

# FAERIE MAGAZINE

ISSUE NO.

44

AUTUMN 2018

*Enchantment for a Modern Age*



\$12.95 USA | \$14.95 CAN



*Falling Through Time*

*The* **OUTLANDER** *Issue*



Photo by Piiia Tolonen

*“And women trapped in the rocks of fairy duns, traveling far and arriving exhausted, who knew not where they had been, nor how they had come there.” —Diana Gabaldon, Outlander*

We suspect that more than a few of our readers feel, now and then, like they’re out of time—or drawn to faraway places and eras, longing to return to an age when the world was alight with magic, when people believed in fairies and lore, when stones could scream and the forests hid all manner of secrets. In *Faerie Magazine*, and in *The Faerie Handbook* and *The Mermaid Handbook*, we regularly reach through history to find beauty and romance, sumptuous works of art, and old, old tales, not to mention ravishing costumes that trail the ground behind us. So *Outlander* seemed like the perfect universe to celebrate in this jam-packed, extended autumnal issue. Who wouldn’t like to fall through time, even just once, and wake in a wilder, more bewitching landscape where the veil between worlds is thinner (and a most passionate, time-spanning love might be just around the corner)?

*Outlander*’s heroine Claire Fraser is the quintessential out-of-time character, of course, who takes the old and makes it new—who borrows equally from the past, present, and future, making her own world as she goes. That’s what we strive to do here in these pages: cross time and space to create that sense of endless possibility and wonder that makes us lose our breath, while always staying grounded in the real world. Claire may pass through a standing stone and fall into the wilds of the 18th century, but then she gets to work.

So we hope you enjoy these pages. We’ve brought together as many *Outlander*-esque delights as we could. We’ve talked with Diana Gabaldon, creator of this spangled universe; Terry Dresbach, the Emmy-nominated costumer for the TV series; and knitwear designer Flora Kennedy. We have Scottish fireside treats from Gather Victoria, lavender wands from Charlotte Baker, tea-leaf reading from Veronica Varlow, an herb-filled abode in the English countryside, and so much more. We wanted to make this a dream issue for *Outlander* fans, full of recipes and tutorials and herbs so bright you can almost smell them, but just as pleasurable for those who’ve yet to discover this enchanted universe and simply want to add some enchantment to their own.

Love,

Carolyn Turgeon



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VOLUME 44 | Autumn 2018

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ISSN: 1554-9267, recorded with the U.S. Library of Congress.  
Faerie Magazine is published in the United States of America.

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*Faerie Magazine's Outlander Issue*



**Charlotte Baker**

Charlotte Baker is an artist and horticulturist who is constantly seeking ways to combine her two passions. She enjoys uniting form and function to fashion objects that are both beautiful and useful, and lend a little magic to ordinary tasks. Her handmade brooms were featured in our “Practical Magic” issue and in the book *Swept Away: The Vanishing Art of Broom Making* by Karen Hobbs. In this issue, Charlotte shares a tutorial for making beribboned wands using lavender fresh from the garden. “Of the myriad ways to preserve lavender,” she says, “these wands are my favorite. Their old-fashioned, feminine charm is the perfect accompaniment to their usefulness.”



**Danielle Prohom Olson**

Danielle Prohom Olson is a wildcrafter and herbalist dedicated to reviving the ancestral wisdom of wild plants as foods, healers, and spiritual guides. Her blog *GatherVictoria.com* is filled with seasonal recipes, articles, and videos exploring the arts of magical cookery, the nature-based seasonal celebrations of our ancestors, and the herbs, wild plants, backyard weeds, blossoms, roots, and berries at the heart of our oldest and most sacred traditions. For this issue, “I was thrilled to indulge my passion for all things *Outlander*,” she says. “Inspired by the autumn bounty of the Highlands, I envisioned our renegade adventurers settling down at a cozy fireside table for a romantic tête-à-tête!”



**Ange Harper**

Photographer Ange Harper currently resides in London but grew up in South Africa. She’s heavily influenced by the fantasy movies of the 1980s and takes inspiration from the great Pre-Raphaelite paintings. “I always surround myself with people whose creativity I admire,” she says, “and I love nothing more than creating our own little magical world, leaving the 21st century behind for a few hours.” She created the *Outlander* set when her sister was visiting from Australia and they wanted to do a photo shoot. “Everyone agreed that Dance of the Druids was the perfect choice to celebrate sisterhood, make new friendships, and of course, try to summon Jamie Fraser.”



**Timothy Schaffert**

Timothy Schaffert is the author of five novels, most recently *The Swan Gondola*, part revisionist fairy tale and part historical novel, inspired by the Wizard of Oz’s pre-wizardry days in turn-of-the-century Omaha. *The Swan Gondola* was an Oprah.com Book of the Week and featured as one of its recommendations for “Costume-Drama Novels Every Intelligent Woman Needs to Read.” His short fiction has appeared in *Faerie*, *Fairy Tale Review*, and *My Mother She Killed Me*, *My Father He Ate Me: 40 New Fairy Tales*. “Any snippet of antiquity is so rich with story,” he says. “A turn-of-the-century newspaper ad for whiskey can cast a pretty potent spell on the imagination.”



**Grace Nuth**

Grace Nuth is a writer and artist living in a cozy cottage in central Ohio with her husband, two black cats, and a garden full of fairies. Co-author of *The Faerie Handbook*, she has worked happily for *Faerie Magazine* for the past five years, and is now the senior editor. As creator of the Facebook groups Domythic Bliss and Daily Fae-shion, featuring fairy-inspired home décor and fashion respectively, Nuth found Ali English’s herbalist cottage and Celtic Fusion Designs’ gorgeous daily wear delightful subjects to explore. “I especially adored the copper pot full of oversize decorative mushrooms in Ali’s home. They make one feel the size of a fairy in comparison.”



**Stephanie Stewart-Howard**

Stephanie Stewart-Howard is a magical medievalist and artist making her way in the tech world. She lives in the greater Nashville area with her husband and two gray cats. For this issue she not only interviews knitwear designer Flora Kennedy but also writes about the enchantment of tartan. “I’m a costumer and former Highland dancer, so I love all textiles and tartans—my fabrics bills are a little insane,” she says. “The scholar in me also loves tracking down how to cut the fabric right for the period I’m working with and talking to experts who know the garment and fabric origin stories. Fashion is who we are, socially, culturally, and in our deepest hearts.”

## Signs You May Have FALLEN THROUGH TIME

by Grace Nuth

Illustration by Guinevere von Sneed

- You can lace your own corset without assistance.
- You wear corsets.
- When your friends order cocktails, you prefer a neat whiskey—or champagne if you’re feeling feisty.
- You believe music sounds best when played on a Victrola.
- Most of your remedies for colds or headaches come from your stock of dried herbs.
- Antique photos give you a strong sense of déjà vu, and a peculiar sadness.
  - Your ankles feel bare without the brush of long skirts against them.
  - Wait, bare ankles? How unseemly! Sturdy boots for walking in the Highlands, please!
- When friends ask you for makeup advice, you suggest crushed berries or herbs for blush and lipstick shades.
- Modern life is far too fast, chaotic, and noisy. You prefer quiet moments in nature, reading, working on embroidery, or gardening.
- You sew your own clothes ... without a sewing machine.
- There are no televisions or computers in your home. Modern electronics make you feel uncomfortable.
- You reach out to touch every standing stone you visit.

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Things We Love

*Autumn 2018*



*Illustration by*  
Guinevere von Sneed



# FALLING THROUGH TIME OUTLANDER

by CAROLYN TURGEON

Photography by STEVE PARKE

*“When the day shall come, that we do part,” he said softly, and turned to look at me, “if my last words are not ‘I love you’—ye’ll ken it was because I didna have time.”*

—Diana Gabaldon, *The Fiery Cross*

The Bromo Seltzer Arts Tower has been part of the Baltimore landscape since 1911, when Captain Isaac E. Emerson—inventor of the headache elixir Bromo Seltzer—commissioned architect Joseph Evans Sperry to create what would be company headquarters in the style of Florence’s Palazzo Vecchio, complete with a jutting clock tower. It was once the city’s tallest building and definitely the most show-stopping. For a photo shoot about falling through time, it was the perfect location, especially for a magazine that makes this eclectic city its home.

To get to the tower, which was fully restored just last year, you ascend fifteen floors on an old-time freight elevator before climbing a ladder into a click-clacking room that might be the lair of a mad scientist. It’s full of steampunk-esque machines and high-voltage devices you’d do well to keep at a distance. Each of the four walls features a massive clock face made of glass, filtering light in a dreamy way that adds to the surreal effect. You may very well have fallen through time to get here in the first place; not even the light looks the same.

Our time-traveling team needed a dress for our cover that was as dramatic as the locale, and it was photo editor Steve Parke who suggested local makeup artist turned fantasy designer Justina A. Prince, who happens to be a die-hard *Outlander* fan, not only of the show and


books but of costumer Terry Dresbach (see our feature on page 62). Prince was up for the challenge, wanting to pay homage to Dresbach without actually copying any of her designs. “Her work is immaculate and beautiful,” Prince says of the Emmy-nominated designer, “warm and earthy. You believe that someone she’s dressed comes from another time, but they’re relatable too.”

Trying to stay as true to period as she could, Prince sought the help of Mary Bova from Baltimore’s A.T. Jones & Sons—America’s oldest costume shop, which recently celebrated its 150th birthday—in constructing an authentic 18th century corset from scratch. “I’d never tried to make something period before,” Prince says. “Bova was instrumental in creating this silhouette.” The seasoned costumer came to Prince’s studio and patiently taught her to put steel boning into corsets. “The dress is not historically accurate, of course,” Prince says, “but the corset is classically constructed, and I’m so grateful! [Bova] is a deeply humble and deeply talented person.”

Prince also enlisted Baltimore artist Tim Kelly to hand-paint the thistles that line the dress and complement the colorful tartan. Why hand-paint the thistles? “I feel like mixing the two mediums elevates both of them,” Prince says. “The painting made the dress feel more timeless to me. Someone from any age could have painted the thistles the same way.”

Photography: Steve Parke    Gown/Styling: Justina A. Prince

Model: Sarah Bentman    MUA and Hair: Nikki Verdecchia of NV Salon Collective

A woman with dark hair, wearing a long, off-the-shoulder historical dress with a blue and white plaid skirt and a bodice decorated with floral patterns, stands in the center of a large, circular clock tower. She is looking up at the camera with a slight smile. The clock face is massive, with large, dark metal hands and a complex gear mechanism at the top. The tower's interior is made of dark stone, and the light from the clock face creates a strong silhouette of the woman and the clock hands against the bright background.

*“But just then, for that fraction of time, it seems as though all things are possible. You can look across the limitations of your own life, and see that they are really nothing. In that moment when time stops, it is as though you know you could undertake any venture, complete it and come back to yourself, to find the world unchanged, and everything just as you left it a moment before. And it’s as though knowing that everything is possible, suddenly nothing is necessary.”*

*—Diana Gabaldon, Outlander*

## On Our Cover

Autumn 2018



Prince chose Scotland's national flower for a specific reason too. "The biggest inspiration for me was the idea of the thistle representing Jamie and Claire's love for each other," she says, "spanning time and distance. It represents that tumultuousness, their constant effort to stay close to each other even when separated by time and space. Plus they're unsure of each other at first. They have their hackles, or thistles, up. They need each other to survive but need to protect themselves from each other too." *Braveheart* was also an inspiration: "When William Wallace marries the Scottish maiden, the priest wraps a piece of fabric embroidered with thistles around their hands."

Prince recommended our cover model Sarah Bentman for her Claire-esque dark locks and her "sense of wonder and awe and innocence in how she looks and how she moves through the world"—reminiscent of Claire's innocence as she travels through time. Nikki Verdecchia of Hampden's NV Salon kept Bentman's hair wild (her mission: "make her look like she's been running through the Highlands all day") and her face fresh. This was no easy feat on a July morning in a glassed-in room with the (dreamy yet potent) sun shining in. And in a heavy dress, standing in an old clock, no less!

Parke is the one who brought it all together—standing on a ladder, peering through that heavy, dust-filled air to capture the perfect shot. "Seeing the dress on Sarah for the first time in person," he says, "I couldn't wait to get her in front of the large panes of glass, clock hands, and Roman numerals. This beautiful gown has a remarkable silhouette that plays perfectly against the industrial feel of the clock face and gears and the dinginess of the space. And how often do you have a timepiece that dwarfs a human being at your disposal?"

Several artists came together, then, to create these images, capturing a moment both modern and classic, in a location rooted in history, evoking a feeling of falling through time. As we read in *Outlander*, "There were moments, of course. Those small spaces in time, too soon gone, when everything seems to stand still, and existence is balanced on a perfect point, like the moment of change between the dark and the light, and when both and neither surround you."



