

# Cottonwood Bud Salve Instructions

Developed by Gayla Pedersen



## MATERIALS:

Disposable Gloves  
Cheesecloth  
Small Jars (4 oz size)  
Organic Oil (4 oz per jar)  
Beeswax (2 tbsp per jar)  
Vitamin E Oil Capsules (4 per jar)  
Plant Matter (1/4 cup per jar)  
You will also need a heat source,  
a pan, water, and a heat-safe bowl.

## 1. PREPARE

- A. Choose your plant matter and prep it as needed (i.e., chopped, dried). You can use cottonwood buds, bark (alder, willow, or birch), calendula flowers, etc.
- B. Choose your oil (i.e., olive, grapeseed or any high quality non-vegetable oil).
- C. Procure beeswax, cheese cloth, and liquid vitamin E (capsules work well). Optional: you can add essential oils for scent, but be cautious that any oils are safe for topical use.
- D. Select a 4 oz container for the salve. You will use it to steep the oil and store your finished salve.



Cottonwood Grove, Karluk River

## 2. MAKE SALVE

A. Fill your steeping jar (for cold extraction) or double boiler (if using heat extraction\*) with your prepared plants and cover with oil.

i. If using cold extraction method be sure to cover plants with an additional inch of oil so they are well covered and move when the jar is shaken. If using the cold extraction method, put your jar in a warm area of the house, especially for a resinous plant, and shake daily for at least one month to promote extraction and prevent mold.

ii. If using heat extraction method (double boiler) be sure plants are covered and are not floating by more than an inch. Turn on the heat, bring the water to a boil, and reduce heat to create a steady simmer for 40 minutes. Stir occasionally.

\*If you are using fresh tender plants, heat extraction is preferred. It helps to evaporate any water from the infused oil and prevents spoilage.

B. Strain oil through cheese cloth into a clean dry jar. Now that you have infused oil (by either method), return it to direct or indirect heat (be careful not to overheat) and add beeswax at a ratio of 4 to 8 parts oil to 1 part wax. The more wax you use the firmer the salve will set. Gayla prefers a soft set for this particular salve because she uses about half a teaspoon for each application. Choose a pan that won't be ruined by a little wax—do not use nonstick.

C. AS SOON AS YOUR WAX IS MELTED, remove the mixture from the heat and add in your liquid vitamin E (excessive heat will destroy the stabilizing quality in vitamin E). Stir, stir, stir, and pour into your storage container. Allow to set for several hours.

D. Label your salve with date made, and ingredients used. This will help you track your recipe in case you want to make it again.

Cleaning Tip: Use alcohol to clean cottonwood bud resin and wax off your dishes (Gayla uses brandy and a paper towel).

A Note of Caution: All use of wild plants is done at the user's own risk. The Alutiiq Museum and its partners accept no responsibility for experimentation.

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