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REDISCOVERING PAST RECIPES FOR A SUSTAINABLE FUTURE

Example of Good Practice

Iași, 2025



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ISBN: 978-973-0-41659-6



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CLIMATE ACTION STARTS FROM LOCAL LEVEL

2023-1-RO01-KA220-SCH-000154832

Foreword

by Mihaela Cornelia Fiscutean

Within the Erasmus + project, no. 2023-1-RO01-KA220-SCH-000154832, Climate Action starts from Local Level, we set out to gather recipes from our grandparents' time in this book—not just for the authentic taste of childhood, but also to reconnect with a more balanced way of life, in harmony with nature. The environment gives us so much without asking for anything in return—only respect and care.

Our grandparents and great-grandparents knew how to live simply and frugally, making the most of everything in their households, from clothes to food. For them, recycling and reusing weren't just necessities but a natural way of conserving resources and avoiding waste. Today, we can learn from their wisdom, embracing their mindful practices to protect nature, reduce unnecessary consumption of raw materials and energy, and minimize pollution from waste and emissions.

The recipes in this book encourage the use of local and seasonal ingredients, supporting small producers in our communities while lowering the environmental impact of transportation. By choosing foods in sync with the natural rhythm of the seasons, we not only save energy but also savor richer, more vibrant flavors—just as our grandparents once did.

Let's rediscover the flavors of the past, cooking with respect for tradition and care for the future!

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I. Food Recipes

1. Recipe for borsht



Short description

The borscht is a probiotic complex, the result of mainly lactic fermentation of wheat bran. It can be included in the category of live nutritious drinks.

Commercial borscht is pasteurized, which means that its properties are diminished. Therefore, it is recommended to consume homemade borscht, obtained only from natural ingredients.

Borscht can be used either as an ingredient in food or separately as an individual drink. It is usually used in Romanian gastronomy only for souring soups. There are even a few sour soups called borscht. One ingredient required in all recipes by Romanian tradition is lovage leaves, which has a characteristic flavour and significantly improves the soup's aroma.

As a drink, borscht is used in various situations. Popular, it is a famous remedy in cases of indigestion, primarily due to the intake of natural probiotics, but also because it helps eliminate toxins from the body. Borscht can also be used in weight loss, stimulating fat burning.

Ingredients

300 grams of wheat bran

150 grams of cornmeal

3 grams of dry yeast

3 liters of water

A sprig of creeping thyme

A sprig of lovage

Objects to use:

- A wooden spoon
- A large glass or plastic jar (metal objects must not be used)
- A colander and some bottles

Way to prepare

- Put the bran, the cornmeal and the yeast in the jar and mix them with a wooden spoon
- Add enough warm water to contain the previous elements and, after fusing, let the composition ferment for 30 minutes
- Use the spoon to observe the change of its fluidity
- Add the twigs of lovage and creeping thyme

- Fill the jar with warm water
- Mix the elements
- Cover the jar with a dish and put it in a warm place
- Wait 24 hours for the mixture to ferment
- Strain the liquid and put it into bottles
- Put 1.5 liters of warm water on what is left and mix
- Cover the jar with a dish
- Wait 72 hours for the composition to ferment

- Strain the yellowish liquid and put it into bottles

This wheat bran maceration juice contains probiotics and important enzymes for a healthy digestive system, lactic acid, B, C, D and H complex vitamins, minerals (calcium, magnesium, phosphorus, selenium, chromium), essential aminoacids and a few carbohydrates.

In Romania, borscht is often used to create a cooking community, with borsch-making women frequently sharing with their neighbors. That's it! I hope you will enjoy it!

The benefits of homemade borscht:

- Natural and local ingredients – Homemade borscht is made from wheat bran, water, and natural ferments, without artificial additives or preservatives, reducing environmental impact.
- Waste reduction – Making borscht at home minimizes plastic packaging and single-use bottles associated with store-bought products.
- Lower environmental impact – The fermentation process used for homemade borscht requires minimal energy resources compared to industrial production.
- Health benefits – It contains natural probiotics that support gut health, reducing the need for supplements and digestive medications.
- Supporting the local economy – Using locally sourced grains for borscht helps support local producers and reduces the carbon footprint linked to transportation.

proposed by Agnes Munteanu, Ana Simina Spiridon, Ana Sofia Leaută and Dorin Fiscutean

2. Oatmeal Pancakes with Strawberries and Honey

Ingredients



2 Tbsp canola oil or melted, cooled butter
3/4 cup Greek yogurt
1/2 cup milk
2 cups rolled oats
2 large eggs
3 Tbsp honey
1/2 tsp cinnamon
1 Tbsp baking powder
1/2 tsp salt
Strawberries, for serving

<https://www.medus.lv/receptes/category/Brokastis>

Preparation:

- Place oil, Greek yogurt, milk, 1 1/4 cups rolled oats, eggs, honey, vanilla, cinnamon, baking powder, and salt in a blender.
- Blend until smooth, stopping to scrape down sides of blender as needed. Continue blending until no more oat particles are visible.
- Stop blender while stirring in remaining 3/4 cup rolled oats and any desired toppings. Let the batter sit for 10 minutes while you heat the pan.
- Heat a large frying pan over medium heat. Lightly grease the pan if necessary.
- Once the pan is hot, pour in the batter. Let cook for 3 to 4 minutes on one side, until the pancakes look dry around the edges and small bubbles are forming on the top.
- Flip, then cook on the other side for 1-2 minutes. The pancakes should look golden brown on both sides.
- Mash the strawberries with a fork and add a little sugar. Serve with the pancakes and drizzle with the liquid honey!

proposed by Laura Buravcova

3. Oven-baked apples with honey

Warm up, eat deliciously and use up fallen apples by making this classic dessert!



Ingredients:

Large autumn apples
Honey
Slush ice cream
Nuts or dried fruit

Preparation:

Remove the core from the apples and fill it with honey, about 1 tablespoon. Sprinkle nuts on top and bake in the oven at 200 degrees. Bake for 15-20 minutes, serve warm with slush ice cream.

<https://www.medus.lv/receptes/category/Brokastis>

proposed by Laura Buravcova

4. Bread Meatballs



Ingredients:

- Stale bread (200 g)
- Milk or water (to soak the bread)
- 1 egg
- Grated cheese (50 g)
- Chopped parsley
- Salt, pepper, and nutmeg
- Breadcrumbs (for coating)
- Oil for frying or baking

Preparation:

1. Break the stale bread into pieces and soak it in milk or water until it softens.
2. Squeeze the bread well and mix it with the egg, grated cheese, parsley, and spices.
3. Form the meatballs and coat them in breadcrumbs.
4. Fry in hot oil or bake at 180°C for 20-25 minutes.
5. Serve as an appetizer or main course.

proposed by [Elisa Calonghi](#)

5. Leftover vegetable meatballs

**Ingredients:**

Leftover spinach /
chard

1 boiled potatoes

1 egg

breadcrumbs

grated parmesan

cheese

Salt and pepper

Oil for frying

Parmesan fondue:

Parmesan

Fresh cream

Preparation

1. Mash the boiled potatoes and mix them with the chopped spinach.
2. Add the egg, parmesan, breadcrumbs, salt and pepper.
3. Form into meatballs and, roll them in breadcrumbs for extra crunchiness.
4. Fry them in hot oil until golden brown or bake them in the oven at 180°C for 20 minutes.
5. To prepare the Parmigiano fondue, pour the fresh cream into a saucepan and start heating it over medium heat, then add some of the Parmigiano.
6. Continue adding the Parmigiano little by little, stirring continuously, and leave to thicken for a few minutes; add some black pepper.

proposed by [Elisa Calonghi](#)

6. Leftover Vegetable Omelette

Ingredients

- Leftover cooked vegetables (courgettes, carrots, potatoes, spinach, etc.)
- 4 eggs
- Grated parmesan cheese (30 g)
- Salt and pepper
- Olive oil



Preparation

1. Chop the leftover vegetables into small pieces, if necessary.
2. In a bowl, beat the eggs with the parmesan cheese, salt and pepper.
3. Add the vegetables to the eggs and mix well.
4. Pour the mixture into a non-stick pan with a little oil and cook over low heat until the omelette is golden on both sides.
5. Serve hot or cold.

proposed by [Elisa Calonghi](#)

7. Lentil Salad



Ingredients:

- cooked lentils
- tomatoes
- white and red onion
- olives
- leak
- parsley
- mozzarella cheese
- salt and pepper
- extra virgin Italian olive oil

Preparation

When you have some cooked lentils, it's good idea to make a nice and healthy summer salad.