Follow Carolyn Turgeon on Instagram @carolynturgeon.  
Find photographer Steve Parke at [steveparke.com](http://steveparke.com).





## DESIGN HARMONY: JUSTINA A. PRINCE

Though 18th century corsets are not in her normal repertoire, designer Justina A. Prince has always had a love for fantasy couture that combines seemingly incongruous elements. While creating the *Outlander* dress for this issue of *Faerie Magazine*, she was also finishing her debut line, “The Bird and the Fish,” which she was readying to present at New York Fashion Week. Each dress represents either a bird or a fish, “two different species that seem to be in opposition and come together to live in harmony,” she says.

Which is not too different from the way she sees Jamie and Claire: “They’re from two different worlds that overlap each other in time. They’re so different yet bound to each other, and they too show how different species can share an environment symbiotically.” It’s no surprise, then, that *Outlander* is one of her biggest inspirations. “All the silhouettes are indicative of different eras,” she says, “so that you travel through time as you experience the line.” What does she love most about the books? “Diana Gabaldon has the ability to not only transport you to another time but make you feel you can relate to that time—and that it’s relating to you.”

Another heavy influence is the natural world. Prince sees each gown as representing a goddess—one who’s in touch with nature, a “steward of the environment, of the water and air.” The line “reminds us that we’re the goddesses and gods and it’s our job to protect other living things.” To that end, she realizes how important materialistic sustainability is to the fashion industry and tries to use materials that “improve the environment rather than destroy it.” “I’m so inspired by what other sustainable designers are doing right now,” she says, “and want to incorporate some of their best practices into my work. All my underlinings will be seeded, for example, so that when they’re thrown away and no longer usable, they’ll grow into something else.”

The shots here, all by traveling photographer Cassandra Panek, were taken at another historic Baltimore landmark: the Howard P. Rawlings Conservatory, established in 1888 and modeled on London’s Kew Gardens. What began as a Palm House and Orchid Room now includes three greenhouses and two display pavilions, too—all perfect for a photo shoot spanning worlds and time.

*Creative Director/Gown Designer:* **Justina A. Prince**   *Photography:* **Cassandra Panek**

*Models:* **Mary Clark, Katlyn Keneally, Adrianna Morgan, Sarah Shellhorn, Elizabeth Walker**   *Hair:* **D’vora Stal**  
*MUA:* **Athena Golden**   *Wardrobe Assistant:* **Sam Stephenson**   *Custom shoes:* **Katlyn Keneally**   *Jewelry, crowns, and wands:* **Mystic Myne**





The Callanish standing stones on the Isle of Lewis, Scotland are at least 5,000 years old, and although we're not sure if Claire ever used them, they are the inspiration for Craigh na Dun in Outlander. Today they are open to the public, and you can walk among them and imagine all the amazing things that have happened here over the millennia.

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Diana Gabaldon as  
Iona MacTavish

Courtesy of Starz

# AN INTERVIEW WITH DIANA GABALDON

*The creator of the Outlander series shares how she does what she does, and what's next*

BY RONA BERG

One fine day last spring, I met my sister-in-law Rita for lunch. She was clutching a chunky paperback with an embossed cover, the kind, so I thought, that I would never read. Rita told me my brother had bought her the entire eight-volume boxed set of *Outlander*, by Diana Gabaldon, the blockbuster series about time travel in the Scottish Highlands, because she had become so obsessed with the first book. She was sad to be nearing the end, she said, and may need to go back to the beginning and start all over again. (At an average of 1,200 pages per volume, that tells you something.) But be warned, she said. There's a lot of sex in those stories.

I'm not sure why she needed to warn me, but I was intrigued—not about the sex, it was the time travel!—and so I bought the first volume, *Outlander*. It was impossible to put down, and I've been devouring those chunky paperbacks with the embossed covers ever since. And now I'm sad to be nearing the end too. (Though there's good news on that front: Gabaldon is working on a ninth book, *Go Tell the Bees That I Am Gone*, and claims that she'll make it an even ten and be done.)

*Outlander* is a smart, well-written, impeccably researched page turner that is impossible to categorize or define. The *New York Times* called it “genre-bending.” A rich, bubbling stew of romance and historical fiction, it is also a thriller, thick with magical enchantment, herbal lore, and more. Whatever you call it, one thing is certain: It's an international publishing sensation. *Outlander* has sold well over 30 million copies in 44 languages around the world since the first book was published in 1991. It was made into a hit TV series on Starz and was recently renewed for its fifth and sixth seasons. The show costars Sam Heughan, the hunky Scotsman, in the role of Jamie Fraser, and Irish-born beauty Caitriona Balfe as Claire Randall. And maybe someday *Outlander* will be a Broadway musical—there have been talks—but possibly not while the TV show is running.

The story centers around Claire, a former combat nurse, who takes a second honeymoon to Scotland in 1946 with her husband, Frank. Out for a walk one morning near Inverness, she stumbles upon Craigh na Dun, an ancient circle of stones

that turns out to be a portal to the past, and Claire slips through to 1743. Before she can even blink an eye, she finds herself in mortal danger and is rescued by the dashing Highlander Jamie Fraser.

If you have read the books, you know what happens next, and if not, well, you are in for a great treat. But be warned: Don't pick up these books unless you are prepared to not put them down. And if you can, read the *Outlander* books in sequence before you watch the TV series. That way, you'll have the characters take shape in your imagination before the actors get inside your head. Gabaldon agrees. “The show is a very good companion to the books,” she says. “But it's not a replacement.”

Creating a richly layered, exquisitely detailed, multisensory world is important to the author, and she is really, really good at it. In fact, the attention to detail is a main reason *Outlander* resonates so powerfully with readers—it makes the books transportive. Gabaldon, who is really fun to talk to, is extremely articulate and strongly opinionated (a bit like

Jamie Fraser!) and has mastered a writing style that propels—no, hurtles—readers forward. It immerses them squarely in a sensual world of her creation, and it turns out that is exactly what Gabaldon is going after. “I start with a kernel—an object, a vivid image, a line of dialogue—and I'll write down a line or two that attempts to capture where that was. Writing immersively is a matter of technique but also seeing what's there that's having a sensory effect,” she says. “If you use any three or more of the five senses in a scene, that scene will become three-dimensional, and readers will feel like they're in there. Most new writers use sight and sound, but not touch and smell.”

Gabaldon is not a linear writer, and that comes through in her books, which twist, turn, and loop back around in ever surprising and delightfully elliptical ways. In fact, she feels very strongly that most people, from grammar school on up, are “brainwashed into thinking we must write from beginning to end, create a rough draft, and polish it. Most people's minds don't work that way,” she continues. “I don't work on rough drafts at all. I fiddle with a sentence until it gets as good as it can be. I am the absolute opposite of a linear writer.”

*“I start with a kernel—an object, a vivid image, a line of dialogue—and I'll write down a line or two that attempts to capture where that was.”*

Some writers chart and map things out to the smallest detail. But Gabaldon does not. She keeps writing “in a back and forth manner”—doing her research at the same time—and sees where her characters lead her and how their rapport moves the story forward. Gabaldon is a fast talker, and her writing is, in part, a process of talking to herself: “How do I describe this 18th century crystal goblet? Oh, it’s winter light. It’s mid-afternoon. I have to say it’s ‘cold blue light’ because it’s a winter afternoon.”

If you are awed by the complexity of the *Outlander* plots and have ever wondered how Gabaldon weaves those many gold threads together into that shimmering tapestry, it is astounding to think about how serendipitously it all got started. Gabaldon is incredibly prolific—and pragmatic—and has always had at least three projects to work on at a time.

In the early days, she says, “I had to keep going to get paid.” If she came to a place in the novel where she got stuck, “I would stop,” she says, “and pick up a software review to write. If I got stuck again, I’d go to work on a grant proposal. Some people get stuck and stop for coffee or walk the dog. But those people don’t always come back, and they don’t produce. I’d reach the end of

the evening with a lot of work done.”

Now, of course, those software reviews and grant proposals are ancient history. Instead there’s the challenge of keeping the novels’ momentum going for readers who started with the first book and have read the books in sequence while also providing enough context for those who’ve stepped into the middle of the series. “In a series, you want someone who picks up your book at an airport to enjoy it but not bore followers who were there with you from the beginning.” She calls it “jacquard writing”: “I just pick up a few threads here and there. Given the size of the books and the complexity, it takes increasing ingenuity to engineer it.” And like every writer, she occasionally gets stalled and loses momentum herself. But when that happens—she calls it “a cold day”—Gabaldon turns to one of the 2,200-plus books in her office library for help. “I pick up one of the books, flip through it, it triggers something, and it picks up the writing.”

Though she always wanted to write, Gabaldon didn’t set out to be a novelist. In fact, she is a scientist, with a bachelor of science degree in zoology from Northern Arizona University, a master’s degree in marine biology from the University of

California, San Diego, Scripps Institute of Oceanography, and a Ph.D. in quantitative behavioral ecology from Northern Arizona University.

In the 1980s, she was an assistant professor of environmental studies at Arizona State University, in Tempe, and also juggled her two other jobs as a software reviewer and a grant writer. She “had slid sideways into having an odd expertise in scientific computation—using computers to do science.” As if that wasn’t enough, she has a husband and, at that time, her three kids were under the age of six.

And then it hit her: “At 35, I said to myself, Mozart was dead at 36. I don’t want to be 60 and *not* have written a novel.” Gabaldon decided to try and write a book “for practice” to see if she could do it. “The determination to write came first,” she says, “then I asked myself, What am I going to write about? What would be the easiest thing for me? I’m a research professor, and I know I can do research. I could research historical fiction!” With that decided, she needed to figure out “the what and where”—what period in history, what part of the world. “I was just casting around: American Civil War? Italy in the time of the Borgias? Scotland was a pure accident.”

One thing she did know was that the novel would need conflict. She happened to see an episode of *Doctor Who*, with a young Scotsman wearing “a rather fetching kilt.” The next day Gabaldon went to the library—this was 1988, before Google—and typed “Scotland,” “Highlands,” “18th century” into the computerized card catalog. She took a bunch of books home, and she was hooked. “Scotland has a very rich cultural tradition,” she says. “Scots hold grudges. They’re very opinionated. And there are stories under every rock in Scotland.” Our hero, Jamie Fraser, was named after the fetching Scotsman Jamie from *Doctor Who*.

Not surprisingly, Claire’s character was more of a challenge. On the third day of writing the novel, Gabaldon went back to the library and ran a quick search of Scottish history, looking for conflict. She found the Jacobite Rising. “I thought it would be good to have a woman play off the men in kilts,” she laughs. “If it was the English versus the Highlanders, there would be plenty of conflict if I introduced an Englishwoman.”

But Claire was even more of a handful than Gabaldon bargained for. “I fought with her for two or three pages, but she just kept making smartass modern remarks, so I said to her,



At Doune Castle

Okay, I’ll figure out how you got here later.” And that, of course, evolved into time travel.

As she writes, Gabaldon breaks her characters into three types. There are the “onions,” like Jamie and Claire: “I add more layers the more I work with them.” And there are the “mushrooms” like Lord John Grey or Mr. Willoughby: “They just pop up. I don’t expect them or plan for them.” The “hard nuts” are “the people you’re stuck with because they are real historical people or they appear in the plot, like Brianna.”

Gabaldon has lived in the same house in Phoenix for thirty years. She has two dachshunds and has been happily married to the same man, Doug Watkins, for forty-seven years. She is extremely approachable and seems to love to engage with her readers, who can find her on *TheLITforum.com*, an online literary hangout where Gabaldon found “a free-floating twenty-four-hour literary

cocktail party” many years ago when the site was in an earlier incarnation. It now has an entire section called the Diana Gabaldon forum, where fans of all things *Outlander* can engage with each other—and her.

When she’s not writing, she’s reading. Gabaldon learned to read at age three and never stopped. When asked what she likes to read at the moment (aside from tomes on Scottish history), she says she has “a particular taste for Celtic crime novels by Ian Rankin, Adrian McKinty, and Christopher Brookmyre.”

Now Gabaldon has come to a place where she’s not only polished her craft but, still the professor at heart, has a lot to share with budding writers. Occasionally, she’ll retreat to her old family home in Flagstaff to write in seclusion, which she loves. But it’s not necessary. “The act of writing will oil your synapses. Even if you have ten minutes a day to write a novel, eventually, you’ll get there,” she says. As E.L. Doctorow once said, “Writing is like driving a car at night. You never see further than your headlights, but you can make the whole trip that way.”

“Early on, I decided if it turns out that I have no imagination, I can steal things from history,” Gabaldon laughs. “It worked out pretty well.”



