

# Herbs Make Scents

THE HERB SOCIETY OF AMERICA  
VOLUME XLVII, NUMBER 12



SOUTH TEXAS UNIT  
DECEMBER 2024

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## December 2024 Calendar

**Dec 7, Sat. 11:00 am – 1 pm**  
**Members and Family**

**STU Annual Holiday Party** at the home of **Angela and Chris Roth**  
RSVP at [angelaroth1983@gmail.com](mailto:angelaroth1983@gmail.com)

**Dec 10, Tues. 10:00 am**  
**Members only**

**Day Meeting** "Holiday Mocktails, Cocktails, and Punches" presented by **Stephanie Calloway** and **Benée Curtis**, at the home of **Elayne Kouzounis**. RSVP to Benée at ([bccurtis5@comcast.net](mailto:bccurtis5@comcast.net)) requested. Immediately following the program, we'll share a potluck meal together. Bring a dish that serves at least 8-10. Beverages will be provided.

**Dec 13, Fri. 8:30 – 3:30 pm**

**Women in Agriculture Conference** at 2811 Hayes Road, Houston, TX 77082. Go to the [Urban Harvest website](#) to register.

**Dec 14, Tues. 9:00 am – 12 noon**

**Garden Workday Kolter Elementary** at 9710 Runnymede Dr., Houston, TX 77096

**Dec 14, Tues. 10:00 am**

**Westbury Garden Workday** at 12581 Dunlap Street, Houston, TX 77035

## January 2025 Calendar

**Jan 14, Tues. 10:00 am**  
**Open to members and guests**

**Day Meeting** *Adventure Luncheon to Waterstone TurkishRanch* (<https://waterstonetr.com/>, 14614 County Rd. 820 Rosharon, TX 77583, ph. 832-908-0020). We will carpool from Colonial Park Pool (4130 Byron, Houston, TX 77005) for any interested. RSVP to Benée ([bccurtis5@comcast.net](mailto:bccurtis5@comcast.net)) and indicate if you will (1) meet us there (2) join a carpool or (3) are able to drive a carpool.

**Jan 15, Wed. 6:15 pm**

**Evening Meeting** "Eyes on the Garden" presented by **Stewart Zuckerbrod, MD**. Cherie Flores Pavilion, 1500 Hermann Dr. Houston, TX 77004. Doors open at 6:15 pm, potluck meal and program to follow.

**Jan 28, Tues. 6:00 pm**  
**Members and Guests**

**Lagniappe** "Borscht from Baba's Kitchen - An Introduction to Ukrainian Cuisine". Join us at 6 pm at Frontier Grill in the Conservatory Food Hall, 606 Dennis St, Houston, TX 77006 for a traditional Ukrainian meal.

**Newsletter deadline: December 13<sup>th</sup> for January news! (January editor is Linda Alderman)**

## Happy Birthday!



14 – Lena Herce

21 – Debbie Gordon

15 – Lorena Jaramillo

31 – Laura Boston



## 'Tis the Season...

\* ...To celebrate the best time of the year for gardening here on the Gulf Coast. My beds are overflowing with newly planted lettuces, greens, nasturtium, lemon balm, parsley, dill, and fennel. Tomatoes are still ripening, the roselle branches are loaded with crimson calyces, and the self-seeded milkweed is already covered with monarch caterpillars.

\* ...To learn uses for the uncommon herbs in my garden. Mugwort and mullein are thriving, and the soft grays are beautiful accents against the blue-gray of rue and the yellow-green of scented geranium. It's time to move past admiring their beauty and see what I can do with them. I've been meaning to add a sprig of rue to my morning coffee as we were taught at the Ethiopian Coffee Ceremony a couple of years ago, so that will be a good start. Next, make a mugwort dream pillow, and then a rose-scented geranium pound cake. And for all those vintage textiles I've collected - the velvety leaves of mullein produce a beautiful soft yellow dye. Time to get busy!

\* ...To harvest cold sensitive herbs, particularly basil, before the nighttime temperatures dip below 50 degrees. Dry the leaves for teas or make and freeze herbal pastes for winter soups.

