



# Burdock

*Arctium Lappa, Arctium Minus*

Burdock is best known for its giant, rhubarb-like leaves and round, sticky cockleburs, said to have inspired the invention of Velcro (™). Often found growing in pastures, burs are nuisances that tangle themselves in the fur of livestock and pets.

Burdock is one of the most utilized detoxifying herbs in both Chinese and Western herbal medicine. Burdock Root is used medicinally as an infusion (tea), a tincture, and in capsules as well as cooked as a vegetable. Burdock infusion is known as a “blood purifier” and healthy tonic. Burdock leaves can be used as a poultice or made into a salve for irritated skin. They are said to be helpful with fever when laid across the forehead.

Supplementing the diet with Burdock root extract has shown positive effects in the treatment of acne especially of inflammatory type. The oil from Burdock seeds has been shown to have anti-aging properties for skin care.

If you are patient enough to remove seeds from their sticky coatings, you could grind them very fine, add some Olive or another good oil, and use for an anti-aging, anti-acne body scrub.

You can also crush the seeds while still in their burs and make a tincture or infused oil, so you can strain out the sticky parts. Be sure to use an extra fine strainer. If any moisture settles in the bottom of the oil, it must be removed for long term storage. It might be worth the work if you compare it to the cost of fancy anti-aging serums.

Burdock root is edible and used extensively in Asian cooking where it is called “Gobo”. You can harvest the roots in their first autumn through the second early spring of its life cycle. Use as you would potatoes or add to stir-fry dishes.

Burdock leaves are delicious as a wrap for fired roasted meats with no other seasoning needed for flavor. They can be blanched then and frozen between layers of wax paper for future use.