Connect with Diana Gabaldon on Facebook and Twitter

Follow Rona Berg on Instagram @ronaberg



© Lisa Gill

# FIRESIDE FEASTS

*Recipes and Photography by  
Danielle Prohom Olson (a.k.a. Gather Victoria)*

An autumn night has fallen over the Highlands, but inside the sturdy walls of Lallybroch a cozy fireside table is set. Here our renegade adventurers are settling in for a romantic tête-à-tête—and a wee evening snack! Candlelight flickers over a round of rosemary and oat bannock (no Scottish meal is complete without this oat bread), and glistening bowls of honey butter, chutney, and jelly filled with a fall bounty of berries, fruits, and nuts. (Visit [faeriemagazine.com](http://faeriemagazine.com) to find the recipes for the chutney and jelly.) Afterward our duo will tuck into the cranachan, Scotland's beloved dessert, served with a fragrant thistle blossom tea.

Now you may not live in a Scottish manor, but you can feast like Jamie and Claire. These easy-to-make treats transport your taste buds back in time and set the stage for an intimate and delicious fireside tête-à-tête of your own!

## AUTUMN APPLE CRANACHAN

*Cranachan* is a Gaelic word for a classic Scottish “pudding” or trifle originally made for harvest celebrations. Composed of layers of toasted oats, cream, and fresh berries, it was traditionally assembled right at the table. It is also a favorite dessert at weddings, bringing good luck to newlyweds. Simple and easy to make, this autumn version features caramelized oats, whisky cream, and tart apples.



## THISTLE BLOSSOM

Those prickly thistles growing uninvited at the back of the garden have been eaten as vegetables for eons, and their beautiful pale mauve to royal purple blossoms have long been used in teas and curing remedies. In fact, the humble Scotch thistle is absolutely royal—an emblem of the House of Stuart itself. Claire's wedding band was engraved with interlaced thistle blooms symbolizing her marriage to Scotland.



ROSEMARY OAT BANNOCK

Makes two small bannock cakes  
(or eight pieces total)

Recipes varied according to region, but most 18th century bannocks were hearty, flat cakes of unleavened oatmeal dough, formed into an oval shape and then baked on a girdle (think *griddle*). The “most luxurious kind,” according to Isobel Grant, author of *Highland Folk-Ways*, were “covered with caudle, a thin batter of eggs, milk, and butter, and then baked before the fire.”

- 1 cup rolled oats
- 1 cup oat flour (you can make your own by whirring up oats in a coffee grinder)
- ¼ teaspoon salt
- 6 tablespoons unsalted butter
- ¼ to ½ cup cream or milk (plus one extra tablespoon for the caudle)
- 2 tablespoons minced fresh rosemary (1 tablespoon dried)
- 1 teaspoon grated orange zest (optional)
- 3 tablespoons sugar (and three more tablespoons for sprinkling)
- 1 egg yolk (for the caudle)

Preheat the oven to 400°F. Grease a cast iron skillet or baking sheet.

Place the oats, flour, salt, sugar, rosemary, and orange zest in a large bowl and mix together with a fork. Cut the butter into the flour mixture. Stir in the cream until all the flour is absorbed. You may not need all of it.

Gather the rough dough together and place on a surface lightly dusted with oat flour. Knead until the dough holds its consistency (but don’t overwork).

Divide the dough in half and roll out each half into a circle about a quarter-inch thick. Using the handle of a wooden spoon, score your bannock into four quarters. Press firmly but don’t divide the dough.

In small jar, vigorously mix your egg yolk with a tablespoon of cream. Then brush the mixture over the top of the bannock. Sprinkle with sugar.

Gently lift your bannock and place in a cast iron pan or on a baking sheet. Bake about 20 minutes or until golden and crisping at the edges.



THISTLE BLOSSOM TEA

This tea is made by pulling the downy feathery blooms out from the spiky heads, but be warned—you’ll need gloves. Use young flower buds that haven’t begun to puff out seed. Spread out the petals on a cookie sheet in a quiet, nonbreezy spot, and let dry for a day or two. If you can’t find Scotch thistle, any thistle bloom will do!

- 2 tablespoons dried thistle blossoms
- 4 cups of water

Place your blossoms in a teapot. Boil water, then pour over. Let steep for 10 minutes. Sieve off the petals. Serve.

AUTUMN APPLE CRANACHAN

Serves Four

- 3 peeled, cored and diced apples (McIntosh is good)
- 3 tablespoons honey
- 1 cup rolled oats
- 3 tablespoons butter
- 4 tablespoons brown sugar
- 1 tablespoon white sugar
- A pinch of cinnamon
- A pinch of nutmeg or allspice
- 1 teaspoon of grated lemon zest
- ¾ cup whipping cream
- 2 to 3 teaspoons whisky (optional)

Place apples in a saucepan with water on medium heat. Cover. Cook till soft and easily mashed with a fork. Add more water if dry.

Put the oats, sugar, and 2 tablespoons of butter and spices in a frying pan over medium heat. Cook for a couple of minutes until toasted, but keep a careful watch—once caramelized it can burn quickly.

Remove to a parchment-paper-lined plate or small baking sheet and allow to cool. Set aside a couple of tablespoons for garnish.

Roughly mash the apples with honey, lemon zest, and tablespoon of butter.

Whip the cream and 1 tablespoon of white sugar. Once stiff, slowly and gently fold in the whisky.

Layer the toasted oats, apples, and whisky cream in four pretty glasses and sprinkle the reserved toasted oats atop each serving.

Serve immediately. (Otherwise your toasted oats will go soggy!)

CHESTNUT HONEY BUTTER

One of Scotland’s oldest surviving sweet chestnut trees was planted by Mary, Queen of Scots. Their starchy, soft, and sweet nuts make excellent eating, and in late fall Scottish vendors sell them roasted and piping hot on the streets.

Preparing chestnuts from the shell is a bit laborious, so this recipe calls for store-bought peeled and pre-roasted chestnuts. If the chestnuts are hard, soak them in a little water for a couple of hours to soften.

Drain and use as directed.

- 2 cups whole chestnuts (pre-cooked or roasted)
- ¼ cup honey
- 1 vanilla bean, scraped, or ½ teaspoon vanilla extract
- 1 cup milk or cream (or more if you like a smoother texture)
- 3 to 4 tablespoons butter
- 2 tablespoons of whisky or brandy (optional)

Place chestnuts in a blender or food processor with the honey, butter, cream, vanilla, and salt.

Add ¾ cup of cream, then continue processing/blending, scraping down the sides regularly, adding a little more cream until you achieve a smooth spreadable consistency. Stir in the whisky if desired.

Place in small jars and refrigerate. Will keep for two weeks.



Follow Danielle Prohom Olson (a.k.a. Gather Victoria) on her blog at [gathervictoria.com](http://gathervictoria.com).



CHESTNUT HONEY BUTTER

This chestnut “butter” is sweetened with honey and makes a rich and creamy spread for bannock or scones.



ROSEMARY OAT BANNOCK

Like any good Scot, Jamie loves his oats, and no Scottish meal is complete without bannocks, oatcakes, or oat bread.

# THE ECCENTRICITIES OF GENTLEMEN

EPHEMERA AND APOCRYPHA FROM THE NOTES OF TIMOTHY SCHAFFERT, ESQ.

## BAD WHISKEY AND CROSS WOMEN



“Matrimonial miseries, domestic unhappiness, social wretchedness, and national degradation; every evil under the sun will be found, if you go sufficiently far back, to have had its origin in whisky.”  
—from “Grant’s Impressions of Ireland” in Tait’s Edinburgh Magazine for 1844

Whiskey (sometimes referred to as “whisk(e)y” in whiskey critique so the whiskey critic can acknowledge that whiskey is sometimes spelled “whisky” depending on the region) has bewildered, bedeviled, and bemused women for centuries, even as men have rigorously (and often chauvinistically) protected whiskey-drinking as a pleasure and vice exclusive to gentlemen and varmint.

It can be argued—and has been, especially by whiskey critics who are women—that whiskey has been both a symbol and a rite of exclusion. From blues tunes to cigar clubs, men have staked their claim on whiskey appreciation. They even proudly appreciate whiskey unworthy of it: swigging rotgut is a classic cliché of masculinity in westerns.

Even when marketing directly to women, whiskey dealers have emphasized that the drink is a little rough-and-tumble for delicate tongues. Women whiskey aficionados have successfully challenged such stereotypes and traditions. And though books such as Fred Minnick’s *Whiskey Women: The Untold Story of How Women Saved Bourbon, Scotch, and Irish Whiskey* have outlined the roles women have played in the development of whiskey around the world, this all works against decades of the popular notion that it’s manly to love whiskey too much (no matter how bad it might be) and womanly to hate it (for its taste, but also because men love it too much).

Here are a few glimpses of women’s relationship with whiskey in centuries past:

- ★ Historical anti-liquor movements, such as temperance unions and prohibition campaigns, were often led by women and blamed on women. Saloons were considered a threat to family, and the popular imagination enjoyed portraying women in protest. While some women held prayer vigils outside saloons, others took a different tack. Under the title “Spunky Women,” a news item in 1854 described forty to fifty women of Winchester, Indiana, visiting “the different rumsellers in town” following the death by whiskey of a local man. They demanded the saloon keepers sign an agreement to sell no more liquor; if they didn’t sign, the women busted up the bottles behind the bar.
- ★ Though counties refused to outlaw liquor, many of them did outlaw women from getting near it (and this is perhaps responsible for some women’s disgust for saloons). Women were forbidden from bars and clubs throughout the 1800s, but ads for “medicinal” whiskies and other

potent cure-alls (in the years before FDA approval) kept local newspapers in business. Ads for Duffy Barley Malt Whiskey were often testimonials by “analytical chemists,” as well as doctors, ministers, and the women who drank it. A Duffy ad that ran in several papers in 1886 looks like editorial content (under the headline “Facts About Whiskey”) and asserts that “women, from the peculiar character of their organism, frequently need pure whiskey stimulant, and with them it is indispensable.”

- ★ Ads for Duffy’s included the following spokeswomen: Mrs. Henke, “known as the handsomest woman in Milwaukee,” who was cured of consumption after physicians failed her; Miss Susie John Cotton, who came down with pneumonia while traveling by train and was given Duffy’s by a minister; Miss Mae Rodgers was cured of bronchitis; and Frances Burton (116 years old), Mrs. Susan Baker (101 years); and Mrs. Priscilla Martin (93) attested to Duffy’s claim as “the Great Renewer of Youth.”
- ★ Lydia Pinkham, who inspired a line of curatives for women that were 18 percent alcohol, wrote a medical book in which she recommended partridgeberry wine, fortified port, and whiskey in milk for a stomachache. A 1907 ad for her spiked vegetable compound asserts that “a sickly, irritable, and complaining woman always carries a cloud of depression with her; she is not only unhappy herself but is a damper to all joy and happiness when with her family and friends.”
- ★ An ad for Tharp’s Berkeley Rye in 1901 features, in bold print, “A Whiskey Ladies Like” followed, in smaller print, by: “to have in the house for sickness and emergencies,” complete with a phone number for “family orders.” The ad goes on to boast that Tharp’s “has the distinction of being more imitated by unscrupulous dealers than any other in the market. Inferior goods are never imitated.”

Though newspaper advertising portrayed women as needing these liquor-laced patent medicines (some of which also contained morphine and cocaine) to address their distinctly feminine problems, the newspaper’s reporters often attributed crimes to a deadly combination of whiskey and women. Everything from suicide and embezzlement was initiated by “whiskey and women,” though there were never women at any of the scenes of these crimes (and, indeed, women were sometimes the victims). Here’s just a sample:

- ★ The following quote was tossed around in the mid-19th century, as early as 1856, perhaps providing decades of criminal motivation: “The five great evils of life are said to be standing collars, stove pipe hats, tight boots, bad whiskey, and cross women.”
- ★ In the News and Notions section of an 1880 edition of the *Mower County Transcript* (Lansing, Minnesota): “Whiskey, women and cards are said to be the rocks on which mail agent Ed. Keeler foundered. Either one of these cursed evils are enough to ruin a man, but from the three combined, there



could be no escape.”

- ★ As train robbers stood on a scaffold, about to be hanged, “they made statements attributing their downfall to whiskey, women and bad company,” according to the *Scranton Tribune* in 1894.
- ★ A man murdered his lover, and was sentenced to hang; he blamed, in a letter quoted in an 1897 article, “whiskey drinking, bad women, game and deceit.”
- ★ An escaped convict in Tampa in 1907 declared that “whiskey, women, and cards caused my downfall.”

- ★ The *Santa Fe New Mexican* in 1904 reported on a group of men in a brawl that led to a knife fight. Though no women were present, nor mentioned in the article, the headline declared: “Whiskey and Women the Cause.”
- ★ Back in 1882, such attribution seemed to already be recognized widely as cliché. A Kentuckian wrote teasingly to the editor of a Louisiana paper: “Possibly you will not seriously object to a few lines from this land of good whiskey, pretty women and fast horses.”