Cut the tomatoes, olives, onions, then finely chop the leak and parsley.

Cut the mozzarella in cubes.

Mix all the ingredients and pour some extra virgin olive oil. Sprinkle with salt and pepper

proposed by [Elisa Calonghi](#)

8. Panzanella

Ingredients

- Stale bread (200 g)
- Ripe tomatoes (3-4)
- Red onion (1)
- Cucumber (1)
- Fresh basil
- Extra virgin olive oil
- White wine vinegar
- Salt and pepper

Preparation:

1. Cut the stale bread into pieces and wet it lightly with water. Squeeze it to remove the excess.
2. Cut the tomatoes, cucumber and onion into thin slices.
3. Add the bread to the vegetables, add chopped basil and season with oil, vinegar, salt and pepper.

4. Leave to rest for at least 30 minutes to let the flavours infuse and serve.

proposed by [Elisa Calonghi](#)

9. Pasta omelette

Ingredients

Leftover pasta (spaghetti or penne)

4 eggs

50 g grated parmesan

Salt and pepper

Extra virgin olive oil

Preparation

1. In a bowl, beat the eggs with the parmesan, salt and pepper.
2. Add the leftover pasta and mix well.
3. Heat a little oil in a non-stick pan and pour in the mixture.
4. Cook over medium heat for 5-7 minutes per side, until golden brown.
5. Serve the omelette hot or warm.

proposed by [Elisa Calonghi](#)

10. Polenta Pasticciata



Ingredients:

Cooked polenta
Cured meats (cooked ham, speck, salami)
Soft cheese (taleggio, fontina)
Butter

Preparation:

1. In a non-stick pan, heat a little butter.

2. Add polenta cubes and brown them on all sides.
3. Add pieces of cured meats and cheeses, stirring until the cheese melts.
4. Serve hot as a single dish

proposed by [Elisa Calonghi](#)

11. Quiche with leftover courgettes



Ingredients:

Leftover courgettes
1 roll of puff pastry
or brisée
2 eggs
200 ml cooking
cream

Preparation:

1. Roll out the puff pastry in a baking pan and prick the bottom with a fork.
2. Arrange the courgettes on top of the base.
3. Beat the eggs with the cream, cheese, salt and pepper and pour the mixture over the courgetets.
4. Bake in a preheated oven at 180°C for 30-35 minutes.

proposed by [Elisa Calonghi](#)

12. Rice Croquettes

Ingredients:

- Leftover cooked rice (300 g)
- 1 egg
- Diced cheese (mozzarella or other stringy cheese)
- Breadcrumbs

- Salt and pepper
- Oil for frying

Preparation:

1. In a bowl, mix the rice with the egg, salt and pepper.
2. Take a small amount of rice, form a ball and insert a cube of cheese in the centre.
3. Pass the croquettes in the breadcrumbs.
4. Fry in hot oil or bake in the oven at 180°C until golden.

proposed by [Elisa Calonghi](#)

13. Canederli



Ingredients:

- Stale bread (250 gr)
- Speck 1(50 gr.)
- 1 white onion
- 2 eggs
- Milk (250 gr)
- Butter (10 gr)
- Black pepper
- Parsley
- Chive

Preparation:

Finely chop the onion and the speck.

Melt the butter in a pan and brown the butter and onion for 5 minutes, then turn off the fire.

Chop the chives, parsley, and then chop the stale bread into cubes.

Put the bread in a bowl with the parsley, chives and slowly add the milk.

Add the speck and knead everything, adding milk if the dough is too hard or dry, or flour if the dough is too soft.

Use your hands to form the canederli, which should be 5 cm in diameter.

In the meantime, you will have prepared a good meat broth. Cook the canederli in the broth for 15 minutes. Sprinkle with parmesan.

proposed by [Elisa Calonghi](#)

14. Yogurt Making

Ingredients

1 liter of milk (preferably natural, without additives)

1 tablespoon of yogurt (as a starter culture)



<https://images.app.goo.gl/2J9HEMBddARJZMMa9>

Preparation:

1. Boil the milk and let it cool down to about 45°C (warm but not too hot to touch).
2. In a small bowl, mix the yogurt with some warm milk.
3. Add this mixture to the milk and stir well.
4. Cover the container and leave it in a warm place for 5-8 hours.
5. Once the yogurt has set, refrigerate it for a few hours before consuming.

Historical Background:

Yogurt originates from Central Asia and is believed to have been discovered by the Turks. It was traditionally used by nomadic societies to preserve milk for longer periods. During the Ottoman period, it spread to Europe.

Recipe by Piraye Nimet Tekgöz

15. Sun-Dried Tomato Paste



<https://images.app.goo.gl/pWwPjpEWT5ovNue88>

Ingredients:

5 kg of tomatoes or peppers

3 tablespoons of rock salt

Preparation:

1. Wash the tomatoes, peel their skins, and remove the seeds.
2. Blend or strain them to create a puree.
3. Spread the puree in a large tray and sprinkle with rock salt.
4. Let it dry under the sun for several days, stirring occasionally.
5. Once thickened, store it in glass jars.

Historical Background: Tomato paste was widely used in Ottoman cuisine to enhance flavors. Sun-drying is a traditional method, particularly common in Anatolia. It acts as a natural preservative, making it an essential part of Turkish culinary traditions.

Recipe by Necmettin Ulaş

16. How to Sun-Dry Plums and Why the Traditional Method is the Best

Sun-drying plums is a traditional method from the Moldavian Plateau, a natural and efficient way to preserve these delicious fruits. My grandmother, who had a plum orchard, used to keep plums for the winter by drying them in the sun. This process not only preserves the authentic flavor and nutritional properties of plums but is also an eco-friendly alternative to artificial drying in ovens.

How to Sun-Dry Plums?

1. Choosing the Right Plums

It is recommended to use well-ripened plums, but not overly soft ones. Varieties with firm flesh, such as the Bistrițean Plum, are the most suitable.

2. Washing and Cutting

Plums should be thoroughly washed and cut in half, removing the pits. To speed up the drying process, they can be slightly scored or gently pressed.

3. Placing on a Drying Surface

The fruits should be placed on wooden or metal trays or mesh screens, with the cut side facing up, allowing moisture to evaporate. Ideally, they should be exposed in a clean and well-ventilated area.

4. Exposure to Sunlight

Choose sunny days with low humidity, and leave the plums in the sun for 5-7 days, depending on temperature and sunlight intensity. At night, they should be covered with a thin cloth to protect them from dew and insects.

5. Checking and Turning Regularly

Every 1-2 days, the plums should be turned to ensure even drying. When they become elastic and no visible liquid remains, they are ready for storage.

Why Prefer Sun-Drying Over Artificial Drying?

1. Better Preservation of Flavor and Aroma

Slow sun-drying allows the fruits to concentrate their natural aroma, offering a sweet and authentic taste, without the "burnt" sensation that oven-dried plums can sometimes have.

2. Retains More Vitamins and Nutrients

Exposure to high temperatures in an oven can destroy certain vitamins, especially vitamin C and natural antioxidants. Through natural drying, plums better retain their beneficial properties.

3. Eco-Friendly and Cost-Effective

Sun-drying does not require electricity or gas consumption, making it an environmentally friendly and free method.

4. More Pleasant Texture

Sun-dried plums remain juicier and softer, whereas those rapidly dehydrated in an oven can become too hard or brittle.

5. No Additives or Preservatives

Unlike many industrially dehydrated fruits, homemade sun-dried plums contain no sulfites or other chemical preservatives.

Sun-drying plums is a natural, healthy, and efficient method that preserves the authentic flavor of the fruit while offering a tastier and more nutritious final product. This preservation process can also be applied to other fruits such as apricots, apples, or mirabelle plums. Sun-drying is a traditional conservation method used for generations, which deserves to be maintained and passed on as an eco-friendly solution!

proposed by Mihaela Țurcanașu

17. Pickle



<https://images.app.goo.gl/13cqsyFLEdcYHLAj7>

Ingredients:

1 kg of vegetables (cucumbers, cabbage, carrots, peppers, etc.)

1 liter of water

3 tablespoons of rock salt

1 cup of vinegar

5-6 cloves of garlic

Preparation:

1. Wash and chop the vegetables as needed.
2. Place them in jars in an orderly manner.
3. Mix water, salt, and vinegar to prepare the brine.
4. Pour the mixture over the vegetables, add garlic, and seal the jar tightly.
5. Store in a cool, dark place for 10-15 days.

