Spanish physician and botanist, Nicolas Bautista Monardes (1493-1588). Although Dr. Monardes never went to the Americas, he was able to study American medicinal plants in Spain because Spain controlled commerce and navigation from the New World.

91. OREGANO

Origanum vulgare

Lamiaceae

Origin: Mediterranean

Historical culinary uses: Used as culinary herb, it's a very important in Mediterranean cuisine.

Historical medicinal uses: Used as an antiseptic, a digestive aid, and for gastrointestinal problems and respiratory problems.

Interesting facts: *Origanum* is derived from the Greek words “oros” and “ganos,” meaning “mountain glamour,” or “joy of the mountaintop” because of its attractive appearance and aroma.

92. LIMBERBUSH

Jatropha cardiophylla

Euphorbiaceae

Origin: Arizona and Mexico

Historical medicinal uses: The sap of the limberbush is extremely astringent. Native Americans use the sap or a poultice of mashed branches to treat toothaches, mouth sores, burns, insect bites and stings.

Interesting facts: The Spanish name for this plant, *Sangre de Drago*, refers to the color of the sap which is initially clear but dries to a deep red color. The English name refers to the fact that the branches contain natural latex rubber and are extremely flexible. The O’Odham and Seri peoples use limberbush in their basketry. It is also thought that limberbush is a good predictor of the weather as it is leafless most of the year but the rise in humidity just prior to the monsoon causes the plant to bud and leaf out.

93. SACRED DATURA

Datura wrightii

Solanaceae

Origin: Central America and all four deserts of the North American southwest

Historical medicinal uses: An excellent topical painkiller, it was used externally as a poultice, oil or liniment for painful sprains and contusions.

Interesting facts: In the Zuni Tribe, root pieces are chewed by a robbery victim to determine the identity of the thief. **DO NOT EAT - ALL PARTS OF THIS PLANT ARE POISONOUS!**

94. SOCIETY GARLIC

Tulbaghia violacea

Amaryllidaceae

Origin: South Africa

Historical medicinal uses: This plant is used mainly for ornamental purposes.

Interesting facts: This plant belongs to the lily family, like onions and garlic, but to an entirely different genus restricted to South Africa. The species name, *violacea*, refers to the flowers’ violet color. Leaves have a garlicky odor and can be used in cooking.

95. ANISE

Pimpinella anisum

Apiaceae

Origin: Mediterranean

Historical medicinal uses: Used as a digestive aid and cough suppressant.

Historical culinary uses: Flavoring in many foods and baked goods. Also used as a flavoring in liquor.

Interesting facts: In the 16th century anise was used as bait in mousetraps. Mice found it irresistible.

96. CAMPHOR, ARNICA

Heterotheca subaxillaris

Asteraceae

Origin: Mid-eastern to southwestern U. S.

Historical medicinal uses: Applied externally to diminish pain, inflammation, sprains and contusions.

Interesting fact: Not to be confused with true Arnica (*Arnica montana*). Both are used to diminish pain but used for very different purposes.

97. CHIVES

Allium schoenoprasum

Amaryllidaceae

Origin: Native to China, by the 16th century it was common in European gardens.

Historical culinary uses: Used as a flavoring in cooking. It is similar in taste to onion but milder.

Interesting facts: Chives are the only member of the onion group found growing wild in both Europe and North America. People thought that chives could drive away evil influences and diseases so they hung bundles of chives in their homes.

98. CILANTRO

Coriandrum sativum

Apiaceae

Origin: Eastern Mediterranean and southern Europe

Historical culinary uses: Used in Chinese cooking and medicine since about A.D. 200. Leaves, roots, and fruits used to flavor food in Asian and Middle Eastern cooking. The leaves are very popular in Mexican cooking. The ground fruits are known as coriander, the fresh leaves as cilantro. The fresh leaf is probably the most widely use of all flavoring herbs throughout the world.

Historical medicinal uses: Used to treat minor digestive problems. Oil from the seed is fungicidal and antibacterial. A poultice from crushed leaves was used for relief of rheumatism.

Interesting facts: The name is derived from the Greek word “koris” [bedbug] as the mature plant smells strongly like the insects. Ironically, coriander is also a fragrant ingredient in some perfumes and cosmetics.

99. CORSICAN MINT

Mentha requienii

Lamiaceae

Origin: Southern Italy and Sardinia

Historical medicinal uses: Used as an antiseptic.

Interesting facts: It was historically used as a “strewing herb” on household floors to deter rats and mice.

100. CUMIN

Cuminum cyminum

Apiaceae

Origin: Egypt and Middle East

Historical culinary uses: Romans used ground cumin seeds the same way we use pepper today. A common seasoning in many cuisines.

Historical medicinal uses: Used as a digestive aid.

Interesting facts: Oil from the seed is used in perfumery.

101. DWARF PERIWINKLE

Vinca minor

Apocynaceae

Origin: Europe

Historical medicinal uses: Diuretic, stimulant, and remedy for stomach disorders. It is also used to treat sore throat and mouth ulcers.

Interesting facts: Considered a ‘magical’ and medicinal plant in Europe.

102. FENNEL

Foeniculum vulgare

Apiaceae

Origin: Mediterranean

Historical culinary uses: Fennel seeds have a similar flavor to licorice. Seeds were used to flavor baked goods, soups, sauces and sausages. Today the bulb and fronds are also very popular in cooking.

Historical medicinal uses: All parts of the fennel plant are edible and beneficial. Fennel was used to improve digestion and improve eyesight. It was also used as a treatment for infants suffering from colic.

