



Hildegard's Healing Plants: From Her Medieval Classic Physica

By Hildegard Von Bingen

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Hildegard's Healing Plants: From Her Medieval Classic Physica By Hildegard Von Bingen

Medieval saint, mystic, healer, and visionary-Hildegard von Bingen has made a comeback. She is now popular in natural healing circles, in medieval and women's studies, and among those interested in investing the everyday with the spiritual.

Hildegard's Healing Plants is a gift version and new translation of the 'Plant' section of Physica, Hildegard's classic work on health and healing. Hildegard comments on 230 plants and grains-most of which are still grown in home gardens and sold at local health food stores. In one of many entries on women's health, Hildegard writes, 'Also if a pregnant woman labors much in childbirth, let someone cook pleasant herbs, such as fennel and assurum, in water with fear and great moderation, squeeze out the water, and place them while they are warm around her thighs and back, tied gently with a piece of cloth, so that her pain and her closed womb is opened more pleasantly and easily.'

Whether read for the sheer enjoyment of Hildegard's earthy, intelligent voice ("Let a man who has an overabundance of lust in his loins cook wild lettuce in water and pour it over himself in a sauna") or for her encyclopedic and often still relevant understanding of natural health, *Hildegard's Healing Plants* is a treasure for gardeners, natural healing enthusiasts, and Hildegard fans everywhere.

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Editorial Review

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Given the current popularity of nutritional therapy involving certain plants, vegetables and herbs, it would be easy to assume that this approach to good health is based on recent knowledge, yet the recognition that plants have healing properties is older than, well, dirt. The use of aloe to treat burns, or ginger to relieve an upset stomach can be traced to folklore, and readers curious about just how such treatments were discovered in the first place will be illuminated by this translation of Hildegard von Bingen's twelfth-century treatise. A learned nun, poet, prophet, and physician, Hildegard wrote voluminously about medicine and natural science, herein describing some 230 plants with therapeutic qualities. Although its archaic language and questionable logic make it unsuitable for literal application to any modern medical condition, the book can be appreciated by students of herbal folklore as well as those interested in medieval culture. *Carol Haggas*
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Review

A fun, historical read about many of the medicinal plants that are so popular today. --*Herbs for Health*, Editor's Pick

"Holds great relevance for today's students of natural healing and plant lore. . . . An interesting and worthwhile addition to the herbal shelf." --NAPRA Review

About the Author

Bruce W. Hozeski, founder of Hildegard studies in the United States, is translator of Hildegard Von Bingen's *Mystical Visions* and teaches at Ball State University in Muncie, Indiana.

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Karen Chan:

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Karena Figueroa:

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