Historical Background: Fermenting vegetables is one of the oldest food preservation methods. It was a staple in Ottoman kitchens and was widely used for winter preparation. Fermentation not only extends the shelf life of food but also enhances its nutritional value.

Recipe by Piraye Nimet Tekgöz

18. Beet Kvass Recipe

Beet kvass has a deep, earthy flavor with a slightly salty tang. It was traditionally used as a cleansing tonic and is rich in probiotics and antioxidants.

Ingredients:

- 2 medium beets, peeled and chopped into cubes
- 1.5 L (6 cups) filtered or boiled and cooled water
- 1 tbsp sea salt (non-iodized)
- 2 garlic cloves, smashed (optional, for flavor)
- 1 tsp caraway seeds (optional, for aroma)

Instructions:

1. **Prepare the beets** – Peel and chop the beets into medium-sized cubes (do not grate, as this will speed up fermentation too much and may cause spoilage).
2. **Combine the ingredients** – Place the beet cubes in a clean glass jar. Add the salt, garlic, and caraway seeds (if using), then pour in the water, leaving some space at the top.
3. **Fermentation process** – Cover with a breathable cloth and let ferment at room temperature for 3–7 days. Stir daily and remove any foam that may form.
4. **Straining and storing** – Once it develops a deep red color and tangy taste, strain the liquid into a clean bottle and refrigerate. The kvass will continue to develop flavor over time.

19. Grandma's Homemade Bread

This homemade bread recipe uses basic ingredients and can be made with minimal equipment. It's a wonderful example of sustainable cooking, as it avoids the preservatives and packaging of store-bought bread.

Ingredients:

- 5 cups all-purpose flour (you can also use whole wheat flour or a mix)
- 2 teaspoons salt
- 2 tablespoons sugar or honey
- 2 tablespoons active dry yeast
- 2 cups warm water (about 110°F/45°C)
- 2 tablespoons vegetable oil or melted butter

Instructions:

1. Prepare the Yeast:

- In a large mixing bowl, dissolve the sugar or honey in the warm water.
- Sprinkle the active dry yeast over the water and let it sit for about 5-10 minutes until it becomes frothy.

2. Mix the Dough:

- Add the salt and vegetable oil or melted butter to the yeast mixture.
- Gradually add 4 cups of flour, one cup at a time, mixing well after each addition.
- Continue adding flour until the dough comes together and pulls away from the sides of the bowl.

3. Knead the Dough:

- Turn the dough out onto a lightly floured surface.
- Knead the dough for about 8-10 minutes, adding more flour as needed, until it becomes smooth and elastic.

4. First Rise:

- Place the dough in a greased bowl, turning it once to grease the top.
- Cover the bowl with a clean kitchen towel and let the dough rise in a warm place for about 1 hour, or until it has doubled in size.

5. Shape the Dough:

- Punch down the dough to release the air.
- Turn it out onto a lightly floured surface and divide it in half.
- Shape each half into a loaf and place them into two greased 9x5 inch loaf pans.

6. Second Rise:

- Cover the pans with a clean kitchen towel and let the dough rise again in a warm place for about 30-45 minutes, or until the loaves have doubled in size.

7. Bake the Bread:

- Preheat your oven to 375°F (190°C).
- Bake the loaves for about 30-35 minutes, or until the tops are golden brown and the bread sounds hollow when tapped.
- If the tops are browning too quickly, cover them loosely with aluminum foil for the last 10 minutes of baking.

8. Cool the Bread:

- Remove the loaves from the oven and let them cool in the pans for about 10 minutes.
- Turn the loaves out onto a wire rack to cool completely before slicing.

This homemade bread is a testament to the simplicity and sustainability of traditional cooking. It uses basic pantry staples and can be made without any special equipment. The recipe can be easily adjusted to incorporate whole grains, seeds, or other favorite ingredients. Enjoy making and sharing this timeless recipe with your family, just as our grandmothers did!

Recipe by Manvydas Salickas

20. Homemade Trachanas



Trachanas is a traditional Greek recipe, ideal for winter and cold weather. It is a pasta made from flour and milk and has a grainy and irregular shape. The grains are approximately 2-3 millimeters in diameter. It comes in various varieties: sour and sweet, thick and thin. Sour trachanas is fermented with yogurt.

When making trachanas, the last stage is its drying. To do this, the trachanas is spread out so that it has the maximum possible surface area. This process, the spreading of trachanas, has also remained as a popular expression, referring to someone who is characteristically slow.

Trachanas is also made from finely ground wheat.

Optionally, we can make it with vegetables and spices.

Fermentation produces lactic acid and other compounds, giving trachana its characteristic sour taste and good preservation properties

INGREDIENTS for 2 kilos of sweet trachanas

~ 2 kilos of hard flour (yellow) and a little more

~ 1 cup of coarse semolina

~ 1 teaspoon of salt

~ 1 kilo of sheep's or goat's milk

~ Special sieve (remoni)

~ Sifting sieve

Instructions:

- We boil the milk overnight and let it cool to room temperature.
- In a kneading bowl or large bowl, place our sifted flour and semolina.
- We make a small well and add the salt.
- Then gradually add the milk and mix with your hands until you have a mixture.
- If necessary, add flour. We don't want to get a dough.
- Rub the mixture with your hands and let it rest for a while (about half an hour).
- We place a clean tablecloth on a table and there we will pass the trachana through the special sieve.
- We transfer a small amount to the sieve and with our hands we rub in circular motions on the surface of the sieve until the entire amount passes through.

- If some pieces do not pass, we transfer them back to the vessel and rub it again, adding a little flour.
- When we have passed all the mixture, we transfer the trahana onto a clean sheet or tablecloth and spread it on a bed or large table in a shady place away from flies or other bugs. If this is not possible, cover it with tulle
- We spread it in a thin layer so that it can dry.
- We leave it for about three or four days and stir it from time to time.
- When it is dry, we pass it through a sieve to remove the excess flour and place it in a cloth bag or glass jar.
- Old housewives had special pillows for storing trahana and noodles.
- In city apartments, storage requires a lot of attention, as much as possible in a cool place.



It is cooked like a soup, either with enough water or thicker. The cooking time is usually short, about 10-15 minutes. Sometimes it is also cooked with tomatoes.

soypa-feta/

<https://artemidanews.gr/trachanas->

Recipe by Lekosi Artemis, Benetatou Irini, Katogianni Kalliopi

II. Other Sustainable Recipes

1. Natural dyes

Natural dyes are environmentally friendly and provide satisfactory colors for textiles. They can be applied, in particular, to fabrics and yarns made from natural fibers (wool, natural silk, cotton, linen, hemp, jute).

Natural dyes, according to their origin, are of vegetable origin, from plants, from animal origin, from mollusks and insects and mineral pigments, white and red clays. Natural dyes of vegetable origin are complex substances obtained by extraction from the whole plant or from its various parts. In traditional dyeing, they are called "paints", "dyes", "colors", and the dyeing process is called "weed dyeing".

Dyes of vegetable origin are found in plants: roots, leaves, flowers, fruits, stem and twigs, the woody part. The coloring substance is extracted by various methods, both from fresh and dried plants.

Among the plants most often used to dye fabrics are: black alder, rowan, thyme, black cornflower, plum, onion, crocus, sedge, dandelion, both elderberry, stevia, linden, nettle, tobacco, walnut, saffron, violets, maple, oak, burdock, sea buckthorn, quince, chamomile, wormwood and safflower. of plants, as the same plant species can be the seat of several pigments with different structures.

- chlorophyll-green
- carotene-red-orange
- xanthophyll-yellow
- flavones-yellow
- anthocyanins (vacuolar pigments) - vary from red to blue, depending on the acidic or basic of cell juice.

Among the natural dyes used for Easter eggs are:

- COFFEE: Ground coffee gives eggs a brownish hue
- BEET BEETS: Beetroot dyes the eggshell red with purple hues
- NETTLE/SPINACH: Using nettles or spinach, we will obtain green eggs
- RED CABBAGE: Red cabbage dyes the eggs blue or turquoise, the opposite of its color. The blue color can also be obtained with the help of black Aronia berries, but they must be frozen in the fall
- TURMERIC: Turmeric dyes the eggshell yellow

How to dye Easter eggs?



