



Presenting December's Plant Ally:

Tangerine

Botanical name: Citrus tangerina, Citrus reticulata

Family: Rutaceae

Temperature: Warm, dry (peel) / Cool, damp (fruit)

Taste: Acrid, aromatic, pungent, sour, sweet

Parts Used: Flower, fruit, peel

Constituents: Vitamins B & C, calcium, phosphorous, potassium, water, sugars, & some other vitamins/minerals; d-limonene, citrol, synephrine (the peel)

Actions/Functions: Anti-inflammatory, anti-microbial, astringent, antitussive, carminative, expectorant, stimulating

*December darkens, the nights longer than the days, the moon sitting like an empress amongst the stars... Hopefully, we are slowing down, spiraling in, tucking away into the soft velvet comfort of the dark hours. I always find that it is during this time of the year that I crave the color orange. Orange of the flame, orange of the squash, orange of Venus brighter than the other planets ~ citrine smack upon the sky. Now that I think about it, every year on Christmas (even to this day if I go home to see my family) my brother, sister, & I receive a chocolate-orange in our stockings. It is funny how we tuck away traditions until they are summoned to the surface, no? It is this same craving that brought me to the plant ally for this month *tangerine*, sweet cousin of the grapefruit, little sister of the orange. Tangerines grow upon wonderful trees with beautiful cream-colored, five-petaled blossoms, native to Tangier, Morocco a nod to how they received their namesake through tradesmen in the 1800's.*

Tangerine is a little bitter, a little sweet, cooling, bright & clearing. The volatile oils have a specific affinity for the



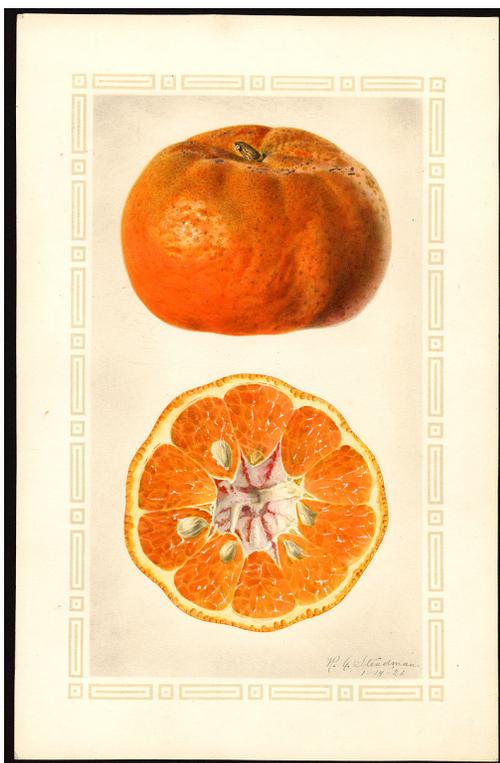
lungs & the gut. I find that it helps to move stagnation & to dry where there is excess dampness (the peel), but moisten where there is too much dryness (the fruit). For instance, make a nice decoction or a tincture with the peel—it is amazing at helping to clear old phlegm from the lungs & sinuses, for soothing digestive woes like diarrhea & distention, or to break up general stagnation anywhere in the system. The peel is considered to be very warming, drying, & stimulating so it is contraindicated for those with excess heat/dryness in their systems & for those with high blood pressure as it has been shown to stimulate the circulatory system & raise the blood pressure level. The fruit itself is considered cold & sweet, thus helping to build, nourish & create mucous. Use the fruit with dry coughs or to help soothe irritation in the belly, & get a nice dose of Vitamin C.

Tangerine peel also has a grounding effect, perhaps due to its bitterness & pungency. Because it is so sensory, I find it brings the attention into the body, especially the solar plexus area/our bellies.

With that said, on a physiological level, it is amazing for dealing with any upset in the stomach (including bloating) & because of its bitterness, it will help to kick the liver into gear, addressing both digestion & helping to tonify the gut while signaling to the parasympathetic nervous system. It is even said that Tangerine helps with hiccoughs! On energetic level, I imagine it bringing a little sunshine into one's life: like swallowing a bit of the sun itself, a golden glow emanating from the belly out.

This brings me to the flower essence. Though I have not yet made one, I did find this lovely write-up from *Sacred Essences* collection. Amongst other things, they note that it is “starlike in presence, yet earthly humorous” (which I love & completely agree with!). They also say that tangerine flower essence “encourages the fun & passion that keeps one focused & energetic while taking care of the details of practical tasks.” You can read their whole poetic description [by following this link ~](#)

There are many ways to make remedies with Tangerine. They are a great example of food as medicine—I



definitely recommend keeping some in the kitchen during cold & flu season.

You can use the peels fresh or dried, but just make sure they are organic & not waxed. Most conventional tangerines & oranges are waxed over to make them appear more glossy & sprayed with lots of harsh chemicals to keep bugs from eating the delicious fruits before harvesting. My favorite way to use the peels is fresh in a tincture or dried in a decoction. The tincture is amazing in any formula & helps to bring a little kick to whatever system your blend is focusing on. I bet they would make an *amazing* infused oil, too. Drying tangerine peel is super easy: you can either let them air dry for a night or so on your kitchen counter or you can speed dry them in your oven or a dehydrator! For the oven method, put your oven on the lowest setting you have. As it warms, carefully remove the rinds & place them onto a cutting board; put your fruits in a bowl or nibble on some slices as you process them. You can either cut or tear (my preferred method) the fresh rinds into pieces---size is your choice. Place them with ample space between the peels onto a clean cookie sheet or inside of baking trays. Toss them into the oven & let them sit for a few hours, until the moisture has dried out of them. In the meantime, [make an orange or tangerine fruit jam](#) (a bit of fresh thyme makes this treat even more mouthwatering) or

squeeze them into some fresh juice to sip on while you are waiting.

Candied Tangerine Peel :::::::::::

You will need:

- 5 Fresh, organic tangerines (you could also do oranges or grapefruits!)
- Water
- Salt
- 2 ½ cup sugar

Making the Candied Tangerine Peel

- Wash the tangerines & remove the peel with a sharp vegetable peeler, avoiding any white pith. Put the peel in a saucepan with 4 cups water & a pinch of salt. Bring to a boil over high heat & boil for 5 Minutes
- Drain. Repeat this process one more time
- Put 1 cup of the sugar & 1 ⅔ cups water in a clean saucepan & bring to a boil, stirring until the sugar dissolves
- Add the blanched peel to the boiling syrup, immediately remove from the heat, cover the pan, & set aside overnight at room temperature
- The next day, drain the peel, reserving the syrup. Add ⅓ cup of the remaining sugar to the reserved syrup, bring to a boil, & return the peel to the syrup
- Remove from the heat, cover, & set aside overnight at room temperature
- Repeat this process three more times, over three nights, adding ⅓ cup sugar each time
- Once the peel is candied, let drain at room temperature for 1 day, then cut into thin slivers. (The peel can be stored in an airtight container for up to 1 month)

Lovingly yours /
Chanelle + Tangerine