\* ...To gather together with good friends. Our Annual STU Holiday Party will be at **Angela Roth's** home Saturday, December 7, from 11:00 am to 1:00 pm. Spouses, significant others, and children are welcome. Please bring a potluck item to share, and RSVP with Angela at [angelaroth1983@gmail.com](mailto:angelaroth1983@gmail.com) If you would like to participate in the gift exchange, please bring a gift valued at \$15.00 or less.

\* ...To promote the STU. We have again been invited to provide the herbal tea for the annual Women In Agriculture Conference (December 13, 2024 8:30am - 3:30pm) sponsored by Urban Harvest. In return, we'll have access to one outreach booth where we can interact with attendees and promote the activities of the STU. Contact Julie [fordes.julie@gmail.com](mailto:fordes.julie@gmail.com) if you're interested in helping, or you can purchase tickets here - <https://give.urbanharvest.org/campaigns/33493-2024-women-in-agriculture-conference>. The conference is designed for urban growers, entrepreneurs, and plant enthusiasts and is an excellent opportunity to meet other growers and creators.

\* ...To express gratitude. To all our wonderful members who brought so much joy and energy to our 2024 Herb Fair. And especially to **Stephanie Calloway** who served as Herb Fair Chair and graciously filled in for me at the last Evening Meeting, and **Catherine O'Brien** who stepped in at the last minute to give the November program.

*Karen Cottingham, on behalf of Dena Gaydos*





*We're sliding in to the  
holiday season!*



*Please join us for a holiday celebration  
December 7 11am - 1pm  
Members and their families invited  
RSVP [angelaroth1983@gmail.com](mailto:angelaroth1983@gmail.com)*





## Herb Fair Recap: Gratitude and Awe

Stephanie Calloway

I know I have communicated with some of you multiple times already to express my sincere appreciation and inspiration after another successful Herb Fair. Like last year, we raised more than \$16,000 in funds and went through all 400 sales slips that were printed! Thank you to ALL the incredible Herb Society of America South Texas Unit members and volunteers who made the event possible. We had 18 committees and more than 50 volunteers for the event – incredible! We are continuing to receive positive feedback and suggestions to make next years' event even better. In addition to the plants, baked goods, culinary blends, vinegars, jellies, salves and body products, fabric items, wood items, teas, books and resale items, we also featured a gorgeous machine-stitched quilt from HSA-STU member **Laura Boston**.

Due to some technical difficulties with the online auction, we decided to postpone the auction until Herb Day, April 26, 2025.

So, stay tuned for more information on that event and another chance to bid on the beautiful quilt! If you have any additional thoughts or feedback on the event, please reach out to Herb Fair Chair Stephanie Calloway at [stephaniec621@gmail.com](mailto:stephaniec621@gmail.com)

### Faces in the Crowd Herb Fair 2024







# Herbal Experience 2024







# Herbs Make Scents

December 2024



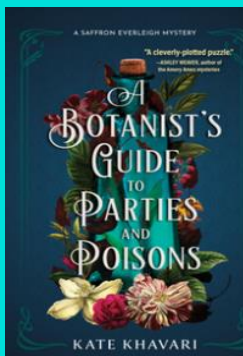


## Day Group Meeting Review

The Day Group meeting on November 12 at the Cherie Flores Garden Pavilion was well attended. **Benée Curtis** and **Julie Fordes** presented a program on *Drying Herbs and Blending and Brewing Tisanes*. Benée focused on the drying methods discussed on our website (<http://www.herbsociety-stu.org/harvesting-drying-and-storing-herbs.html>). Julie led an interactive discussion on how to balance and blend the herbs for a balanced tisane. Her program notes are shared here in the newsletter. (See next page.)

Following the presentation, we met to discuss our fall book read, **Marta McDowell's Gardening Can Be Murder: How Poisonous Poppies, Sinister Shovels, and Grim Gardens Have Inspired Mystery Writers**. Joan Jordan led our discussion. The book was quite popular and generated a good deal of animated and entertaining discussion about our favorite murder mysteries.