In a small saucepan, boil water over low heat. With each ingredient individually, make a dye bath - a bit like preparing soup or Turkish coffee. Some colors may take longer to prepare than others, depending on the depth of color. Cut the beets and cabbage into small pieces. Use about a teaspoon of turmeric and the teas. A handful of onion peel should be good, and about 3 soft-boiled avocado seeds.

Place each dye bath in a container, bowl, or glass jar large enough to hold how many eggs you will be dyeing each color. Make several containers of each color, because now you can change the colors used vinegar or baking soda.

Red cabbage is especially great for changing color - the anthocyanins in red flowers, leaves, vegetables are very sensitive to different pH. Start with the purple bath first, then add vinegar to one jar and baking soda to another. Watch for the color change immediately.

Using the leaves and flowers, place them on clean, dry eggshells and tie them with the pieces of stockings in small pieces. Make sure to tie them as tightly as possible to create durable patterns.

Dip the eggs in the containers of natural dyes. Leave them there for at least half an hour. Then let them dry and re-soak if the color is darker. Let them dry completely before removing the stockings.

Once they are dry, you can polish them with a little cooking oil to make them shine. Try not to touch the eggs while they are still wet, as the color may come off.

Conclusions about natural dyes

1. Firstly, because they come from natural sources, from plants, insects, minerals, they are not harmful for the environment.
2. Natural dyes are renewable because they are obtained from renewable sources.
3. The majority of natural dyes are not harmful for people, for their skin or can not cause health problems as there is no use of toxic or chemical elements.
4. Many natural dyes have antimicrobial properties. They can be easily used to replace synthetic dyes for children's clothing.

proposed by Miruna Onofrei, Elena Calistru and Cătălina Rusu

2. Homemade soap with multiple uses (body, hair, face) in temperate climate

The preparation of the multiple uses soap is a craft handed down from generation to generation, over the centuries, constituting even today a beloved pastime, despite the existence of a continuously diversifying range of soaps on the market.

Of course, the natural soaps obtained today keep from our grandmothers' recipes only some stages of the work process and some of the ingredients used. They attract with their *beautiful colours, varied shapes and aromas*, but also with their effects on the skin.

Homemade soaps **do not contain harsh chemicals** that can be harmful to your skin, hair, clothes and the environment. Synthetic fragrances, preservatives, and other substances found in commercial soaps

can cause allergic reactions, disrupt the endocrine system, and contribute to environmental pollution. Natural soaps, on the other hand, just as we specified before, are made with simple, natural ingredients that do not contain these harmful substances, and can actually help your skin, hair and even treat certain health problems of them.

In the picture below you can see some of the ingredients used in soaps sold in most stores and their negative effects on humans:

Chem Corner

Toxic Chemicals Found in Some Soaps

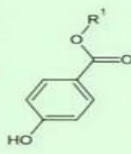
Made by Alexandru Mereuță, using ChemSketch

Preservatives¹

Prabenes

These substances are salts/esters of the parahydroxybenzoic acid often used as conservatives.

Risks: potential endocrine hazard used in medium to high doses, research on-going, but risks come from the similarity with estrogen of the parabenes with long alkyl radicals (R1)¹; **allergic reactions.**



Formaldehyde

$H_2C=O$

Formaldehyde is used for perserving and antibacterial activity, being found in soaps with the following names:

- paraformaldehyde;
- methylene glycol;
- quaternium 15 and ureas - releasers of formaldehyde;
- etc.²

Risks: it is a known carciongen, as IARC³ has concluded; **irritates eyes and skin.**



Surfactants such as **SLS** and **SLES** are substances often used in shapoos in order decrease the surface tension of different liquids. Simply speaking, they produce the foam we all know.

Risk: many cosmetic companies have misconcluded that these surfactants are dangerous for humans. They have misinterpreted studies. Speaking strictly from a data analysis perspective, these chemicals don't represent the real risks hidden in industrial soaps.⁴

Most of the products found usually on the market (soaps, shampoos, perfumes and mainly all cosmetics) are using fragrances, synthetic (made using multiple chemical processes and probably dangerous chemicals) ones. Aromas or fragrances that are atural (oils made from raw materials, that are safe) are sometimes used, but it's hard to tell when.⁵

RISK: Brands are not bound to disclose what these fragrances are and thus this word can hide a lot of dangerous chemicals (up to 3000 in one fragrance), liked to **cancer, endocrine disruption and reproductive problems**, just to name a few risks.^{5,6}



Benzophenone



1,4-dioxane

An important aspect for sustainable development and biodiversity concerns *animal welfare*. Commercial soaps are often tested on animals, while homemade natural soaps are not. As a result, they can be used without worries, including by vegetarians and vegans.

In addition, using natural ingredients, this type of soap is 100% biodegradable; therefore, they have no negative impact on the environment. While the containers used for liquid soap seriously damage the environment, both because of the hydrocarbon resources used for their manufacture, and

because, after exhaustion, they are thrown into nature. Since many of the ingredients in liquid soap, once they reach the soil or water, harm them as well as fauna and vegetation, both directly and indirectly.

Here are the ingredients you need in order to prepare homemade soap:

- 4 kg of pork bacon in the form of lard, lard or leftover fat that you used for frying
- 2 l of lye water (liquid lye)/1.5 kg solid (crystalline lye)/1kg caustic soda
- 10 l of water
- a handful of coarse salt

The *lye could be obtained by using rainwater* to leach wood ashes, which are highly soluble in water (mainly in rainwater) and strongly alkaline of their potassium hydroxide (KOH).

Regarding caustic soda, *we recommend being very careful with this substance*, because it must not come into contact with the skin because it causes burns. Use rubber gloves and protective glasses when you add it to the pot where you will boil the ingredients.

To enrich the final product with therapeutic properties, you can add plants such as:

- nettle, chamomile, mint, wormwood (use only the leaves or flowers, not the stems)
- honey, propolis, oils macerated with various medicinal plants
- clay
- goat's milk

For example, people who lived in Neagra, in the Calimani Mountains, where sulphur is mined, added this mineral to produce a soap that removed dandruff or was used to treat scabies. Our grandmother prepares soap *using wormwood and nettle*, but you can use any plants you want. You can also add lavender. Moreover, we show you how to grow lavender and how to get profit from it.

How to prepare for making homemade soap in a safe way:

Soap should be made only outdoors. Sodium hydroxide is a very strong chemical and can cause serious injuries. The soap making process starts with *safety equipment*, which includes stainless steel pots, gloves, wooden molds, spatulas, spoons, scales, long-sleeved clothing, an apron, and a mask. Protection against potential hazards is a must.

Now that you have found out what are the necessary ingredients to prepare homemade soap and how to protect yourself from the potential

hazards, we will also tell you what steps you need to follow in order to create your own soap!

There are two ways you can make your own soap:

- *Cold process*
- *Hot process*

What's the difference between cold process and hot process soap?

Both cold process and hot process soap starts out being mixed the same way. The only difference is that **cold process soap doesn't have extra heat applied**, so needs 24 to 48 hours in a mold to finish the saponification process (the chemical reaction of soapmaking). **Hot process soap is heated, usually in a crockpot**, which speeds up that initial saponification time. After that, both cold process and hot process soaps need a cure time of several weeks to be at their best!

1) Hot process

- Put a cast iron pot on the fire, just like grandma used to do
- Then, add the mentioned ingredients
- You will boil them for 7-8 hours, but do not forget to mix with a wooden spoon during this time, so as not to burn the composition
- After 7-8 hours have passed, everything is left to cool
- After cooling the composition, portion the soap with a knife

It should be noted that salting and boiling are no longer used for the soaps prepared these days, but the *cold mixing method is applied*. The **cold process** to make homemade soap it is more sustainable, more environmentally friendly and, at the same time, preserves nutrients and active substances better.

2) Cold process

- Choose a recipe and check it with a lye calculator
- Assemble ingredients and safety gear
- Prepare the mold
- Weigh the water and the lye
- Sprinkle the lye into the water
- Weigh and heat the oils, butters and fats
- Monitor the temperatures and combine
- Blend until trace
- Pour the soap batter into the mold
- Cover and insult the mold
- Unmold and slice into bars

Whichever way you choose to make soap, its benefits are the same:

- ❖ **Environmentally friendly:** It is 100% natural and does not pollute water, unlike chemical detergents.
- ❖ **Low resource consumption:** It does not require industrial production, saving water, energy and other raw materials used in the manufacture of common detergents.
- ❖ **Economically efficient:** It is free and affordable, unlike commercial detergents.
- ❖ **Simple to prepare:** You need to use only natural and simple ingredients.
- ❖ **Effective washing:** Removes dirt and can be used for both colored and white clothes.
- ❖ **Customizable:** Essential oil can be added for a pleasant smell and white vinegar to combat the effects of hard water.
- ❖ **Easy to store:** It can be stored for long-term use.
- ❖ **Efficient and economical** – Cleans clothes thoroughly, removes dirt and unpleasant odors, and a small amount is enough for several washes.
- ❖ **Easy to prepare** – You can make it at home in just a few simple steps.
- ❖ **Gentle on clothes** – It does not contain aggressive chemicals, so clothes retain their color, texture and elasticity for longer.
- ❖ **Gentle on the skin:** It does not contain artificial fragrances or harsh chemicals, making it ideal for people with sensitive skin.