Timothy Schaffert is the author of five novels, most recently *The Swan Gondola*. He is a professor of English at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln. Learn more at [timothyschaffert.com](http://timothyschaffert.com).



## Fiddler's Green

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# Druids Dance

by Grace Nuth

Photography by Ange Harper

*“There’s no place on earth with more of the old superstitions and magic mixed into its daily life than the Scottish Highlands.”*

—*Diana Gabaldon*, *Outlander*

Figures in white emerge from the swirling mists that surround the standing stones. The quiet observer may spy these women, hair loose and wild, spinning and twirling in an elaborate dance, holding cloth-wrapped lanterns adorned with flowers outstretched in one hand, swaying like will-o’-wisps.

It is an image that repeats time and again in artworks and photographs from many eras: A circle of women, dancing and twirling, creating mystery and magic from both the dance and their wild feminine beauty. The sight has its roots in ancient traditions and mysteries. After all, there is evidence that the druids of ancient Celtic tribes had powerful female spiritual leaders called ban-draoidh, or bandrui. Although their existence was mostly passed over in records kept by the male writers of history, they can be seen in characters in folklore and myth, such as Fedelm the seer, from the Ulster cycle of Irish mythology.

These undocumented female priestesses and druids in Celtic cultures have become tantalizing inspiration for stories like *The Mists of Avalon* and, of course, *Outlander*, in which Diana Gabaldon imagines a sisterhood of priestesses who secretly leave their houses in the conservative era of 1940s Scotland on the eve of Samhain, gathering around the standing stones of Craigh na Dun (a creation of Gabaldon’s imagination, though numerous real standing stones exist) to dance a magical and beautiful ritual.

This image was at the forefront of photographer Ange Harper’s mind when she gathered her models together at a local park where an old wooden gate post magically became a standing stone (in post-processing, Harper had to remove the graffiti and make the wood look like stone!). Through the mists, the three women lean toward each other, faces painted with white sigils and magical lines echoing the ley lines that some believe run between sacred sites in Ireland, England, and Scotland. They raise their glowing blooms of white flowers toward the stone, acknowledging both the magic of these ancient monoliths and the history, mostly lost to time, of a powerful sisterhood in ancient Celtic lands.



*Druids:* **Sofia Vella, Druidess Of Midian, Benita Botha**

*Hair:* **Breena J.**

*Follow Ange Harper at [angeharper.com](http://angeharper.com).*

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*Grace Nuth is a writer, artist, and model living in central Ohio with her husband, black cats, and a garden full of fairies. She is also co-author of The Faerie Handbook. To follow her projects, please visit [gracenuth.com](http://gracenuth.com).*

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*The Magic of*  
**SCOTLAND**

*With Gavin Hardcastle*

*by Jill Gleeson*



## The Magic of Scotland

*Jill Gleeson*

Like the prickles of the fierce, resilient thistle, should it be handled without care, Scotland gets under your skin. Visit once and you may well succumb to enchantment, as if spellbound by the “little people” said to live within the Isle of Skye’s Fairy Glen. And then you’ll find yourself returning again and again, falling deeper for the country each time, much like Gavin Hardcastle. The photographer, who was raised in England but lives a continent and an ocean away on Vancouver Island, British Columbia, returns to Scotland as often as twice a year.

His images from these trips reveal a rich, evocative topography, lonely and precious, with graceful waterfalls, skies slate-hued and candy-colored too, and verdant forests. Here and there are man-made structures, though they appear forgotten, isolated by time. Hardcastle first snapped images on Scottish soil two decades ago, when he visited his parents in the southwestern village of Auchencairn, where they had retired.

“I fell in love with the landscape instantly,” Hardcastle recalls. “I’ve explored the Highlands as well as the East Coast. I’ve also spent a lot of time in the Southwest, where some of my favorite forests, like Carstramon Wood, can be found. I love the beech trees during bluebell season ... Scotland offers that perfect blend of amazing natural landscapes and historic sites. It’s a land of rich culture, myth, and legend.”

Along with thistle—the country’s national emblem—bluebells are one of Scotland’s most beloved flowers. According to folklore, bluebells are believed to house fairies who cast spells on cloddish humans trampling the blossoms. Hardcastle must tread lightly, for he has shot images of the flower without repercussion. Or perhaps the fairies simply love his photographs, such as the one he snapped on an overcast May afternoon in Ballachulish, a stone’s throw from Glencoe, in the untamed section of northwest Scotland called the Highlands.

The area, celebrated for stunning mountain scenery, has been featured in a number of films and appears in the opening credits of every *Outlander* episode. In Hardcastle’s photograph, the blossoming bluebells, all the brighter for the gray skies, are seen in the foreground. St. John’s Church, built in 1842, sits lovely and a bit foreboding further back. But it is the small rectangular building to the left of the mist-daubed graveyard that holds the historical appeal.

In 1770, Bishop Robert Forbes used this simple stone storehouse as a place to preach. Forbes was famously a supporter of Bonnie Prince Charlie, who began the Jacobite rising of 1745, one of a series of rebellions that aimed to restore his father, the deposed James II of England (and James VII of Scotland) to the throne. Forbes was forced to sermonize from this secular site due to Britain’s Penal Laws, which barred Scottish Episcopal parishioners from their places of worship. Today, the wee building stands picturesque and perfect in the middle of one of Scotland’s most cherished and notable landscapes.

Hardcastle, who was born and raised in West Yorkshire, began

pursuing a career in landscape photography about five years ago as a way of submerging himself in the natural world he loves so much. “Spending time in nature is good for the soul,” he says. “Feeling that connection to the earth is reason enough to spend as much time out in the elements as possible. Being able to create inspiring art while I’m out there is the icing on the cake.”

Every year, Hardcastle holds workshops in locations across the planet, including Patagonia, the Faroe Islands, and of course, Scotland. Next year will see Hardcastle leading his students to Scottish shoots in Inveraray, Glencoe, and the Isle of Skye. Perhaps if they’re very diligent and a little lucky, they’ll walk away with a shot of Eilean Donan Castle like the one Hardcastle captured.

Standing guard over an island in the Highlands, surrounded by three great sea lochs, the castle was first built in the 13th century. Partly destroyed in the 1719 Jacobite uprising, it stood in ruins for two centuries until members of Clan Macrae restored it to its former glory. Hardcastle’s photograph, taken as a melon-colored sunset lit the sky behind Eilean Donan and was reflected in puddles before it, is breathtaking. It’s also proof that, despite rumors to the contrary, it’s not always raining in Scotland.

Other iconic Scottish locales where Hardcastle has managed magnificent images include what he calls “the Fey Realm.” Hidden deep in the Highlands, it’s swathed in green and graced by a waterfall over which perches what looks like a stone bridge made for a mythological beastie, perhaps a unicorn. (After all, Scotland recently adopted it as one of its national animals.)

But according to Hardcastle, his favorite place to shoot is Finnich Glen, outside Glasgow. Featuring a circular rock known as the Devil’s Pulpit, Finnich Glen is bisected by a river that runs eerily red. Used as the setting for the truth-inducing-waters scene in *Outlander*, the gorge is said to have been a secret gathering site for ancient druids. Looking at Hardcastle’s photograph of it, it could be possible. There is an undeniable sense of magic and mystery to the place.

While Hardcastle is preparing for his trip to Scotland next year with his photography students, he’s also hard at work on his YouTube channel “to give subscribers a feel for what it’s like on my photography adventures and to hopefully inspire others to get out and connect with nature,” he says. “With photography I’m out in nature all the time. One day I could be shooting the sunrise over a frozen lake in subzero temperatures, the next day I could be standing next to molten lava as it pours into the ocean. Life as a photographer is difficult but very rewarding.”



*For more information about Gavin Hardcastle’s images and workshops (he’s now taking bookings for 2020), visit [fototripper.com](http://fototripper.com). For more information about Scotland, visit [visitscotland.com](http://visitscotland.com).*

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*Find Jill’s writing about adventure, love, loss and healing at [gleesonreboots.com](http://gleesonreboots.com).*







# *A Healing Garden*

*The top 20 medicinal plants and remedies,  
some known as “fairy herbs,”  
from 18th century Scotland*

**By Rona Berg**



**C**laire Fraser, one of the two main characters in *Outlander* (with her husband, Jamie Fraser), was a World War II combat nurse in England before she time-traveled back to 18th century Scotland. In an environment with few doctors and crude surgical options, her medical training certainly came in handy. A gifted diagnostician and healer, Claire had to work with what she had, which meant she foraged for native healing herbs and plants and used them to concoct (and decoct) remedies for everything from pesky skin irritations to gunshot wounds.

Scotland has a long folk-medicine tradition, and plant remedies were the only means of treatment in Claire’s time. (They still make up 25 percent of modern-day medicine.) Botanical remedies were passed down through the generations by word of mouth, until handwritten collections, like the 18th century *Book of Herbal Remedies*, began to appear.

The University of Glasgow created an early medical school, around 1704, and constructed “the Physic Garden,” an herb garden with medicinal plants. The garden was set aside for students to use for the study of plants and their healing properties under John Marshall, surgeon of Glasgow, who was the keeper of the garden and a teacher of botany. (In addition to herbs, fruits and flowers, like the lily of the valley, were important apothecary staples.)

The study of plants was essential to the medical students, who learned how to distinguish between them and use them

for herbal healing. But doctors were still a rarity, their services were costly, and it was difficult for them to travel great distances, especially to rural areas. That’s why most relied on local healers, or “wise women,” like Claire to administer herbal tonics, teas, elixirs, poultices, and more. Claire stored hers in glass jars, which are nonreactive, in a beautiful carved-wood apothecary cabinet.

Some plants widely used in Scotland at the time were known as “fairy herbs” for their seemingly magical powers: foxglove and dandelion, yarrow, vervain, and more. Foxglove was considered an especially potent remedy, with powers believed to come from the fairy realm. Its name means “fairy fingers” in Irish and “banshee herb” in Scottish Gaelic.

Before Claire came along, says Diana Gabaldon, author of the *Outlander* series (see her interview on page 20), “I didn’t have any particular interest in plant medicine. But when I began thinking about Claire, I got interested in herbs—after all, some of these plants have been used medicinally for thousands of years.” Gabaldon wanted to make sure the herbs and plants she featured in the books were “historically accurate, native to 18th century Scotland, and used for the purposes described.”

Although she now has a vast collection of books on botanicals, Gabaldon’s primary resource for her research on herbs and plant medicine is *A Modern Herbal* by Mrs. M. Grieve, first published in 1931. An impressive tome, it contains the medicinal, culinary, and cosmetic properties—along with information on cultivation and folklore—of more than 800 plants.

*Here is an introduction to some of the most powerful healing plants native to 18th century Scotland, many of which are still in use today. The benefits described here are by no means comprehensive.*

### **BELLADONNA** (*Atropa belladonna*)

Also known today as deadly nightshade and banewort, belladonna was extremely effective for treating digestive pains and muscle spasms. It was also used to relieve menopausal sweats for women. Belladonna got its name—“beautiful woman”—in Ancient Rome, where women dropped belladonna into their eyes to make their pupils dilate, considered a highly desirous look back then. But belladonna is extremely poisonous if not administered correctly.

### **COMFREY ROOT** (*Symphytum officinale folia*)

An herb with pinkish-white flowers that grows in damp climates throughout Europe, comfrey was made into tinctures, teas, poultices, and ointments to ease digestive issues and heal damaged tissues. It should be avoided by pregnant or nursing women.

### **CONEFLOWER** (*Echinacea purpurea*)

Plants that are part of the echinacea family are colloquially known as coneflowers and look like pretty purple daisies. Echinacea strengthens the immune system, shortens the life of an infection, and even makes the body more resistant to catching one, like a cold, in the first place. In 18th century Scotland, coneflower would have been made into an ointment or a salve, which is what Claire used to treat a gunshot wound.

### **FENNEL** (*Foeniculum vulgare*)

In India, fennel seeds are a digestif that is always on offer at the end of a meal. In Scotland, the seeds were used for treating digestive issues from bad breath to gas, bloating, stomach upset, heartburn, and flatulence. Fennel is rich in vitamin C, which may have helped sailors prevent scurvy, and fennel seeds were used to block keyholes to ward off witchcraft and stop ghosts from entering.

### **FOXGLOVE** (*Digitalis purpurea*)

Foxglove grows in the rich, loamy soil of Scotland and in cracks and crevices of stone walls. It is highly toxic, but despite that, it has been used for congestive heart failure and relieving edema (fluid retention)—what was then called dropsy.

It causes a high rise in blood pressure and then a slowing of the pulse, and it can ultimately cause the blood flow and pulse to normalize. Only a very skilled healer, like Claire, could be entrusted to use it.