103. LADYFINGER CACTUS

Echinocereus pentalophus

Cactaceae

Origin: Texas, Mexico, and the desert southwest

104. LEMON BALM

Melissa officinalis

Lamiaceae

Origin: Mediterranean

Historical medicinal uses: Greeks and Romans valued the crushed leaves of lemon balm for treating fevers, wounds and insect bites. The lemon scent has a calming effect.

Interesting facts: In the 9th century, the Emperor Charlemagne was so impressed with the herb's healing properties that he ordered it to be planted in all monastery apothecary gardens.

105. PARSLEY

Petroselinum crispum

Apiaceae

Origin: Mediterranean native

Historical culinary uses: Fresh leaves are added to salads and foods for flavoring.

Interesting facts: First used by the Romans as a culinary herb, by the Middle Ages it had also found use as a medicinal herb. Genus name *Petroselinum* is from the Greek 'petros' meaning 'rock; and 'selinum' meaning 'celery.' Parsley was once classified in the same genus as celery. Today parsley oil is used in cosmetics, shampoos, perfumes, soaps and skin lotions.

106. PEPPERMINT

Mentha piperita

Lamiaceae

Origin: Peppermint was cultivated by the ancient Egyptians. The natural peppermint is more commonly recognized as being native to Europe and was "discovered" in England in 1696.

Historical culinary uses: Peppermint oils and peppermint leaves were used as a flavoring for food and wine.

Historical medicinal uses: Peppermint was used for treating stomach ailments and other digestive issues. It was also used for the treatment of headaches and as a mouthwash. Menthol, an active constituent of peppermint, is effective in treating respiratory ailments. Mentholated ointments and lozenges provide relief for coughs and chest congestion.

107. RUE

Ruta graveolens

Rutaceae

Origin: Southern Europe and northern Africa

Historical medicinal uses: Eaten to aid digestion and improve eyesight. It was also used for the treatment of insect bites, gout, rheumatism and digestive problems.

Interesting facts: During the Middle Ages Rue was considered a defense against witches and their spells. It was also used as protection against the plague. Glands located over the entire plant contain a volatile oil that photosensitizes the skin of some people causing blistering of the skin after handling the plant

108. SORREL

Rumex acetosa

Polygonaceae

Origin: Europe

Historical culinary uses: Added to salads and vegetables for a lemony taste. Also used as an ingredient in sauces and soups.

Historical medicinal uses: Used to treat skin conditions and also used as a diuretic. Leaves were applied to treat burns.

Interesting facts: *Rumex* is a divided genus: “Sorrels” are the cultivated plants and “Docks” are the wild plants.

109. SPEARMINT

Mentha spicata

Lamiaceae

Origin: Mediterranean

Historical culinary uses: Dry or fresh leaves are steeped to produce tea.

Historical medicinal uses: Used for stomach ailments and headache remedies. Romans used the leaves as a flavoring for food and as a scent for bathwater and cosmetics.

Interesting facts: The name *Mentha* comes from Minthe, a nymph in Greek mythology. The God of the Underworld, Hades, loved Minthe, but Minthe was turned into an insignificant little plant by Hades’ jealous wife. Hades tried to make it up to Minthe by sweetly scenting her small leaves.

110. SUMMER SAVORY

Satureja hortensis

Lamiaceae

Origin: Mediterranean

Historical culinary uses: Rich in volatile oil, summer savory is used as a culinary herb to flavor sausages, meats and stuffing. It is also used as a salt substitute. It is an important ingredient in salami. Winter savory is a perennial evergreen and it is the hardier of the two varieties of savory. It provides fresh leaves for winter flavoring.

Historical medicinal uses: Used to treat indigestion, colic, sore throat and as an antiseptic.

Interesting facts: It is believed that the Romans introduced savory to England where it became popular as both a medicine and a cooking herb.

111. SWEET BASIL

Ocimum basilicum

Lamiaceae

Origin: Asia, Iran and the Middle East. Introduced to Europe from the Middle East in the 16th century

Historical medicinal uses: Used to treat digestive complaints and headaches. Basil is antibacterial and a natural disinfectant.

Interesting facts: Because basil has heart-shaped leaves, it is traditionally seen as a symbol of love in Italy. You can plant basil in a given area to deter flies.

112. WINTER SAVORY

Satureja montana

Lamiaceae

Origin: Mediterranean

Historical culinary uses: Rich in volatile oil, summer savory is used as a culinary herb to flavor sausages, meats and stuffing. It is also used as a salt substitute. It is an important ingredient in salami. Winter savory is a perennial evergreen and it is the hardier of the two varieties of savory. It provides fresh leaves for winter flavoring.

Historical medicinal uses: Used to treat indigestion, colic, sore throat and as an antiseptic.

Interesting facts: It is believed that the Romans introduced savory to England where it became popular as both a medicine and a cooking herb.

113. NASTURTIUM

Tropaeolum majus

Tropaeolaceae

Origin: Andes region of South America

Edible uses: Many parts of the plant are edible. Buds and flowers are used in salads for their spicy taste. Pickled seeds are used as a substitute for capers.

Historical medicinal uses: Some varieties contain large amounts of sulfur which is said to retard baldness. The plant has antifungal and antibacterial properties.

Interesting facts: This plant was introduced to Spain by returning conquistadores. Nasturtiums were commonly known in Europe a “Indian cress” or “Capucine cress” referring to the shape of the flower which resembles the hooded robe of a Capucine Monk

114. SWEET POTATO (also 115)

Ipomoea batatas

Convolvulaceae

Origin: Central or South America

Edible uses: The starchy, sweet-tasting, tuberous roots are eaten as a vegetable. The young leaves and shoots can be eaten as greens.

Interesting facts: The sweet potato is only distantly related to the potato (*Solanum tuberosum*) and does not belong to the nightshade family.