Returning to the origins is nothing new, and if you want to resume the old habit of your grandparents, there is no shame. The product you will get will be much better than the soaps you find in the trade, which are full of chemicals.

So, with that being said, why don't you try it as well?

proposed by Alexandru Mereuță, Maria Ioana Oglinzanu and Cornelia Fiscu

3. Tallow Candles

Necessary Materials:

- Tallow (fat scraps from beef or sheep)
- Wick (a burning thread in the middle of a candle made from cotton, hemp, or linen)
- Pot
- Molds for pouring (reed tubes or wooden/metal molds)

Preparation Method

I. Rendering the tallow

1. Cut the fat into small pieces and place them in a pot on low heat.
2. Let it melt on low heat until it becomes a clear liquid.
3. Optional Step: Add herbs (such as lavender or mint) and let them infuse for a few minutes over low heat.
4. Strain the liquid to remove the impurities.

II. Preparing the wick

1. Cut pieces of wick.
2. Soak them in liquid tallow and let them dry. This step improves the burning.

III. Pouring the Candles

1. Secure the wick in the center of the mold, using a stick/wire at the top end.
2. Pour the melted tallow into the molds.
3. Let it cool for a few hours or overnight to solidify.

Once cooled, the candles are removed from the molds and are ready to use!

Tallow candles did not burn as cleanly as wax candles, but they were very practical.

Benefits of Tallow Candles

- Eco-friendly: Made from 100% natural ingredients, decomposing without polluting the environment.
- Upcycling animal byproducts: Transforms otherwise discarded fat into a useful product, reducing food waste.
- Easy to make: Requires only basic materials and a few simple steps.
- Chemical-free: Contains no synthetic additives or artificial fragrances, making it safer for indoor air quality.
- Long-lasting burn: Tallow candles burn slowly and evenly, making them more durable than many commercial alternatives.
- Reduces reliance on fossil fuels: Unlike paraffin candles, which are petroleum-based, tallow candles use a renewable and biodegradable resource.
- Customizable: Can be infused with natural scents like herbs or resins for a pleasant fragrance.
- Reusable: Leftover tallow candles can be melted down and remolded into new ones.
- Stable flame: Burns evenly and produces minimal smoke compared to other types of candles.
- Energy-efficient: Made by hand without industrial processes, conserving resources and minimizing environmental impact.

proposed by Teodora Enăchescu and Cornelia Fiscutean

4. Homemade mediterranean soap

Ingredients:

150 g glycerin soap base (unscented)
15-20 drops of essential oil
Colorant optional
Soap mold
Spoon or spatula for stirring
Soap melting bowls

Preparation:

- Cut the glycerin soap base into small pieces to make it easier to melt
- Melt the soap base in a melting pot, water bath or microwave. Be careful not to overheat the soap, and stir occasionally to ensure even melting
- Once the soap base has melted, add the essential oils and mix
- Then add the coloring and mix again
- Pour the scented and colored soap mass into the mold and allow it to cool. Depending on the size and thickness of the soap, it usually takes 1-2 hours for the soap to cool completely.
- When the soap is completely cooled, remove it from the mold.
- Your first soap is ready!



<https://healthworksfitness.com/blog/healthy-holiday-treats/>

proposed by Laura Buravcova

5. Bath bombs

How to make bath bombs? What you need:

70g baking soda
25g cornstarch or potato starch
25g citric acid
30g Epsom salt
2 tbsp water
10 drops essential oil (of your choice)
6-8 drops soap coloring (of your choice)
Bath bomb mold

How to make:

- In a large bowl, mix baking soda, cornstarch, citric acid, and Epsom salt.
- Add a little water and essential oil, mix well to make the mixture homogeneous.
- Form a ball using special molds or regular spoons.
- Leave the ball to dry for a few hours or overnight.
- Drop the ball into the bath and enjoy a fragrant and relaxing bath.



<https://www.1188.lv/zinas/ka-pagatavot-vannas-bumbas-jeb-burbulbumbas/6606>



<https://luckyleafbathbombs.co.uk/blogs/news/the-fizzy-evolution-unveiling-the-colorful-history-of-bath-bombs>

proposed by Laura Buravcova

6. How to make your first candle?

- Prepare your workspace, you can cover the table with newspapers, or a tablecloth that you don't mind damaging if the wax drips onto it.
- Melt the wax in a melting pot or water bath at the temperature indicated for the specific wax, or until the wax is completely melted.
- While the wax is melting, prepare a mold or container into which to pour the wax. If you have chosen a ready-made length of wick with a metal base, place it in the mold or container directly in the middle. If you have chosen an unwaxed wick in a roll, cut the required length, attach the lower part to

the metal base (if the candle will be in a container), or leave it without a base (molds), and also place it in the middle. You can stick a double-sided sticker to the metal base so that it does not move from its place when pouring the wax. Tie the upper part to a stick to fix it.

- Optionally, add essential or aromatic oils and dyes, mix. It should be noted that it is important to follow the manufacturer's instructions on the proportions and doses of wax, oils and dyes. Oil manufacturers also tend to indicate the temperature of the wax at which the oil should be added.
- Place decorative flowers or plants on the sides of the container so that the decorations do not ignite when the candle burns.
- When the wax has reached the required temperature, carefully pour it into a mold or container, arrange the wick so that it is in the middle.
- Allow the wax to harden completely, the duration depends on the size of the candle, but it would be safe to leave it to harden for 24 hours.
- When the candle has hardened, carefully remove it from the mold. Cut off the excess wick so that only about 1 cm remains.
- Allow the candle to rest for at least 48 - 72 hours before burning.
- Enjoy the fruits of your labor and come up with ideas for the next candle.



<https://svecuparadize.lv/lv/raksti/post/9-ka-izveidot-sojas-vaska-konteinersveci-ar-vanilas-deserta-aromatu>
<https://svecuparadize.lv/lv/raksti/post/9-ka-izveidot-sojas-vaska-konteinersveci-ar-vanilas-deserta-aromatu>

proposed by Laura Buravcova

7. Aromatic body scrubs

Required materials:

Salt and/or sugar, base oil, dried herbs/milk or fruit powders/clay/spices/coffee, etc., additional exfoliants - seeds (poppy, cranberry, raspberry), olive/apricot/walnut granules, ground tea tree, etc., essential oils.

Containers for scrub, spoon for mixing.

Preparing the scrub

Fill a container halfway with salt and/or sugar, add the remaining dry ingredients (herbs, fruit, milk powders, dried herbs, etc.) - about 2 tablespoons and a 150-180 ml container. Mix the dry ingredients, add the essential oil and mix again. Add oil (about the same amount as the dry ingredients) so that the consistency of the scrub is thick enough - so that when you take the scrub in your hand it does not "flow" through your fingers and so that it is not loose or "crumbly".



- 20-40 drops of essential oil are required per 100 ml of scrub.
- Sweet almond, grape seed, peach, apricot, coconut, rice bran, safflower oil can be used as a base oil for the scrub.
- The finished scrub can be stored at room temperature for up to 6 months from the time of preparation.

https://www.freepik.com/premium-photo/glass-bowl-with-lemon-scrub-some-ingredients-metal-tray_39802516.htm

proposed by Laura Buravcova

8. Handmade Beeswax Candles

Before electricity, people made candles from beeswax or animal fat. Today, beeswax candles are a more eco-friendly and healthier alternative to paraffin candles, as they burn cleanly and emit a natural, subtle honey scent.