Our March 18 meeting will be a potluck picnic and plant swap. Be thinking now of plants you might like to share at the plant swap. We haven't defined, yet, how the plant swap will be conducted, but want to remind members that we'll be doing the exchange so you can divide, root, sow seeds, etc. now, if needed.



Our pick for the spring (May) meeting's discussion is **Kate Khavari's A Botanist's Guide to Parties and Poisons**. Goodreads describes the book as "The Lost Apothecary meets Dead Dead Girls in this fast-paced, STEMInist adventure. Debut author Kate Khavari deftly entwines a pulse-pounding mystery with the struggles of a woman in a male-dominated field in 1923 London." All are welcome to join the book discussion.







## Blending and Brewing Herbal Teas (Tisanes)

Julie Fordes

The first thing to decide is your intention for the tea. Do you want an energizing or calming tea? Need to soothe your tummy or relax after a stressful time? Or maybe you just need something that just tastes good made from what is in your garden right now. Here is a useful framework to use.

### Pyramid of Ratios (proportions)

### Herbal Energetics and Uses



**Digestive-** tulsi, mint, ginger, bay, fennel

**Respiratory-** mullein, sage, thyme, mallow

**Circulatory-** black pepper, ginger, rosemary, sage, oregano, cinnamon

**Relaxing Nervines-** chamomile, tulsi, oatstraw, rose, elderflower, lavender, hawthorn, lemon balm, passionflower

**Anti-Inflammatory-** bay, chamomile, rose, ginger, turmeric, moringa

**Anti-Oxidant-** tulsi, black pepper, cinnamon, calendula

**Anti-Viral-** lemon grass, elderflower, moringa

**Anti-Microbial-** lemongrass, cinnamon, ginger, lavender, thyme, oregano, moringa, calendula

**Adaptogens-** tulsi, nettle, ashwagandha

### A few STU Recipes and their Ratios

**Holy Rosy Basil-** 3 parts tulsi, 1 part rose petals, 1/2 to 1/4 part rooibos or honeybush tea

**Pink and Lemony-** Equal parts lemongrass and roselle, 1/2 to 1/4 part cinnamon. Cinnamon is included in Madalene Hill's original recipe for Pink and Lemony.

### Considerations for Brewing with Dried Herbs

**Amount of Tea/Water** –Single serving: 1-2 tsp dried herb per 8 oz water. Potful: 1-2 tsp dried herb per 8 oz of water and more for the pot. Gallon: 1/2 cup of dried herb per gallon of water

**Temperature of Water-** Usually “off the boil” or around 190-200 degrees. Longer steeping times are needed when the water temperature is lower. Sun tea (several hours) or refrigerator tea (over night or longer)

**Length of Time to Steep:** Usually 5- 10 minutes, more if you are drinking it medicinally

**Storage and Shelf Life of dried Herb:** 1 year in an air tight container out of the light.

**When brewing with fresh herbs, use more of the fresh herb than dried. The dried herb is more concentrated.**





## Sources for Herbs/Herbal Information

**Mountain Rose Herbs**- a reliable source for both information and herbs

<https://mountainroseherbs.com>

**Mark Merriweather**-<https://www.foragingtexas.com/2004/09/common-herbal-teas.html>

## Sources for Recipes

[www.botanyculture.com](http://www.botanyculture.com)

<https://gathervictoria.com/?s=herbal+tea+>

<https://www.growforagecookferment.com/page/2/?s=herbal+tea>



Save the Date & Support Local by joining us as we

*Educate. Celebrate and Encourage*  
the diversity of urban agriculture.

We have been asked to provide herbal teas for this event again! I am so excited to be able to work with the women from Urban Harvest who are organizing this event! How about using your knowledge of herbs and blending teas to help put together some new and tasty blends for this event!!! Call **Julie Fordes** if you want to be part of this awesome opportunity.