### **HAWTHORN** (*Crataegus monogyna*)

One of the oldest words in English, “Hawthorn,” a.k.a. “cockspur thorn” is powerful medicine. It is known as the “heart herb” for its use over many centuries in treating heart conditions from high blood pressure to angina. Hawthorn contains antioxidants called flavonoids that improve circulation and protect blood vessels.

### **HEATHER** (*Calluna vulgaris*)

Heather is said to be a soporific and induces sleep. Tired Highlanders would stuff their pillows with heather to help them rest.

### **LADY’S MANTLE** (*Alchemilla mollis*)

Known as a “woman’s herb,” lady’s mantle was supposed to help healing after childbirth, and when the dew of lady’s mantle was applied to a girl’s face, it was said to make her more beautiful.

### **LAVENDER** (*Lavendula angustifolia*)

Lavender is known for its relaxing and stress-relieving properties, which is why Claire gives Alex Randall a mixture of mint and lavender infused into poppy syrup to help him sleep in *Dragonfly in Amber*.

Lavender is an antimicrobial and anti-inflammatory, and many cooks, myself included, keep a vial of lavender essential oil by the stove because it helps heal burns. The smell of lavender has aromatherapeutic properties along with a calming effect on the central nervous system. It can kill the bacteria that causes acne, soothe tired muscles, and help you sleep.

In Elizabethan England—when housekeeping and hygiene left much to be desired—lavender buds were strewn on the floor to release their scent and perfume the air when walked upon.

### **LEMON BALM** (*Melissa officinalis*)

With its lemony smell and pretty white flowers, lemon balm is just that—a soothing balm. It has been used since the Middle Ages to improve sleep, heal wounds, reduce stress, and promote longevity. It is also used to treat digestive issues, toothache, and headache and to ease melancholy.

### **LILY OF THE VALLEY** (*Convallaria majalis*)

With medicinal properties similar to foxglove, lily of the valley was a common substitute. It can also be toxic. The flowers,

# A Healing Garden

Rona Berg

however, have a lovely sweet scent that belie their potentially deadly nature. Starting in the Middle Ages, a poultice of lily of the valley, peppercorns, and lavender was applied to the forehead and the back of the neck to treat melancholy, depression, and seizures.

### PENNYROYAL (*Mentha pulegium*)

A member of the mint family, pennyroyal has similar properties to peppermint. It can help ease indigestion, nausea, and the symptoms of colic. It was also used to bring on menstruation or miscarriage. Pennyroyal can be dangerous and should be avoided.

### NETTLES (*Urtica dioica*)

Loaded with vitamins and minerals, and especially rich in iron, nettles were used to ease muscle cramping, gout, menstrual issues, and a range of skin conditions from eczema to skin rashes. Also known as “stinging nettles,” it is important to boil them first to remove the sting.”

### PEPPERMINT (*Mentha piperita*)

Peppermint thrives in moist spots, especially around riverbanks in Scotland. It helps relieve nausea, upset stomach, and flatulence, or what was called “wind” in Claire’s day. A cup of peppermint tea at the end of an overindulgent meal will help settle the stomach. Geillis Duncan used a remedy with extract of peppermint on her husband for that purpose, and Claire makes a tea of peppermint and blackcurrant to help Jamie beat the flu.

A peppermint soak is also a great way to relieve tired, achy feet. It reduces inflammation and relaxes the muscles, plus it feels cooling. Mint contains menthol, which cools the skin, increases the blood flow, and is an antibacterial.

### SAINT-JOHN’S-WORT (*Hypericum perforatum*)

Saint-John’s-wort is used to treat depression, and even today it’s an active ingredient in anti-depression medications. In the 18th century, depression was believed to signify possession by the devil. A small pouch filled with Saint-John’s-wort was held under the armpit of the sufferer, and it was believed that the medicine would absorb through the skin and drive away the devil.

Saint-John’s-wort was known in Scottish Gaelic as *achlasan Chaluim Chille*, or “the armpit package of Columba,” and was believed to ward off the evil eye and bring prosperity. Saint-John’s-wort, when soaked in vinegar, was also used to staunch bleeding. Claire used it to disinfect wounds in *Outlander*. She also claimed it would ease headaches and carried it in her portable medical kit.

### VALERIAN (*Valeriana officinalis*)

Valerian was a sedative, used to relieve stress, anxiety, and insomnia, as it sedates the central nervous system. It’s now

known as herbal valium. Valerian also has a relaxing action on the muscles of the bowel and blood vessels, making it very useful for treating cases of stress-related irritable bowel syndrome (IBS) and hypertension. The Ancient Greeks used it as a love potion, since it was said to ease conflict and resolve arguments. The Greeks also believed that valerian could ward off evil and would hang sprigs under their windows to keep it out of the house.

### VERVAIN (*Verbena officinalis*)

Vervain is an herb with many poetic common names like simpler’s joy, enchanter’s plant, herb of the cross, Juno’s tears, pigeon’s grass, herb of grace, wild hyssop, ironweed, wild verbena, and Indian hyssop. It is an anti-inflammatory, also used to treat anxiety and menstrual cramps. In Claire’s day, it was used as a mouth rinse to help relieve gum problems. It was known to help lift the spirits and keep postpartum depression at bay.

### WHITE WILLOW BARK (*Salix alba*)

White willow bark is a powerful remedy, commonly used to treat pain. An analgesic and anti-inflammatory, white willow bark was used in the 18th century to ease the symptoms of rheumatism, gout, headaches, diarrhea, and dysentery, and to reduce fever. In fact, we still use it today: a white willow bark derivative contains salicylic acid, which was used to make aspirin. It is also called creek willow because it grows by the water. A tea made from its pinkish bark is an effective remedy for aches and pains.

### WILD GARLIC (*Allium Sativum*)

Garlic can be a miracle cure: anti-inflammatory, antibiotic, antifungal, antiviral. Claire used it to treat Jamie’s gunshot wound in an early scene. Its use dates back centuries. It was used to repel insects in the Middle Ages, when it was also thought to repel the plague. Ancient Egyptians would bury garlic with their dead to ease their journey. Garlic contains an antioxidant-rich sulfur compound called allicin, which helps regulate blood pressure and blood sugar and balance the digestive system. It also gives garlic its smell. Wild garlic, crow garlic, and field garlic are the varieties found in Britain.

### YARROW (*Achillea millefolium*)

Yarrow was historically used as a disinfectant, and Claire washed her hair with yarrow to ward off lice. Rosemary was used for that purpose too.



Follow Rona Berg on Instagram @ronaberg





© Emma Stoner Photography

# CELTIC FUSION DESIGNS

*by Grace Nuth*

Fabric artist Regina Tierney creates clothing for the magic ritual that is daily life. Her designs, made from natural and sustainable materials, add a feel of Celtic spirit and culture into ensembles that can be worn anywhere and everywhere.

Indeed, that is how her business first came to be. She started creating clothing for herself to wear every day that would express her character, sense of place, and culture. Before she knew it, strangers were approaching her to ask her where she bought her clothes. “I imagine anyone who feels and identifies a connection to Celtic culture would resonate with my creations,” she says, “but I am continuously taken aback by the variety of people from all walks of life who love my designs.” It quickly became clear that she was onto something. Five years ago, she entered a contest for entrepreneurs and won. This confirmation gave her the nudge she needed to start Celtic Fusion Design.

It is clear that Celtic Fusion is not simply a fashion company but a lifestyle and spiritual walk of life for Tierney: “To me the power of Celtic art lies in its deep roots in earth-based worship and connection to our ancestors. Giving awareness to this is a natural way of connecting to the beauty of Celtic spirit, and this will easily spill over into expressing yourself outwardly through fashion.” For each garment bought from Celtic Fusion’s website, Tierney gives a donation for a tree to be planted as a way to offset the carbon released in the production of her designs. “Fashion is one of the top polluters of our planet. I wanted to do my business ethically and give back to the earth,” she says.

Creating each design for Celtic Fusion can be a long and time-consuming process, involving conceptual drawings on paper, choosing fabrics from Tierney’s stock of textiles and trims, creating the patterns, and cutting the designs. The prototype can be redesigned a half dozen times or more before she is satisfied with the new creation.

Although Ireland is the home of Celtic Fusion and the heart of the business, Tierney also admires Scotland as well. “The culture is so vibrant and historic, and the landscape is immense and wild,” she says. So how would the famous Sassenach lass, Claire Fraser, dress in Tierney’s designs if she lived today? “If I could recommend an outfit for Claire, it would be my new tweed Morrigan skirt, with a flax Grace O’Malley top and Bones cincher belt, with a Dark and Stormy Druid cape over this,” Tierney says. “I think she would look amazing in my designs.”





A photograph of four women in long white dresses standing in a circle in a forest, holding hands. They are positioned in front of several large, upright standing stones. The background is a dense forest of bare trees under a blue sky. The overall mood is ethereal and mystical.

# FAIRIES *and* STANDING STONES

*by* John Kruse

*Photography by* Darja Bilyk

# Fairies and Standing Stones

John Kruse

The stone circle of Craigh na Dun is a vital feature of the *Outlander* series. It's the portal through which Claire Fraser and Geillis Duncan travel from modern times to the 1740s. It's also a symbol of the magic and power that always attach themselves to ancient sites.

There's a very longstanding link between the fairies and barrows and megaliths, not just in Britain but across Europe. For example, in Cornwall, spriggans are said to be found only near cairns, cromlechs, barrows, and stones. People have often explained these mysterious monuments by linking them to fairies. It may just have been a name—in Scotland there is a cairn called the Fairy Hill at Clunemore, Blair Atholl; a barrow in Caithness is called the Fairy Hillock; and on Orkney is the Fairy Knowe—but very often the fairies were seen as being more actively involved in the making of a site. In Brittany, the Champs les Roches stone rows were made by fairies dumping stones they had been carrying, and a passage grave at Coat Menez Guen bears the marks of the fairy builders' fingers on two of its stones.

- In fact, fairies are linked in many ways to ancient stones:
- *Music and dancing:* At Athgreany stone circle in County Wicklow the fairies play their pipes at midnight. The fairies were known to dance on top of both Cauldon Low and Long Low in Staffordshire, the latter on Christmas Eve. Many ancient tumuli in Scotland and England too are noted as “music barrows” where, if you sit at midday, you will hear fairy music within.
  - *Healing:* At the unusual holed stone at Mên-an-Tol, Cornwall, the resident pisky cured sick children who were passed through the stone. At Farranglogh, County Meath, two standing stones were consulted whenever a person was thought to have been enchanted by the fairies.
  - *Dwellings under stones:* Most commonly, ancient stones are where the fairies live. Passage graves are dwellings themselves.



For example, a Cornish fogou near Constantine was called “the pixie house,” and in Ireland several stone circles are classified as *lios*, or fairy forts. Equally, the stones might act as a portal to fairyland. The Irish legend is that after the fairy tribe of the Tuatha Dé Danann was defeated by invaders, they retreated into an enchanted kingdom beneath raths and stones, with such places as Newgrange, Dowth, and Knowth in the Boyne Valley now being their abodes. Ancient stones marking the access to fairyland are common throughout the British Isles: A hole or stairs beneath a menhir lead to the fairy realm. Fairies could be contacted at these spots. At a large stone lying at Borough-hill near Frensham, Surrey, locals could knock and ask for whatever they wished to borrow; a fairy voice would then tell them when to return and the item would be there.

- *Dwellings under burial mounds:* In Scotland, particularly, the “people of peace” live beneath “fairy knowes,” which are either natural green hillocks or ancient tumuli. These are often seen open at night, with light pouring out and fairies feasting within.

It follows that these sites have magical powers. They can cure, but conversely, in Ireland and Scotland, interfering with or damaging the stones is avoided for fear of fairy revenge. In Ireland, disturbance led to either the crops or the home burning; in the Highlands, people were warned against taking turf or wood from a fairy hill. Similarly, tethering an animal by pinning it down on the knoll was very unpopular with the fairy inhabitants within. It made sense, therefore, to appease the fairies at these ancient sites. At the remains of a tomb called Arthur’s Stone on Gower in South Wales, offerings of honey cakes used to be made; offerings of oil and milk were made to gruagachs and glaistigs at standing stones in the Scottish Highlands.

One last thought: Perhaps the time travel effect of the henge in *Outlander* is related to another aspect of fairyland: the fact that time runs differently there. Entering a fairy hill or stone circle is always perilous because if you are able to return (and you may not), you may find that years or centuries have passed in your absence.

Not only are sites like Craigh na Dun worth visiting for their historical fascination and often stunning landscape settings, then; they are some of the best places for making contact with the fairies.

John Kruse is a writer and researcher on fairy lore. He’s a member of the Fairy Investigation Society and writes the British fairies blog on Wordpress: [britishfairies.wordpress.com](http://britishfairies.wordpress.com).

Follow Darja Bilyk on Instagram @dashiee.