Materials Needed:

- ✓ 100% natural beeswax (pellets or a solid block)
- ✓ Cotton wick (natural, unbleached)
- ✓ A heatproof container (for jar candles) or candle molds
- ✓ Double boiler (or a heatproof bowl over a pot of simmering water)
- ✓ Wooden skewer or chopstick (to hold the wick in place)
- ✓ Essential oils (optional, for added fragrance)

Step-by-Step Instructions:

1. Prepare the Wick

- Cut the cotton wick to fit your chosen container or mold, leaving an extra few centimeters to hold it in place.
- If making jar candles, secure the wick at the bottom with a bit of melted wax or a wick sticker.
- Wrap the top of the wick around a skewer or chopstick, resting it across the jar's opening to keep it centered.

2. Melt the Beeswax

- Place the beeswax in a double boiler and melt over low heat. If using a solid block, cut it into smaller pieces for faster melting.
- Stir occasionally and avoid overheating to preserve the natural properties of the wax.
- If desired, add a few drops of essential oil for fragrance once the wax is fully melted.

3. Pour the Wax

- Carefully pour the melted wax into your prepared container or mold, holding the wick in place.
- Leave a small gap at the top to prevent overflow.

4. Let the Candle Set

- Allow the wax to cool and harden completely (this may take several hours).
- If the wax shrinks around the wick as it cools, you can add a little more melted wax on top to smooth it out.

5. Trim the Wick & Enjoy

- Once the candle is fully set, trim the wick to about 0.5 cm for an even burn.
- Light and enjoy your natural, toxin-free beeswax candle!

Recipe by Zygimantas Duda

9. How to Make Amber Jewelry

1. Prepare the Amber Beads

- If using raw amber, you may need to soften the pieces slightly by soaking them in warm water for a few hours to make them easier to work with.
- String the amber beads on a strong jewelry wire or thread, arranging them in the desired pattern. You can mix different sizes of beads for a varied look or use a single type for a more uniform design.

2. Create the Jewelry

- For a **necklace**: Measure your desired necklace length, then use crimp beads to secure both ends of the wire and attach the clasp.
- For a **bracelet**: Follow the same process, ensuring that the bracelet is tight enough to stay on your wrist but comfortable to wear.

3. Final Touches

- Once the jewelry is assembled, trim the excess wire or thread and secure any loose ends with a knot or crimp bead.
- Add any additional decorative beads or charms for extra flair.

4. Enjoy Your Jewelry

- Your handmade amber jewelry is now ready to wear or gift!

Recipe by Smile Matekonyte

10. Linen Bag Instead of Plastic

In the past, shopping bags were made from linen or hemp fabric, providing a durable and eco-friendly alternative to plastic. You can create your own reusable linen bag for carrying fruits, bread, or other items.

Materials Needed:

- ✓ Linen or hemp fabric (medium-weight, durable)
- ✓ Scissors
- ✓ Measuring tape or ruler
- ✓ Needle and thread (or a sewing machine)
- ✓ Pins or fabric clips
- ✓ Drawstring cord (optional, if making a pouch-style bag)

Step-by-Step Instructions:

1. Cut the Fabric

Decide on the size of your bag. For example:

- Small bag (for nuts or herbs): 20 cm x 25 cm
- Medium bag (for bread or produce): 30 cm x 40 cm
- Large bag (for groceries): 40 cm x 50 cm

Cut two identical rectangular pieces of linen fabric according to your preferred size.

2. Prepare the Edges

To prevent fraying, fold the edges of the fabric about 1 cm inward and press them with an iron. You can also use a zigzag stitch or serger for a cleaner finish.

3. Sew the Bag

- Place the two fabric pieces together, aligning the edges.
- Pin them in place to prevent shifting.
- Using a sewing machine (or hand-stitching with a strong backstitch), sew along three sides of the fabric, leaving the top edge open.
- If making a pouch-style bag, leave a small gap at the top on both sides for the drawstring.

4. Hem the Top Edge

Fold the top edge about 2 cm inward and sew a clean hem. If you're adding a drawstring, create a small tunnel by folding the fabric down 2–3 cm and stitching along the edge, leaving an opening for the cord.

5. Add the Drawstring (Optional)

If you want a drawstring closure:

- Use a safety pin to thread a cotton or jute cord through the tunnel you created.
- Tie knots at the ends to prevent fraying.

6. Turn the Bag Right Side Out & Use!

Flip your bag inside out so the seams are hidden. Now it's ready for use!

This handmade linen bag is washable, reusable, and perfect for reducing plastic waste.

Recipe by Rugile Miseviciute

11. Copperware and Tinning



<https://images.app.goo.gl/5aYXN8y8rBhoguiX7>

Materials:

Copper

Tin

Hammer and engraving tools

Process:

1. Copper sheets are hammered and shaped into cookware, trays, and jugs.
2. Decorative engravings are often added to enhance the design.
3. To prevent oxidation, the inside of the cookware is coated with a thin layer of tin.
4. Over time, tin wears off, requiring periodic retinning to maintain usability.

Historical Background: Copperware has been widely used in Turkish households since the Ottoman era. Tinning ensured that copper cookware remained safe for food preparation. Traditional copper craftsmanship is still practiced in cities like Gaziantep and Kahramanmaraş.

Recipe by Necmettin Ulaş

12. Evil Eye Bead Making (Nazar Boncuğu)



<https://images.app.goo.gl/v9XeXeqnocoRsBuV8>

Materials:

Silica (sand)

Soda and lime

Colored metal oxides (blue, white, black, yellow)

Process:

1. The raw materials are melted in a furnace at high temperatures.
2. Molten glass is shaped using metal rods and blown into circular or oval forms.
3. Different colored layers are added to create the eye motif.
4. The beads are cooled and polished for durability.

Historical Background: The belief in the evil eye dates back to ancient Anatolia and was later adopted by Turkish culture. Nazar boncuğu is still widely used in homes, jewelry, and accessories to ward off negative energy. The most famous production centers are in İzmir and Eskişehir.

Recipe by Piraye Nimet Tekgöz

13. Kilim Weaving



<https://images.app.goo.gl/xZTtyQvSAhVze4o97>

Materials:

Wool or cotton yarn

Wooden loom

Natural dyes

Process:

1. The wool is spun into yarn and dyed with natural pigments.
2. A wooden loom is set up with vertical (warp) threads.
3. Colored yarns are woven horizontally, creating traditional geometric patterns.
4. Once completed, the kilim is removed from the loom, washed, and dried.

Historical Background: Kilim weaving is an ancient Turkish craft dating back to Central Asian nomads. These flat-woven rugs were used for insulation, prayer, and decoration. Today, kilims are still handmade in regions like Anatolia and are highly valued for their craftsmanship.

Recipe by Piraye Nimet Tekgöz

14. Beeswax cream



Aelius Galenus or Claudius Galenus (Pergamos 129 AD – Rome 199 AD) was the second most important physician of Antiquity after Hippocrates. In 150 AD Galen made a beeswax cream to help Roman soldiers deal with dehydration on their faces. Every time they used it they felt a cooling sensation, so Galen called it "cold cream". It solves the problem of dehydration once and for all.

Ingredients:

100 ml of balsamolado

20 g beeswax

Instructions:

Grate the beeswax and melt it in a bain marie.

Add the balsamolado and stir continuously until a mixture is created.

Take our mixture off the heat and put it in a jar until it cools and becomes solid and ready to use!

The beeswax has a soothing, antibiotic, healing, anti-inflammatory, anti-freezing, emollient and anti-aging effect. It is used on burns, cuts, chapped lips, all over the body.

Recipe by Dimitra Papastavrou

15. Greek Olive Oil Soap Recipe



The ancient Greeks anointed themselves with olive oil and essential oils, and they scraped off the oil along with dirt using a metal tool known as a "strigil." They also used olive oil mixed with alkanna.

The soap got its name, according to an ancient Roman myth, from Mount Sapo, where an animal sacrifice altar was located. Women discovered that this mixture of clay cleaned clothes much better and with less effort.

The rain washed away the animal fat, wood, and ashes, transporting them along with the clayey soils to the Tiber River.

In the second century AD, the Greek physician Galen recommended soap for two reasons: as medicine and for cleansing

The manufacture of soap in Europe and the Mediterranean region reappeared by the end of the first millennium BC. The first production centers were in Massalia (Marseille) in France and Savona in Italy. It has been suggested that the French word "Savon" for soap may derive from the name Savona.

One soap that stands out in history is Jabon de Castilla, or Castile soap, also known to pharmacists as Sapo hispaniensis or Sapo castilliensis. Initially an important product for the region of central Spain, Castilla, it eventually became the general name for white, hard soaps made from olive oil.

