

BEING AN HERBALIST

THE HERBALIST'S WAY: The Art and Practice of Healing with Plant Medicines.

By Nancy and Michael Phillips. ChelseaGreen, 2005. 352pp. \$30.00. These stories about medicinal herbs and the herbalists who work with them are told with heartfelt sensitivity that reflects the herbalists who wrote them. How appropriate that their New Hampshire farm, where they grow and sell medicinal herb products, is named Heartsong. Their work presents the role of the herbalist, ethical and legal issues facing the wildcrafter, practitioner, and manufacturer, and how to prepare medicinal herb gardens and products—all woven together in an organic style that rings true to the nature of herbalism. Profiles of practicing herbalists addresses the roles and responsibilities of herbalists in their communities, with clients, and conducting workshops. Originally published as *The Village Herbalist*, ChelseaGreen also publishes Michael's *The Apple Grower* (1998), which I'll gladly rename "The Apple Bible."

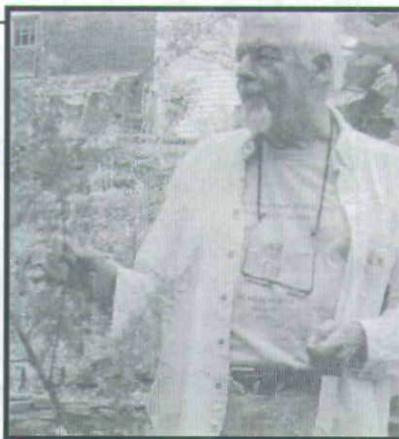
HERBAL VOICES: American Herbalism As Seen Through the Words of American Herbalists.

By Anne Dougherty. Haworth Integrative Healing Press, 2005. 369pp. \$34.95. Here are a diverse group of 26 herbalists, acupuncturists, and naturopaths who specialize in herbal medicine, telling it like it is as they discuss the philosophy behind modern herbalism. Even though quite a few are writers, these taped discussions are very conversational indeed, and a bit more rambling than their polished work. It reminds me of those long talks we have at herbal conferences about what we do, our current role in modern society, the future, the law, and the plants themselves. This is a good, although perhaps a little pricey, way to bring the reader closer to these individual herbalists and their opinions. (Or, at least their views in 1999 when most of the interviews took place.)

SPECIFIC HERBALS

HEALING LYME: Natural Healing and Prevention of Lyme Borreliosis and its Coinfections.

By Stephen Harrod Buhner. Raven Press, 2005. 288pp. Paperback \$19.95. Buhner takes on Lyme disease with his usual thoroughness as he examines leading scientific research, tests, and treatments for this disease. He describes the spirochetes that cause this emerging epidemic as stealth pathogens that hide within cells or alter their form so antibiotics cannot touch them. He then outlines the most useful herbs and supplements, and then designs a detailed protocol that includes suggestions on custom designing a formula based on symptoms, which can run from lethargy and arthritis, to mental dysfunction. Also discussed are treatments for coinfections. His prevention plan is based on taking astragalus (*Astragalus membranaceus*), cat's claw (*Uncaria gambir*), and andrographis (*Andrographis paniculata*), with detailed monographs on these and two other herbs. This is a timely book, as the Centers for Disease Control estimates 20,000 new Lyme infections each year, although Harvard Medical School researchers say the figure may be close to 200,000.



ADAPTOGENS: Herbs for Strength, Stamina, and Stress Relief.

By David Winston and Steven Maimes. Healing Arts Press, 2007. 336pp. Paperback \$18.95.

It's about time a book took on the subject of immune herbs, and this one does an excellent job of explaining why they are so effective at combating

stress-induced illness. The text is very easy to read and understand, but still contains the latest scientific research, all well referenced. The first few chapters of this book define an herbal adaptogen and its purpose in healing. The focus then shines on 20 herbs that meet the criteria, producing a defensive response to stress in the body and increasing resistance. These include ginseng (*Ginseng* sp.) and licorice (*Glycyrrhiza glabra*). The actions, preparation, and dosage are given for each herb, along with a history of the use of adaptogens in India, China, Russia, and the Americas. Adaptogens are also recommended for use as food, such as lycium (*Lycium chinense*), schisandra (*Schisandra chinensis*), and alma (*Embllica officinalis*). A nice addition is a chapter on animals. The authors take a holistic approach, stressing the complementary use of nervines to help alleviate stress on the body and of "nootropic" herbs that act on the mind (*noos* in Greek). Herbalist Winston runs a New Jersey herb school and is the author of *Saw Palmetto For Men & Women* [see *AHA* 16:3] and Maimes is a researcher.

COMPLEMENTARY and ALTERNATIVE CARDIOVASCULAR MEDICINE: Clinical Handbook of Contemporary Cardiology.

By Richard Stein and Mehmet Oz. Humana Press, 2004. 304pp. CD-Rom included. Hardcover \$99.50.

Alternative practitioners come together in this comprehensive text to address the rationale, supporting evidence, and drug interactions for herbs, vitamins, diet, acupuncture, massage, and meditation in 16 easy-to-read chapters. Herbalist Tieraona Low Dog, MD, covers non-toxic herbs. A chapter discussing pros and cons of standardization and claims is written by Robert McCaleb, of the Herb Research Foundation, Boulder, CO and Dr. Fredi Kronenberg, of the Richard and Hinda Rosenthal Center for Complimentary and Alternative Medicine at Columbia University, NY. Dennis Awang concludes that laxatives may decrease drug bioactivity and to not mix anti-coagulants with ginkgo, ginseng, dong quai, or danshen. Aromatherapist Jane Buckle details essential oils that reduce blood pressure. Stein is with Beth Israel Medical Center, and Oz is at Columbia Presbyterian Medical Center, both in New York City. [also see News]

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