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# OUTLANDER

— THE SERIES —

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# Song of Sassenach

by Sarah Ann Winn  
Photography by Laurie Ann Haus

A game I play at night sometimes,  
I detail every dream of you,

count seconds passed since I returned  
to the wrong end of an anchor.

The storm-tossed ship, a chasm away  
and I could not climb up to you.

If the rocks would send me back again,  
I'd bear their scars with pleasure.

I slowly drown without your air.  
Gasp one last breath to hold you.

This cloak of time with seams of lead—  
who would choose to wear it?

I put it on, I stumble home,  
stone-scuffed, risk all to see you.

Oh, will you wrap me in your plaid,  
stay close through any weather?

I keep you off my list of loss,  
for if you are, I'll find you.

*Sarah Ann Winn's first book, Alma Almanac (Barrow Street, 2017), was selected by Elaine Equi as the winner of the 2016 Barrow Street Prize. She is the author of five chapbooks, and her writing has appeared in Kenyon Review Online, Massachusetts Review, and Smartish Pace, among others.*

*Visit artist and vocalist Laurie Ann Haus on Instagram @laurie\_ann\_haus.*



## Tea Inspired by Story

### ALBION TEA COMPANY CRAFTS TEAS WITH OUTLANDER ESSENCE *by Tallitha Reese*

In *Outlander*, the time-swept heroine Claire Randall carves out a purpose for herself as a healer. Deborah Wilkie, the owner of Albion Tea Company, has similarly found her calling among herbs, spices, and flowers.

Rather than using natural ingredients to create healing poultices, however, Wilkie blends them into loose-leaf teas inspired by stories. After discovering *Outlander* in 2016—the same year she and her husband Brock started their tea company—Wilkie knew she had to translate her newfound literary love into a tea collection.

Albion Tea's *Outlander*-inspired line features several teas and a drinking chocolate inspired by characters, settings, and themes from the books. Highlander, the first of these, was inspired by Jaime Fraser and is infused (of course) with single malt scotch. Sassenach represents Claire, with a Ceylon tea base to signify her English background, medicinal rosehips to represent her healing gifts, and, for a pop of color, blue cornflower, a plant known for hardiness in adverse surroundings—also an attribute of *Outlander*'s heroine.

Creating tea is an art form for Wilkie. When developing a new blend, she researches the inspiration and then, like a true apothecary, chooses a base tea and ingredients and begins mixing and experimenting, brewing samples to taste until it's perfect.

The Wilkies began their tea adventure as a way to work together doing something they loved, but soon they realized they could use their business as a social enterprise platform to make a difference. They developed an initiative to help aging-out foster youth in the U.S. and the U.K. called Beyond the Brew.

This was possible only with a strong community of supporters—with *Outlander* enthusiasts making up a large portion of that network.

Not only has Albion Tea's involvement with *Outlander* helped the company develop a deep kinship with fans, but Wilkie has also had the opportunity to meet and create personalized tea blends for several cast members of the series. The teas created for Graham McTavish (Dougal MacKenzie), Steven Cree (Ian Murray), Lauren Lyle (Marsali), Ed Speleers (Stephen Bonnet), and Gary Lewis (Colum MacKenzie) are now available as Albion Tea's CelebriTEA collection.



*Connect with Albion Tea Company on Instagram, Twitter, or Facebook @albionteaco or visit their website at albionteacompany.com.*

*Tallitha Reese is a freelance writer based in rural Wisconsin, where she lives with her husband, a spoiled cat, and a flock of chickens. You can connect with her at wordsbyreese.com.*



All images courtesy of Starz and Terry Dresbach.

# DRESSED TO THRILL

*Meet Terry Dresbach, the genius behind Outlander's gorgeous garb*

BY JILL GLEESON

Should you encounter Terry Dresbach at Thru the Stones in late November, billed as “the first and largest *Outlander* convention in the Central United States,” you’ll most likely be charmed by her great enthusiasm and warmth, her wide smile, that magnificent shock of silver hair. She’ll no doubt be a mass of well-directed energy, happy to answer all manner of queries related to her epic work as costume designer for the hit Starz show, which is adapted from a series of best-selling novels by Diana Gabaldon. But you might want to avoid the one question she says she is always asked, by journalists and fans alike:

What was your favorite *Outlander* costume to design?

“I genuinely and truly cannot answer that,” Dresbach says.

As she explains, her words bubble over and interrupt each other, effervescent with a kind of no-nonsense delight: “How do I choose between Master Raymond’s costume and Claire’s Dior costume? The minute I start down that path it’s like, But then there’s the Charlie suit, and there’s the plaid, and then there’s Jamie, oh, his wedding—Claire’s wedding dress or the red dress. You know what I mean? There are so many costumes! Oh, there’s Mr. Willoughby’s costume—that embroidered one—and Geillis, oh my God, the little gold coat with the pointed fairy hat! I’d love to have an answer to that question, but it’s just not even possible.”

Neither, broken-hearted *Outlander* fans must be thinking, is Dresbach’s recent decision to step down from her position on the show. How can it be possible that someone surely at the height of both her creative powers and her career—Dresbach has been nominated for a second Emmy, which she should take home September 17—would quit? Dresbach addressed the matter on Twitter in mid-July, when she made public her intention: “This is not easy. It is incredibly emotional and difficult. But my kids. They are 19 and 17. They were 14 and 12 when I went to Scotland for 3 mos.” Later she added, “Its been 6 years. I want to be with my family. I am spent, exhausted, worn out. Concerned about my health.”

Although Dresbach also noted that she had found someone to take over “who is very talented and gifted,” it’s hard to imagine the series without her, so integral to its success are her show-stopping, often daring, always historically precise designs. But then, Dresbach never really wanted to work on *Outlander*. A longtime devotee of the books, which she says she consumed as soon as they came out (and has since reread what she guesses might be eighteen times), Dresbach had essentially retired from costume design to focus on her own art and family when her husband, Ronald D. Moore, approached her with the idea.

Dresbach and Moore, who have been responsible for a string of smash sci-fi television shows including the *Battlestar Galactica* reboot, met in 2003 while working on the HBO series *Carnivale*. Dresbach subsequently introduced Moore to Gabaldon’s books, but when he asked for her help on the *Outlander* series he was developing, she turned him down. Repeatedly.

A longtime costume designer with decades of experience, Dresbach knew how momentous an undertaking it would be to design costumes for a show that skips gleefully back and forth through centuries and from country to country with a cast of principals and extras that could number a thousand. She’d have to move to Scotland. The hours would be merciless. Her old life would vanish as thoroughly as Claire Randall did from the 1940s when she touched the stone at Craigh na Dun.

Still, when Moore could find no one else remotely suitable, Dresbach relented. She had to accept what her husband was telling her over and over, what she already understood in her heart. She was meant for this. *Outlander* was hers.

The work, as she knew it would be, was as grueling as it was glorious. Dresbach was responsible for the design of the entire show, which now includes between 50,000 and 60,000 costumes. “I sit down with my team,” Dresbach says, “and give them the direction for the look, the tone, palette, and story. From there the circle widens a bit. I design all the principal cast. I choose from there who designs what. Sometimes it is me, sometimes I delegate. When I delegate a costume for a day player, an assistant designer will design the costume with me. They will bring me fabrics and finishing to talk through. Same thing with all of the extras. Everything comes across my desk for approval. There is no way I could design every costume, I would not just be exhausted, I’d be dead. I have an incredibly talented team that I depend on. It is a collaborative process, we do it together.”

“On a good day we can have over a hundred people working on the costumes,” Dresbach says. “It’s huge. The ongoing staff responsible for making the costumes, from design to aging, is about fifty to sixty people. When you’re making tens of thousands of costumes every season ... we’re always breathless and exhausted, no one’s sleeping, because there’s never enough time. And we start the next season halfway through the season we’re on, so we’re doing double teams ... You have to start all that stuff months, months, months in advance.”

And then there are all the duplicates Dresbach and her “carpenters,” as she calls them, had to produce. Often daubed—or downright drenched—in mud and blood, the *Outlander* cast can require multiple copies of a costume to ensure there is a



fresh one available for every new take. For Season 4, which debuts on Starz in November, Dresbach made seven duplicates of every costume Jamie and Claire wear. (Such a revelation could reasonably lead to speculation that the new season, set in the American Colonies, will be even more action-packed than the past three. If so, Dresbach isn't saying.)

"You know, day players—people that come on camera once or twice, have few lines—we only make one of," Dresbach says. "But main principals, yes. We're making multiples. And anytime anybody gets shot, stabbed, caught on fire, whatever, you've got to make it fit with that. I'm always at production meetings going, 'Can we strangle him? Punch him with a rock? No blood? There's no blood, right? We're not seeing blood, right?' There's a lot of that. 'Can the blood drip on the floor?' And there's a lot of people looking at me like, 'Would you stop already? No, no, no, you get blood on that shirt, I need six of them.' So it's crazy."

But it's not only the sheer quantity of the costumes needed for *Outlander* that make designing for it such a gargantuan task. Authenticity is paramount. Research is endless. "It's everything you could ever possibly think of," Dresbach says of the materials she has used on her never-ending fact-finding missions. "A lot of it is books, it's pouring over a million photographs, digging constantly, constantly, and thank God for the internet! I don't know how you do a show like this without it. Because it gives you access to photos from every conceivable museum in the world, every kind of research. And even then it's still not always enough. You're like, Damn it, why can't I find this?"

This kind of passionate-bordering-on-obsessive devotion to historical accuracy led Dresbach to create an aging and dyeing department staffed by some fifteen people. Its sole objective is to make the costumes appear as though they've been worn over and over, as they would be in real life. Dresbach says this veracity starts "skin out," with every layer of the actor's clothing true to the period in which their character is living, though she confesses she has no idea what Sam Heughan, who plays the swoon-inducing Jamie Fraser, is wearing under that glorious kilt.

"We had lots and lots and lots of lessons to teach the guys how to put on their kilts," Dresbach says. "They wanted to do their own. The beauty of that is when you see an actor do that, they are really owning that character. And then each one of them does something that makes it their own. Which is what real people do, so you want that. You know how Jamie's costume kind of swishes down the back like a long skirt when he walks into the room, and you see that the back of this costume is longer than the rest of it? That was all Sam's idea, and I thought it was kind of weird at first. And then he walked in on the Gathering in Season 1, and that thing just swung behind him and I was like, 'Oh yeah, that's great!'"

The costumes of characters who skip through centuries left more room for interpretation on Dresbach's part, since they are out of time and place. In no garment is that more apparent than the oft-maligned "Bat Suit" of Season 3. The concept behind the suit is brilliant: an intelligent woman like Claire, who has already time-traveled to 18th century Scotland, would know



*"We created all the tartans that you see on our principals," Dresbach says. "There weren't clan tartans then—they were really invented in the 19th century—but there was plaid. So we researched the plant life of the area this story was set in and figured out what the colors would be of the natural plants, and that's how we came up with that palette."*



that she'd need clothing that was warm, would keep her dry, and would look of the era she was entering. So she would make her own suit, crafted from cut-up raincoats. If you look closely when the suit appears on screen, you can even see the hallmarks of a homemade dress clumsily sewn by someone inexperienced: an uneven hem, ragged stitching, and off-kilter buttons. Dresbach is nothing if not detail-oriented.

The inspiration for the outfit, Dresbach says, came from an 18th century encyclopedia set that contained a pattern for a woman's riding suit. "I thought, Well, if I could find it, then Claire can find it," Dresbach says. Then with a chuckle, she adds, "Did I enjoy it? It's an ugly suit. But it was like, Season 2 we had all the beautiful stuff, and in Season 3 you're going to get a gray suit and for a good long time."

Inspiration is as necessary in costume design as in any artistic endeavor, and Dresbach has said she finds hers everywhere—from couture fashion, where the 18th century is much referenced, to art of that period, to what everyday people are wearing on the street. The inspiration for the beloved *Outlander* tartans, however, came straight from Mother Nature. "We created all the tartans that you see on our principals," Dresbach says. "There weren't clan tartans then—they were really invented in the 19th century—but there was plaid. So we researched the plant life of the area this story was set in and figured out what the colors would be of the natural plants, and that's how we came up with that palette."

Fauna as well as flora figured in the design of the apothecary vest worn in Season 2 by Master Raymond, who Dresbach calls perhaps her favorite character. She began with the idea that Master Raymond would want to present himself to his clients as someone magical, because he talks in the book about playing it up for the customers. "I really wanted to give him this mystical coat," Dresbach says. "I researched a lot of ancient alchemy symbols and creatures. In each panel of the coat, the creature represents a disease and the flower or herb was the cure for that disease at the time. So the hooded bird figure, he's putting his claw into a yellow eye, and the herb that wraps around it cured yellow fever."