Green soap cleanses the skin without stripping it of its natural oils. Its natural composition allows the skin pores to remain open, allowing perspiration, while also protecting the skin cells in a natural way. Green soap has the property of maintaining skin hydration. It is rich in antioxidant elements that combat the action of free radicals. The vitamins E and A contained in the oil, and their therapeutic properties, are beneficial and highly exploitable by the body.



**Sodium stearate:
a soap**



**Sodium dodecyl sulfate:
a detergent**

Ingredients

200 g coconut oil

1800 g olive oil

278 g caustic soda (sodium hydroxide)

700 g distilled water

Instructions



Weigh the water and caustic soda. Add the NaOH to the water. Stir until dissolved. Weigh and melt the oils and butters. When the temperature of the NaOH solution drops to 30-35 degrees Celsius, add it to the oils. Stir until achieving a light trace. Pour into molds and leave for 24 hours. Cut and let it mature for a month before use.

And that's it! You've now created your very own soap formula.

Recipe by Ioanna Papageorgiou, Sofia Papalexi

16. Balsamolado (St. John's wort oil) recipe



<https://garden-for-all.com/en/2018/05/25/%CF%85%CF%80%CE%AD%CF%81%CE%B9%CE%BA%CE%BF/>

Ingredients:

100 ml of olive oil

Balsam (St. John's wort) enough to cover with oil

Instructions:

Collect and wash the herb

Let it dry on a towel

Add olive oil to cover the plant.

Leave in direct sunlight for 6 weeks (it's ready when it turns a thick, bright red color)

Strain with a gauze or tulle



Balsamolado has many and various benefits. It is used for: Skin irritations or inflammations, wound healing (injuries-bedsore), light burns, treatment of symptoms from hemorrhoids, lower back pain, sciatica, myalgia, rheumatism, arthritis, insect bites. Since ancient times it has been used to heal wounds, having antiseptic properties. In fact, balsamolado was used by the ancient Spartans to heal their wounds.

Recipe by Nefeli Rementza, Maria Koumasi

III. Traditional Recipes to clean your home using natural eco-friendly ingredients.

These traditional recipes are not only eco-friendly but also effective in maintaining a clean, healthy, and sustainable home environment. By using natural ingredients, you're reducing exposure to harmful chemicals while also helping the planet!

1. Dishwashing Detergent with Ash (lye)

The old housewives boiled the ashes of pure wood in water and used the resulting solution mainly as a cleaner for clothes and even for washing hair, the cleanliness that no other soap would give. The reason was that as the ash is boiled, it releases alkaline elements, creating a liquid with cleansing properties. It can also dissolve fatty residues on dishes.



<http://www.grandvoyageitaly.com/history/lavandaie-the-washerwomen-of-italy>

Ingredients:

- **Wood ash (not from plastics or chemicals):** Use only ash from untreated wood. Ash from wood is ideal because it contains natural alkaline compounds.
- **Water:** Needed to "activate" the ash and create a cleaning solution.
- **Essential oils (optional):** If desired, you can add a few drops of essential oils like lavender or lemon for fragrance.

Instructions:

1. **Mixing the ash:** In a large container, add the ash and pour the water in a 1:3 ratio (1 cup of ash to 3 cups of water).
2. **Boil the water with the ash** for about 6 minutes, removing the foam that forms on the top. Let the boiled ash water settle well, for 2-3 hours, until the ash "sits".
3. **Strain the mixture** through a coffee filter and repeat this step.
4. **Use:** Pour the liquid on the dishes and scrub them with a sponge or cloth. It can also be used for other surfaces, such as kitchen counters and stove tops.

If you make more than you need, you can keep it in the fridge, but make sure it is at room temperature before using.

However, it was not only used for cleanliness. As strange as it may sound, lye also played a leading role in confectionery in old Greek recipes, giving a unique and crunchy texture, as well as a slight swelling to sweet doughs.

The old housewives used it a lot, mainly in recipes like raisin pie, cookies, but also curabiedes and melomakarona.

Some even, apart from its effect on these doughs, consider that lye, always in small quantities, is an ingredient beneficial for health.

Recipe by Eftihia Baladima, Ilias Ntentes

2. All-Purpose Cleaner with Vinegar and Baking Soda

This recipe uses the power of vinegar and baking soda, two of the most well-known natural cleaners that remove grease, dirt, and odors.

Ingredients:

- **1 cup vinegar (white or apple cider):** Vinegar is a natural disinfectant and removes minerals, grease, and bacteria.
- **1/2 cup baking soda:** Baking soda helps remove stains and absorbs odors.
- **2 cups water:** Used to dilute the mixture and make it easier to use.

Instructions:

1. **Mix the ingredients:** In a spray bottle, pour the vinegar and water.
2. **Add the baking soda:** After adding the baking soda, you might see some fizzing (this is normal), so mix well.
3. **Use:** Spray the mixture on the surfaces you want to clean, such as kitchen counters, bathrooms, mirrors, etc., and wipe with a cloth. The vinegar will remove dirt and grease, while the baking soda absorbs odors.

Recipe by Ioannis Verikios

3. Glass Cleaner with Lemon and Vinegar

This cleaner leaves windows and mirrors sparkling clean without chemicals.

Ingredients:

- **1/2 cup vinegar:** As a natural cleaner, vinegar is ideal for dissolving grease and dirt from glass surfaces.
- **1/2 cup water:** Used to dilute the vinegar.
- **Juice from 1 lemon:** Lemon adds freshness and has a strong cleaning action due to its acidity.

Instructions:

1. **Mix the ingredients:** In a spray bottle, add the vinegar, water, and lemon juice.
2. **Spray and wipe:** Spray the mixture on the glass surfaces and wipe with a clean cloth to remove spots and leave the surface shiny.

Recipe by Vasileios Vagenas

4. Laundry Detergent

Making your own laundry detergent is a great way to reduce plastic waste and avoid harmful chemicals. This detergent is simple, effective, and eco-friendly.

Ingredients:

- **1 bar of Castile soap (or any natural soap):** A gentle soap that's perfect for washing clothes.
- **1 cup washing soda (sodium carbonate):** This helps to soften the water and boost cleaning power.
- **1/2 cup borax:** A natural mineral that enhances the effectiveness of the detergent.
- **Water:** To dilute and mix the ingredients.

Instructions:

1. Grate the bar of soap into small pieces or use a food processor to break it down.
2. In a large pot, heat about 4 liters (1 gallon) of water until it's hot but not boiling.
3. Add the grated soap to the hot water and stir until the soap dissolves completely.
4. Add the washing soda and borax, stirring until everything is dissolved.
5. Pour the mixture into a large container and let it cool.
6. Use about 1/4 to 1/2 cup per load of laundry.

Recipe by Kleopatra Kefala, Olga Gioti

5. Natural Furniture Polish

This furniture polish is made with simple, natural ingredients to bring a nice shine to your wooden furniture and keep it well-maintained.

Ingredients:

- **1/4 cup olive oil:** Acts as a natural polish and conditioner for wood.
- **1/4 cup white vinegar:** Helps clean the surface and remove dirt or grime.
- **A few drops of essential oil (optional):** For fragrance (e.g., lemon or lavender).

Instructions:

1. Mix the olive oil and vinegar together in a small bottle or container.
2. If you want a fresh scent, add a few drops of your favorite essential oil.
3. Shake the bottle to combine the ingredients.
4. Apply a small amount of the mixture to a soft cloth and gently rub it onto your wooden furniture, following the grain of the wood.
5. Buff it with a clean, dry cloth to bring out a nice shine.

Recipe by Angeliki Karasavidi

6. Natural Deodorizer (Baking Soda and Essential Oils)

This simple deodorizer can be used around the house to eliminate unwanted smells in the air or even in the refrigerator.

Ingredients:

- **1/2 cup baking soda:** Absorbs odors naturally.
- **10–15 drops of essential oil:** Choose your favorite scent, such as lavender, lemon, or eucalyptus.

Instructions:

1. Place the baking soda in a small jar or container.
2. Add 10–15 drops of your chosen essential oil to the baking soda.
3. Stir well to combine the oil with the baking soda.
4. Leave the jar open in areas that need freshening, such as the fridge, bathroom, or closet.
5. Stir the mixture occasionally to refresh the scent.

Recipe by Ntentes Filippou, Virginia Kalogirou

7. Citrus Vinegar Cleaner

Citrus peels have natural oils that can help cut through grease and grime. This cleaner combines the power of vinegar with citrus for an all-purpose solution.