**There is still time to register for the conference.** Go to the [Urban Harvest website](#) to register.



A GARDEN CLUB OF AMERICA  
MAJOR FLOWER SHOW

## FLORESCENCE: SPLENDOR

APRIL 15-16,  
2025

### WHAT IS FLORESCENCE?

Florescence is one of the largest competitive national flower shows sanctioned by The Garden Club of America in the United States. Florescence is presented by River Oaks Garden Club, The Garden Club of Houston, and the Museum of Fine Arts, Houston (MFAH). Proceeds directly support Florescence's nonprofit sponsors: River Oaks Garden Club, The Garden Club of Houston, and the MFAH. Both garden clubs rely on Florescence proceeds to support their projects in gardens, parks, and green spaces throughout our community.

*Save the date for an exciting show presented at the Museum of Fine Arts, Houston. My favorite part is always the artistic creations using botanical materials . . . dresses, jewelry, hats etc. Spectacular!*

[www.flohouston.org](http://www.flohouston.org)

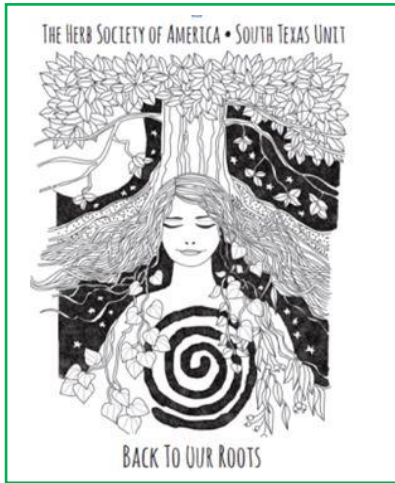
[www.mfah.org](http://www.mfah.org)

[www.gchouston.org](http://www.gchouston.org)

Have questions??? **Ask Susan Wood** or visit the websites







## Upcoming:

**Westbury Workday**  
Dec 14 Saturday 10 am

**Westbury Workday**  
Jan 25 Saturday 10 am

**Address:**  
**Westbury Community Garden**  
12581 Dunlap St,  
Houston, TX 77035

## Back to our Roots at Westbury Garden

Julie Fordes

*And all my life's a circle  
Sunrise and sundown  
Moon rolls through the nighttime  
'Til the daybreak comes around  
All my life's a circle  
But I can't tell you why  
Seasons spinning 'round again  
The years keep rolling by  
By Harry Chapin*

I thought of this song as we prepared the garden bed last Saturday for a new season of herbs. The holy basil and butterfly pea had to make room for calendula and chamomile... and the years keep rolling by!



**Angela Roth taking down blue pea vine with Arya and Santiago**



**Debbie Lancaster with some holy basil**





## The HERB SOCIETY of AMERICA



### Allspice

*Pimenta dioica*

- Allspice is the unripe berry (botanically a drupe) of the *Pimenta dioica* tree
- The common name allspice comes from the flavor that resembles a combination of cinnamon, nutmeg, ginger and black pepper
- Other common names include: Jamacian pepper, pimento, myrtle pepper, newspice or Turkish Yenibarhar
- The tree, *Pimenta dioica* is native to the West Indies and South America
- Commercially, allspice is grown in Jamaica
- Allspice is used in both sweet and savory, including desserts, Caribbean jerk seasonings, curry powder, sausage, pickling liquid and Cincinnati – style chili
- The berries are harvested green and unripe traditionally dried in the sun and sold whole or ground.
- Whole allspice berries have a longer shelf life whole than ground, which is about six months
- Fresh leaves from the allspice tree can be used by infusing their flavor then removing them before serving much like bay leaves

Information obtained through your association with The South Texas Unit of The Herb Society of America is for educational purposes only. It is not intended to diagnose, treat, cure, or prevent any disease. Everyone, especially women who are pregnant or nursing and persons with known medical conditions, should consult their licensed healthcare provider before taking any herbal product.