But the costume Dresbach might most be remembered for isn't the apothecary vest or the tartans or even Claire's scandalously low-cut red dress she wore at court in Season 2, which required about fifteen yards of fabric. It's those fabulous bulky knits Claire snuggled into in Season 1. They started a legitimate fashion trend, as the style started popping up all over Etsy and beyond. When Dresbach began getting pictures of fans wearing what she soon dubbed *Outlander* Knits, she says, "that was really the first realization I had that this would have the kind of impact on people that it did."

As she bids goodbye to *Outlander*, hopefully with an Emmy in her hand, Dresbach will no doubt take heart from the people who have inspired her since the show's beginning: the fans. "The most rewarding and surprising aspect of doing this has been the outpouring of love and support and excitement on the part of the fans," Dresbach says. "The direct contact and feedback from fans through social media has been staggering. I get kind of emotional whenever I talk about it, because it has been such an unexpected and tangible reward for the work, being able to connect directly with the people who are seeing it and talking about what it means to them. It's been one of the most phenomenal experiences of my lifetime."

Visit Terry Dresbach online at [terrydresbach.com](http://terrydresbach.com).





# IN A LOVER'S EYE

BY CAROLYN TURGEON

For the *Outlander* television series, costume designer Terry Dresbach (see page 62) created an ensemble for Geillis Duncan that included a brooch containing Bonnie Prince Charlie's eye as a secret sign of her political allegiance to the Jacobite cause. As Dresbach explains it, "Geillis traveled back in time to help Prince Charlie in his bid for the throne, an act of extraordinary commitment. A kind of patriotic love."

Dresbach says she's long been obsessed with lover's eye jewelry, a fad that started in the late 1700s when nobles would signal their untoward passion for a secret lover by wearing their eye in ornamental fashion. "Lover's eye jewelry is quite remarkable," Dresbach says. "It seemed appropriate that Geillis would choose to wear a piece with the eye of her beloved. We made it oversized, because being a time traveler, Geillis can break the norms, and because we wanted it to be seen by viewers as a clue."

What a gorgeous way to be subversive—and ultra stylish! These miniatures were normally watercolors on ivory, framed in some gem-laden manner, and worn as brooches, bracelets, necklaces, or rings.

It was the Prince of Wales, or the future George IV (1762–1830), who most popularized the trend after falling—illegally—for the Catholic Maria Fitzherbert, whom he wooed in part by commissioning British miniaturist Richard Cosway to paint a portrait of his eye and sending it to her in the post. We're sure this was not creepy at all. She responded with portraits of her own eyes, and a wedding soon followed—how could it not? Shockingly, it did not last. Still, the trend took fire, and eyeballs galore sparkled from the wrists and fingers of any number of lovelorn gentlefolk until well into the 1830s.



Top: *Portrait of a Right Eye*. Philadelphia Museum of Art, Gift of Joseph Carson, Hope Carson Randolph, John B. Carson, and Anna Hampton Carson in memory of their mother, Mrs. Hampton L. Carson, 1935-17-10  
Center: *Portrait of a Woman's Left Eye*. Philadelphia Museum of Art, Gift of Mrs. Charles Francis Griffith in memory of Dr. L. Webster Fox, 1936-6-13  
Bottom: *Portrait of Sarah Best's Right Eye*. Philadelphia Museum of Art, Gift of Joseph Carson, Hope Carson Randolph, John B. Carson, and Anna Hampton Carson in memory of their mother, Mrs. Hampton L. Carson, 1935-17-11



Fatima Ronquillo

"Hand With Pearls and Lover's Eyes"  
7x5 inches, oil on panel  
© Fatima Ronquillo, 2017

# An Interview With Theresa Carle-Sanders of OUTLANDER KITCHEN

by Carolyn Turgeon

As any fan will tell you, the *Outlander* books by Diana Gabaldon have many pleasures. Not least among them is how they immerse you in faraway times and places. You can smell the warm liquor and honey, the linen and musk and pine and “sun-warmed stone” of long-ago Scotland, hear the stirring of the trees and the “deep silence of a Highland night,” feel Jamie’s beard stubble under your fingers (!) and the wool on your skin, see the “air like cider and a sky so blue you could drown in it.” You can smell and touch and taste the 18th century. And then there’s the food.

Chef and cookbook author Theresa Carle-Sanders found the *Outlander* books when she was at a crossroads in her life.

She’d just quit a high-paying corporate job that had been stifling her and was throwing herself back into the quieter pleasures of life, like cooking and reading thick novels. “*Outlander* was waiting for me,” she says. There were five books at that point, and Carle-Sanders read them over the next few months. “They’re cathartic books to lean on when going through change,” she says. “There’s so much emotion, and they can be quite comforting when you’re going through something like that yourself.” And the rich sensory detail—that gorgeous escape in time—didn’t hurt, either.

The recipes came a little later, after Carle-Sanders and her husband moved to tiny Pender Island, off the coast of Vancouver. After a stint in cooking school, she started working in a local restaurant and baking in a farmer’s kitchen. She was walking in the woods one day with her dog when Madame Jeanne’s rolls with pigeon and truffle popped into her mind, and by the time she finished the walk, she’d created a recipe for them—and drafted an email to Diana Gabaldon—all in her head. She thought she might create this recipe and post it on the food blog she’d created, Island Vittles (now [outlanderkitchen.com](http://outlanderkitchen.com), of course). Gabaldon responded yes to Carle-Sanders’s request for permission and even shared the recipe on her own blog once Carle-Sanders posted it. Needless to say, fans eager to taste the dishes they’d read about in the novels were over the moon. So Carle-Sanders did a second recipe, this time for her delicious Brianna’s Bridies, or meat pies, which are a staple in her home to this day.

“That’s when I started pestering [Gabaldon] about a cookbook,” Carle-Sanders says. What she didn’t know was that Gabaldon was in talks for an *Outlander* television series. “So



when I couldn’t go straight to a cookbook, I asked about starting an *Outlander Kitchen* blog to prove that there was a market.” There was—especially after Starz announced its television adaptation in 2013 and asked Carle-Sanders to do a themed recipe for each episode of the first season. Her social media accounts blew up, and the cookbook project finally started in earnest.

This would eventually become the best-selling *Outlander Kitchen: The Official Outlander Companion Cookbook*. When she started work on it, she’d already crafted a dozen or so recipes. To create the rest, she started a handwritten food journal and went back to the *Outlander* books, noting

any food reference or even any sensory reference that hinted at food. By the time she was done, she had 732 notations, which she narrowed down to a final 115. Some were specific dishes, like the “Venison Stew With Tomatoe-Fruits” that came from this *Drums of Autumn* passage: “Also a large boiling kettle, whose Acquisition we have Celebrated with a great quantity of tasty Stew made with Venison, wild Onions from the wood, dried beans, and likewise some Tomatoe-fruits, dried from Summer.” Other recipes came from simple references to things like “soup” that allowed her to be more inventive, thinking of a perfect dish to complement a specific scene in the books. “Big, emotionally charged events tend to happen around meals” in the novels, Carle-Sanders points out, and those emotions and events often informed her recipes.

Of course, to re-create so many 18th century dishes Carle-Sanders had to do her research—and a lot of experimenting. She and her husband have eaten some “deadly things” in the process, like a recipe featuring two tablespoons of cloves. And some bygone dishes are just inedible today, like the *powesodie*, or sheep’s head soup. “One historical recipe calls for you to ‘procure yourself a fresh sheep’s head and scrape the hairs from its nostrils with a spoon’,” she says, shuddering.

So she’s had to be creative in making 18th century recipes not only palatable but delicious to the modern reader—though the book contains some more modern recipes as well, even spaghetti and meatballs! “*Outlander* is a time-travel novel, after all,” she says. As she writes in the introduction, “*Outlander Kitchen* is not a Scottish cookbook, nor a historical one. It’s an *Outlander* cookbook, meaning we have two centuries and several different countries’ cuisines to explore.”

## BLACK JACK RANDALL’S CHOCOLATE LAVENDER FUDGE

*Easy dark chocolate (cheater) fudge lightly scented with lavender.*

Yield: 2 lb.

1 lb. bittersweet or semi-sweet chocolate,  
in chips or small bits

½ teaspoon baking soda

pinch salt

14 oz. can of sweetened condensed milk

1 tablespoon edible lavender blossoms



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Still, there was a lot of 18th century to reckon with, and one of Carle-Sanders’s favorite dishes, she says, is one of *Outlander*’s most iconic: turtle soup. “Turtle was something I didn’t think a lot of people would be willing to get, plus some are endangered,” she says. “So I went to the mock turtle soup in *Alice in Wonderland* and ended up taking two historical soups, one from New Orleans and one from Philadelphia, and combining and modernizing them into what really tastes like a hot and sour turtle soup, using oxtail.” Usually it takes three or four tries to get the taste of a historical dish right, she says: “I try the old version, I try a modern one, and I try something in between.”

Carle-Sanders took time off after all the rigorous work that went into *Outlander Kitchen* and loved hearing from fans who were able to get that much closer to the world of *Outlander* by making and tasting the foods that fill its pages—or at least Carle-Sanders’s time-mixing, ultra-delectable versions of them. Fans will be thrilled to learn that a follow-up is in the works. While *Outlander Kitchen* drew from the first six *Outlander* novels, its sequel will draw from books seven and eight, as well as a number of ancillary short stories and novels by Gabaldon located in the *Outlander* universe. Perhaps right this minute she’s on that magical island, conjuring enchanted meals that might have fallen through time themselves.

Read more from Theresa Carle-Sanders at [outlanderkitchen.com](http://outlanderkitchen.com).

Line an eight-inch or nine-inch pan with wax paper or parchment.

Toss the chocolate with the baking soda and salt. Pour into a heavy saucepan, add the sweetened condensed milk, and melt over medium-low heat, stirring occasionally to start, then more frequently as it melts. When melted and smooth, remove from heat and stir in the lavender, crushing the buds between your fingertips as you drop them into the pan. Stir to combine, then spread evenly in the prepared pan.

Chill in the refrigerator for two hours or until firm. Remove the fudge from the pan, peel off paper, and cut into one-inch squares.

To serve, garnish with additional lavender flowers. Perfect as an afternoon pick-me-up with coffee or tea. Wrap well and store in the fridge for up to one week.

*Note: The better the quality of chocolate you start with, the richer and tastier your finished fudge will be.*



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The Order of Release, John Everett Millais, 1853. Wikimedia Commons.

# COLOR THEORIES *and* TARTAN TROUSERS

by Stephanie Stewart-Howard

Tartan and plaid fabrics, with their history, patterns, and hues, help evoke history and provide mise en scène on the Starz series *Outlander*. They help create the show's mystic landscape and interpretation of character and the time, providing a literal fabric of enchantment.

The seductive glamour of tartan enables a teenage Highland dancer sweating in pounds of wool in a sweltering summer to remain delighted. Something happens on the wooden stage in front of the judges: The pipes skirl, the beat hits, and suddenly all that wool is swirling gorgeously as your feet and muscle memory take over in the act of a fling—your arms raising, your fingers mimicking a stag of the glen's antlers. The air flutters under the pleats, the movement complements it; the weight gives you power and strength. As you turn and your feet pound the floor, all your vision is of the tartans of the other dancers, brilliant and soft, spinning about you.

I've been that girl.

But music playing or not, the magic of heavy wool plaids is physically sensual as they move about and around you on your body.

If you create cloth or clothing, you understand deep in your soul the thrill of running your hands over fabric—the textures between your fingers, the lushness of the colors, and the heady combination of sensory experiences producing a finished craft in your mind's eye.

Fabrics paint our understanding of the world and can make it more beautiful, more rich. As daily street fashion becomes increasingly more ordinary—denim paired with neutral-colored shirts is almost *de rigueur*—we may long for the exotic fabric and texture in high fashion photos; in the souks and markets of the Middle East, Africa, and Asia; in the wild couture of Renaissance fairs and fairy festivals, in Con costume and re-enactor gear.

Perhaps that's why tartans evoke such delight: They layer color upon color, daring the eye to follow.

As much as the world of *Outlander* comes alive in the rough-hewn, haunting intensity of the Scottish countryside, the costume design truly makes it breathe: Those sensual tartans and knits, linens and wools, are not only historically accurate and beautiful; they draw our attention to and distinguish the characters. Good costume design *must* do that. In the audience's first view of a character, the costume must tell us who that person *is*. Costume defines the character.

*Outlander's* designers and costume technologists dig their hands into a period where tartan and plaid had layers of significance. If every costume, from kilt to petticoat, were remade in plain, solid colors, swaths of understanding and aesthetic would be lost.