Ingredients:

- **1 large jar:** To store the solution.
- **Citrus peels** (e.g., lemon, orange, grapefruit): About 2 cups of peels.
- **1 cup white vinegar:** The main cleaning agent.
- **Water:** To dilute the solution.

Instructions:

1. Fill the jar with the citrus peels.
2. Pour the vinegar over the peels, ensuring they are fully submerged.
3. Seal the jar and let it sit in a cool, dark place for 1–2 weeks. Shake the jar every few days.
4. After 1-2 weeks, strain out the peels and dilute the vinegar with water (about 1:1 ratio).
5. Use this citrus vinegar cleaner as an all-purpose cleaner for surfaces like countertops, sinks, and windows.

Recipe by Elena Balla

7. Carpet Cleaner (Baking Soda and Essential Oils)

This homemade carpet cleaner is simple and helps freshen up your carpets without using harsh chemicals.

Ingredients:

- **1 cup baking soda:** A great natural cleaner and deodorizer.
- **10–20 drops of essential oil:** For fragrance (e.g., lavender, peppermint, or lemon).

Instructions:

1. Mix the baking soda and essential oil in a bowl, stirring well to evenly distribute the essential oil throughout the baking soda.
2. Sprinkle the mixture generously over your carpet.
3. Let it sit for about 15–20 minutes.

4. Vacuum the carpet thoroughly to remove the baking soda and freshen up the fibers.

Recipe by Marios Mastoras

8. Glass Cleaner (Cornstarch and Vinegar)

This homemade glass cleaner is easy to make and doesn't leave streaks.

Ingredients:

- **1 tablespoon cornstarch:** Helps to remove streaks.
- **1 cup water:** The base for the solution.
- **1/2 cup white vinegar:** Acts as a natural cleaner and disinfectant.

Instructions:

1. In a small bowl, mix the cornstarch with water until fully dissolved.
2. Add the vinegar and stir well.
3. Pour the mixture into a spray bottle.
4. Spray the solution onto glass surfaces like mirrors and windows.
5. Wipe with a clean cloth for a streak-free shine.

Recipe by Maria Kontogiorgou

9. Wood Scrub (For Cleaning and Polishing Wooden Surfaces)

This scrub will clean and condition wooden surfaces while giving them a nice polished finish.

Ingredients:

- **1/2 cup olive oil:** Helps condition and nourish the wood.
- **1/4 cup white vinegar:** Cleans and removes grime.
- **1/4 cup beeswax:** Adds a protective layer to the wood and helps polish it.
- **Essential oil (optional):** For fragrance.

Instructions:

1. Melt the beeswax in a double boiler.
2. Once the beeswax is melted, add the olive oil and vinegar. Stir to combine.
3. Remove from heat and add a few drops of essential oil (if desired).
4. Let the mixture cool until it thickens slightly, then apply it to wooden furniture or surfaces using a soft cloth.
5. Buff to bring out a nice sheen.

Recipe by Melina Pappa, Alexandra Nastouli

10. Toilet Cleaner

A simple, natural toilet cleaner made with vinegar and baking soda can help keep your toilet bowl sparkling clean.

Ingredients:

- **1/2 cup baking soda:** Cleans and deodorizes.
- **1 cup white vinegar:** Disinfects and breaks down grime.
- **10 drops of essential oil (optional):** For fragrance (e.g., tea tree, lemon, or lavender).

Instructions:

1. Pour the baking soda directly into the toilet bowl.
2. Add the vinegar, and let the mixture fizz and sit for a few minutes.
3. Use a toilet brush to scrub the inside of the bowl.
4. Let it sit for another 5 minutes before flushing to rinse away any remaining residue.

Recipe by Ioannis Beidaris

11. Hand Scrub (Sugar and Olive Oil)

A gentle and natural hand scrub made with simple ingredients that exfoliate and moisturize.

Ingredients:

- **1/2 cup white sugar or brown sugar:** Sugar is a great natural exfoliant.
- **1/4 cup olive oil:** Moisturizes and nourishes the skin.
- **10 drops of essential oil (optional):** For fragrance (e.g., lavender, peppermint).

Instructions:

1. Mix the sugar and olive oil in a bowl until they form a thick paste.
2. Add a few drops of essential oil for fragrance, if desired.
3. Gently rub the scrub on your hands, focusing on rough areas, and then rinse with warm water.

Recipe by Angeliki Tsoutsis

12. Fabric Softener

Ingredients:

- 1 cup baking soda

- 6 cups distilled white vinegar
- 8 cups water
- 10 -15 10 -15 drops lemon essential oils (optional) or 10 -15 drops essential oils, of choice (optional)

Instructions:

Add the baking soda to the plastic container. Add 1 cup of water to start with. Add slowly the vinegar to the bottle as the vinegar and baking soda will start to fizz. Add the rest of the water swirling around and cover venting the top a few times. Last add the essential oil. Add 1 cup in your final rinse cycle for each load but give the bottle a good shake to stir up the essential oil if using.

Recipe by Christiana Konstanti

13. Natural Chestnut Detergent - An Eco-friendly and Budget-Friendly Way to Clean Clothes

Wondering how to create an inexpensive, effective, and sustainable detergent? Here's how you can make a natural detergent from chestnuts at home with no extra cost and no harmful chemicals. This eco-friendly solution lets you clean your clothes healthily while cutting down on plastic waste.

How Does Natural Chestnut Detergent Work?

Chestnuts contain saponin, a natural cleaning agent that works similarly to regular detergents. This substance reduces the surface tension of water, allowing it to penetrate fabrics more easily and effectively lift dirt and grease.

When chestnuts are placed in water, they release saponin, which acts as a natural surfactant. The molecules of saponin surround dirt and pull it away from fabrics without leaving harmful residues behind. Thanks to this gentle action, chestnut detergent is perfect for delicate fabrics and an excellent choice for those with sensitive skin or allergies.

How to Make Chestnut Laundry Detergent:

Making this detergent is simple and takes around 30 minutes.

Ingredients:

235g chestnuts

400ml hot water

(Optional) a few drops of essential oil for fragrance

Equipment Needed:

Wooden chopper

Kitchen knife

Kitchen cloth

Glass jar with lid

Blender

Tea strainer

Instructions:

1. Peel the chestnuts – Wash them thoroughly to remove dirt.
2. Cut the chestnuts – Place them on a chopping board covered by a cloth (to prevent slipping) and cut them into quarters. You can peel them, but it is not mandatory.
3. Hydrate the chestnuts – Put the pieces inside a jar filled with hot water.
 - * After 5 minutes, the water starts to turn yellow.
 - * After an hour, the mixture becomes foamy when the jar is shaken.
4. Blend and strain – After an hour, blend the contents well in the blender, then strain the liquid through a fine strainer. Keep the detergent in a bottle. The chestnut remains can be composted.
5. (Optional) Add perfume –Add a few drops of essential oil if you want to.
6. Store the detergent – Store it in the fridge and use it within a week.

Important! Do not prepare a large amount of detergent at once, because it will spoil quickly due to the lack of food preservatives. If you want to have chestnuts ready at any time, you can chop, dehydrate and then store them in a jar for later use.

How to use chestnut detergent?

The amount of detergent needed depends on the hardness of the water, the amount of laundry and the level of dirt. In general, for a 6 kg washing machine, use the equivalent of a cap of regular liquid detergent. If the clothes are very dirty, you can increase the amount of detergent used.

With this natural solution, you can have clean laundry without using harmful chemicals while protecting the environment and saving money!

Benefits of Chestnut Detergent:

Eco-friendly: It's 100% natural and doesn't pollute water, unlike chemical detergents.

Resource-efficient: It doesn't require industrial production, saving water, energy, and raw materials used in making regular detergents.

Recycling inedible chestnuts: Turns what would otherwise be waste into a sustainable option for washing clothes.

Affordable: It's free and inexpensive compared to commercial detergents.

Easy to make: Only crushed chestnuts and hot water are needed—no special ingredients or equipment.

Effective cleaning: Removes dirt and works well on both colored and white clothes.

Customizable: You can add essential oils for fragrance or white vinegar to deal with hard water.

Simple to store: Shredded and dried chestnuts can be stored for long-term use.

Gentle on clothes: No harsh chemicals, so clothes maintain their color, texture, and elasticity for longer.

Good for sensitive skin: Free from synthetic fragrances and additives that may cause irritation or allergic reactions.

proposed by Laura Nechifor, Ana Cojocariu, Ioana Diaconița, Amalia Albianu and Ilinca Istrate



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