Sunday

Dec. 8

3 – 4:30  
PM

“Scents and  
Sensibility in the  
Ancient World”  
at the Women’s  
Institute of Houston  
\$40

<https://www.wih.org/?s=scents>



Thursday

April 10  
2025

**Botanical Beauty Flower Show**

Presented by

**Bouquettes Garden Club**

**Prefontaine Hall of Corpus Christi  
Church**

**9900 Stella Link Road**

**Questions? Contact Angela Roth**





# Recipes

## Allspice

*Pimenta dioica*

### Grandma Adam's Meat Loaf Balls

1½ pounds lean ground beef  
 ½ pound ground pork sausage  
 ½ cup bread crumbs  
 1 medium onion, chopped  
 1 clove garlic, pressed  
 1 ½ teaspoon salt

½ teaspoon pepper  
 1 rounded teaspoon paprika  
 ¼ teaspoon allspice  
 ¼ teaspoon fresh summer savory  
 ½ cup tomato juice

Preheat oven to 350°F. Mix all ingredients in a large bowl. Form into 2-inch balls and place on an ungreased baking sheet. Bake for 1 hour 20 minutes.

*Ellen Adams, HSA Member at large, Great Lakes District*

### Grilled Jerk Pork Chops

*A seasoning mix that originated in Jamaica, jerk is popular throughout the Caribbean in the preparation of meats such as pork and chicken for grilling. Jerk seasoning typically includes chilies, onion, allspice, and thyme. Can be prepared in 45 minutes or less.*

¼ cup chopped onion  
 1 teaspoon dried thyme, crumbled  
 1 teaspoon sugar  
 1 teaspoon salt  
 ½ teaspoon black pepper  
 ½ teaspoon cayenne

½ teaspoon ground allspice  
 1/8 teaspoon freshly grated nutmeg  
 1/8 teaspoon cinnamon  
 Two ½-inch thick rib pork chops (each about 4 ounces)

Prepare grill. Mince and mash onion to a coarse paste with thyme, sugar, salt, and spices. Pat pork chops dry and rub all over with jerk paste. Grill pork on an oiled rack set 5-6 inches over glowing coals 4 minutes on each side, or until just cooked through. (Alternatively, pork may be grilled in a hot well-seasoned ridged grill pan over moderately high heat.) Yield: 2

*From Gourmet July 1997, epicurious.com*



## Speakers Bureau

Fall has been a busy time for talks on herbs. **Catherine O'Brien** gave a talk and a hands-on presentation on *Mediterranean Herbs* to the River Oaks Garden Club on October 28. The River Oaks Garden Club made a generous contribution to the Unit's Madalene Hill Scholarship Fund.



***Pictured left to right Cherie Flores, Catherine O'Brien and Sarah Oden***



***Catherine O'Brien (right) presenting the River Oaks Garden Club contribution to Maria Treviño (left), the South Texas Unit Treasurer***

Catherine O'Brien made another presentation on Mediterranean Herbs to the Champion Forest Garden Club on Nov.18. She will also present a class on infused oils and salves at Urban Harvest, Bauer Education Center, 1911 West 34<sup>th</sup> street, Houston at 10 a.m. on Dec. 7<sup>th</sup>. There is room available: <https://www.urbanharvest.org/ed>



***Catherine presenting to the Champion Forest Garden Club at the home of Susan Stephens***





## Speakers Bureau News



A WILD RIDE  
THROUGH BROOM  
HISTORY

November 4, 2024

PRESENTED BY:  
KAREN COTTINGHAM

FOR THE KATY CRUIZERS

STU Member Karen Cottingham presented a program on the broom as a mode of transportation to an antique automobile club

Seasons  
Greetings



The Herb Society of America  
South Texas Unit  
P.O. Box 6515  
Houston, TX 77265-6515

Find our Unit on the web at:  
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While authors or speakers may cite how they personally use herbs and may quote scientific, ethnographic, folkloric, or historic literature, the material presented does not represent a recommendation or an endorsement of any particular medical or health treatment.



The Herb Society of America is dedicated to promoting the knowledge, use and delight of herbs through educational programs, research and sharing the knowledge of its members with the community.