**BASIC TINCTURE – Dried Plant, cut and sifted**

For tincture making you will need

* your dried herb, either cut-and-shifted (chunky) or powdered
* a jar (I use quart or pint Mason jars & lids)
* alcohol (100-proof vodka, 80-proof vodka or 80-proof brandy) (This is called the menstruum)
* paper & tape, or masking tape plus a pen for labelling

For straining you will need

* a strainer or potato ricer
* 4 -6 layers of cheesecloth or muslin or a nylon jelly bag or a nut milk bag
* A measuring cup or other container to strain the tincture into

Take a glass jar of any size and fill about ¼ (leaves, flowers) - ½ (roots) full with the dried plant matter. Add 100- or 80- proof vodka (or brandy) to fill the jar. Cap tightly and shake. Remember to label your jar and the lid! Lids like to get away. Check the alcohol level after a bout a day and add more if needed. Shake daily (or when you remember) for about 6 weeks. Your tincture is ready to use after that. The plant matter can remain in the jar or can be strained using a muslin-lined (or lined with a nylon jelly bag or nut milk bag) metal strainer. You can also squeeze the plant matter using a potato ricer lined with muslin/nylon jelly bag/nut milk bag. They're about $15 or so and really worth it if you're making your own tinctures.

The tincture is best stored in a glass jar someplace dark and cool, like a basement or in the back of a pantry. Tinctures can be transferred to a brown tincture bottle with or without a dropper for ease of use. I normally keep mine in Mason jars until I need to fill a 1 or 2 ounce dosage bottle. I wash my original jar and put the strained tincture back in it. Keep in mind that the alcohol in the tincture will eat away at the rubber of the dropper top over time (2 years or so). If you keep your tinctures in dropper bottles store them upright at all times. Shelf life: 10+ years.

Labelling: I put the date I made the tincture, the common name of the plant and the scientific name and what menustruum I used (100-proof vodka, 80-proof vodka, etc.) and where the plant material came from (Mountain Rose Herbs, Pacifica Botanicals, my garden, etc.)