Plaid fabric is not unique to Scotland. Scores of cultures have explored the joys of plaids, as textile historian Elizabeth Wayland Barber has documented in *Women's Work: The First 20,000 Years* and *Prehistoric Textiles*. The twill weaves and plaids belong to many Indo-European language groups, who spread the weaving patterns across Europe and Asia in the Bronze Age. Barber says that “we can trace twill weave (which leaves a distinctive imprint on the bottoms of clay pots) moving slowly outward from the Caucasus with the herders moving across the grasslands, some going east, some going west. Early west-moving herders who used it included the Greeks and the Celts; early east-moving herders with it included the Iranians. Plaid is not a weave but a color trick, so it doesn't leave a recognizable imprint. But wool is easy to dye and linen is very, very hard to dye; and where we get actual plaid cloth preserved, we find it is twill weave and made of wool. So we can *guess* at the trajectory of plaids from the trajectory of twills and sheep herders.”

That means the plaids and tartans sported by Jamie, Claire, et al., have an epic history, at least 3,000 years old. What has made their appeal so enduring, for weavers ages ago as much as for modern fashion lovers like us, who thrill to men in kilts or tartan ball gowns by Alexander McQueen?

Barber suggested that it's the “path of least resistance. It's an incredibly easy and effective way of decorating a woven textile with color: All you have to do is change which yarn you're using, nothing more (no change of weave)—but do it in both the warp and the weft, and do it unevenly. If you make the strips of each color even in width, you get a checkerboard instead of a characteristic plaid or tartan.”

The term *tartan* probably has its origin in the Middle French *tiretaine* (first used in the mid-13th century to mean a strong, coarse fabric), which may derive from the Old French *tiret* (meaning *a kind of cloth*), which in turn comes from the Medieval Latin *tyrius* (meaning *cloth from Tyre*). The first reference to a woven wool cloth with a plaid or striped pattern distinctive to the Scottish Highlands dates to the early 16th century.

Popular culture has convinced us that distinctive Scottish family patterns for tartan cloth goes back to the early Middle

# Tartan

Stephanie Stewart-Howard



Ages, if not before. But while plaid cloth existed, the “clan tartan” idea actually stems from 17th and 18th century bouts of Scottish nationalism, when descendants of James I tried to maintain hold over the fragilely united throne of England, Scotland, Wales, and Ireland.

I asked Barber about this history and whether there was some truth to the idea that different regions in Scotland and Ireland developed local patterns and styles that become traditional.

“Women learn to weave from the older women in their families or clans, and they learn little habits and predilections too,” Barber says. “Gradually this family will come to weave or handle their colors this way—and that family that way—maybe not terribly differently, but enough that neighbors may be able to glance at a cloth and say, ‘*That’s the way the Kerrs usually do it,*’ or ‘*That’s the way the McDonalds would do it.*’ Eventually the nationalists started codifying what had probably been predilections.”

When Scots nationalism exploded in the time of James II, the tartans took on a nationalist meaning. The uprising didn’t work out as planned—history buffs know that James II and his family weren’t as beloved as the romances make it seem.

But we love that romance, and it helped spawn our current delicious level of Scots tartan affinity.

After Bonnie Prince Charlie’s troops lost at Culloden, the 1746 Dress Act banned the wearing of tartans and other distinctive aspects of Scots culture. After this was repealed in 1782, some enterprising tailors and entrepreneurs made their fortunes by promoting the idea of specific “clan” tartans, codifying patterns based loosely on regional traditions.

Of course, part of the appeal of tartans is color—some are deeply saturated hues, others muted. If you’re of Scots or Irish descent, you probably have your own favorites based on family history. (I like the *Hunting Stewart*, which dates from 1819.) Or you might just order gorgeous woolens because you love their scrumptious hues and patterns.

When it comes to color, the natural dyes prior to the 19th century were different from modern chemical options. I asked Barber about the colors in the British Isles’ tartans. Are reds and greens so prominent because of the dye availability—like madder and indigo?

“Color choices depended foremost on two things,” she told me. “First, the availability of natural dyes (not a problem after aniline dyes were invented in the late 19th century), and second, what was colorfast, if you wanted all that work to last.

“Until anilines, the best colorfast dyes were blues and reds, so the flags of essentially all the nations that existed before aniline dyes are blue and white, red and white, red-



white-and-blue, etc. Yellow was iffier—lots of plant sources, but not very stable. And green could be made only by double-dyeing with blue plus yellow, with only one exception that I know of.”

If green is so difficult, why did the peoples of Britain seek it out and use it so much? “I think the answer is camouflage for hunting,” Barber says. “Look at the distribution of colors within a family’s tartans. You typically have a hunting tartan that is predominantly green, and a dress tartan with a lot of showy red in it ... Surely the former are for breaking up the light and hiding you in spring and summer, and the latter for hiding you in the fall.”

From all this we conjure the magic of a richly colored piece of wool plaid, pleated into a kilt—also a fairly modern tweak to the older wrapped-fabric tradition—or draped over a woman in a white shift as an arisaid.

Tartans are written into millennia of Eurasian history, sparking in us a sense of romanticism made up of legend, history, and perhaps collective memories of herding, weaving, and dyeing sunk into our very DNA.

And for contemporary fashionistas, those vibrant woolen skirts still swirl, whether we walk or we lift the corners to dance with the pipes and drums.



Visit Stephanie Stewart-Howard on Instagram @stephaniegwen13.

## Threads of Time

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*An Excerpt From Signe Pike's*  
**THE LOST QUEEN**

*Photography by* NATALIA LE FAY

*Follow Natalia Le Fay on Instagram @natalia\_lefay.*

A chill wind stirred, gusting over the nearby pastures, turning my face clammy where tears yet clung. A feathery fern brushed against my forearm, and I reached to yank it from the ground, the uprooting of the tender shoot somehow nourishing the darkness that consumed me.

That was where Cathan found me after some time, sitting on a half-rotten log by the trickling stream, a mound of tattered ferns at my feet.

“You’re clogging up my head, child.” His knees creaked as he crouched down beside me. His coarse gray hair had come loose from his braid, making him look more like a wildwood recluse than Lord of the White Isle.

*I can feel you thinking on me as surely as you are in the room,* he’d once told me. And yet I could never sense it when Cathan thought of me.

I looked up. “I think Lailoken has broken his foot.”

“If he did, then he likely deserved it.”

An Excerpt From The Lost Queen

Signe Pike

I bent once more to the streambed, my dirt-crusted fingers searching for more shoots to unearh. “Gwenddolau is going off to the Borderlands, where babies are dashed against rocks and whole villages are reduced to cinders.” Cathan eased down next to me, wrapping his long arms about his knees. He paused a moment before speaking.

“Languoreth, the earth is very old. Tragedies will occur on nearly every patch of land, given enough time. But given enough time, miracles will unfold on every hillock and valley, too. Who are you to say a disastrous fate awaits your foster brother? Gwenddolau’s future is his own, and he has much to accomplish before the Ancestors call him home.”

I stared at the soil, saying nothing.

Cathan turned to me, his blue eyes calm. “I do not think it is only Gwenddolau’s leaving that troubles you.”

He waited, but I could not find words for the shadows that had stirred since I’d woken from my dream: my mother’s voice. Her ghostly apparition standing in the winter river. The glistening wounds. The mud-caked boots of the little boy. And so I told him of the stag. Cathan listened keenly, the tips of his fingers pressed together until at last I fell silent.

“You and your brother have been visited by the stag, the spirit of your ancestors,” he said. “This is a mighty thing.”

“But what does it mean?”

“The antlers of the stag arch into worlds unseen. This is why he is seen as a messenger. Perhaps he came to offer comfort. Perhaps he came to show you he is a power that may be relied upon. Perhaps he was only looking for a quiet drink.” His eyes sparkled with humor. When he did not find such a reflection in mine, he bowed his head. “This message has come unto you. You and your brother. But I can tell you one thing of importance. Spirit does not choose to show itself lightly. Spirit cannot be commanded. It comes to those in need, when it is needed, and, most importantly, in its own time. I can promise you that should you desire to know the stag’s true message, you will discover it when the time is right, and not a moment before.”

I let out a sigh.

“Do not sigh like a servant who’s burnt the pudding,” he said. “I have not finished yet, you know.” He lifted a finger. “Most importantly, the stag comes to tell you of a journey that is about to unfold.”

“What sort of journey?” I asked.

“Oh, an epic sort, always. Filled with dashing heroes, a wicked villain, battles, enchantment, and lion-hearted feats of bravery. This is the stuff of stories told round the fire.” But as Cathan looked at me, his smile waned.

“It’s the living of it that’s the hard part,” he said. “There may well be shadowed days. The stag comes to signal the beginning



of a new journey you must take. And so the path of this adventure has been laid at your feet. You and your brother’s. Soon, I think, you will be asked to walk it.”

The journey to Partick. The Wisdom Keeper’s words had taken something once enthralling and hung it with a cloud of doom. I shook my head, eyes stinging with a fresh swell of tears.

“Eh, now,” Cathan said. “Have I not been at your side, all these years? I who foretold you and your brother’s coming? I have bent my life to the task of your learning, Languoreth, and not only from the tenderness that grows for two young babes. I have seen the shadows of the times that lie ahead. You and your brother have roles to play in the events that must unfold. And I mean to arm you to the teeth for battle in ways perhaps only a man such as I am able.”

“Lailoken may have a role, but what role have I?” I challenged.

“I was not chosen to become a Keeper like Lailoken. And I was born a girl. Neither will I be allowed to fight!”

My role was to marry and someday bear children, but I could not say those words because they sickened me.

“Do not envy your brother, Languoreth. It is true, the Gods have not chosen you for Keeper. And, as a young woman, neither can you become a warrior like Gwenddolau. But you will have your own influence, as is your fate. You will come to understand that each of us has the power to fight.”

He meant to encourage, but Cathan’s words nearly sank me. I did not choose to live in such shadowed days. For generations our land had been torn by violence. Now Cathan spoke of more battles to come, of the roles I and my brother must play, as though we were little more than game pieces on a wooden board.

And to what end?

Because there were men in the world with black hearts who brought pain and gore to this place of clouds and trees and swift-moving rivers. Who brought slaughter and death to our timeworn mountains and the people working to carve their abundance from the hardened earth of our fields. A shiver coursed through me and Cathan draped his thick white cloak about my shoulders, engulfing me in warmth. We sat that way for a while, the Wisdom Keeper’s strong arm about me and our eyes fixed upon the hills that slumbered in the north. Twilight was falling. The lowing of a cow sounded in the faded grasses and against the purpling sky; a hawk circled beyond our ramparts. Cathan watched it keenly before turning to me.

“If you are afraid, then you are wise,” he said softly. “But you have nothing to fear, for I will be with you. Now come with me, Languoreth, daughter of Morken. There are trunks to be packed and provisions to be seen to. Your journey awaits.”



AN INTERVIEW WITH SIGNE PIKE by Carolyn Turgeon

**Faerie Magazine:** Many of our readers were fans of your first book, *Faery Tale*. Tell us about that book. What was it like traveling through the U.K. and meeting the Frouds?

**Signe Pike:** *Faery Tale* was a journey I undertook to find healing after the sudden death of my father. I began as a hopeful skeptic, traveling through the U.K., Ireland, and beyond in search of those who might still believe in fairies. The book began as an earnest experiment. By the end it became a living map to finding one’s way back to living a re-enchanted life. The Frouds were a tremendous part of that, and I write about our first meeting in the book. Their home is a 16th century stone cottage, inhabited by all the wizened, playful, or beautiful beings they create—Brian’s original paintings, Wendy’s puppet creations. They offered me wisdom that day that I return to even now, nearly ten years later. Of course I share that in the book too!

**FM:** What’s the new trilogy—including your first novel!—about?

**SP:** *The Lost Queen* introduces readers to the real people who inspired the Arthurian legend. New scholarship has uncovered an intriguing new theory that Merlin was a real man who lived in sixth century Scotland. It sounds incredible, but it’s true. This man had a twin sister named Languoreth—she was married to a historical king named Rhydderch. As I began to research her life, I learned about the epic events Languoreth survived in her lifetime. It angered me that such a remarkable woman had been forgotten and that real human beings like her brother, Lailoken, had been fictionalized. The real man was more than a wizard. He was a chieftain’s son, a druid, a politician, a warrior, a friend. This trilogy seeks to tell a truer version of their story.

**FM:** Some early readers have assumed *The Lost Queen* is a fantasy novel. Are there fantastical elements in your story?

**SP:** *The Lost Queen* is historical fiction. All the major events that take place—assassinations, raids, battles—truly occurred in Languoreth’s lifetime. I have a historical timeline and historical sources I work from. But this doesn’t mean the books are without a “real world” sort of magic. I love fantasy, but I don’t believe fantasy is better than reality. I believe that when we unearh the enchantment inherent in our daily lives, our realities can become so magical, they *feel* like fantasy. The truest things are often the most fantastical. And so the magical elements I incorporate in my novel are in keeping with the sensibilities of Britons living in sixth century Scotland. To them the natural world was imbued with spirit. Rivers were seen as goddesses. Curses were thought to hold power. There is only one moment that requires a bit of suspension of disbelief. It involves a feather—

**FM:** Yes, the feather! Can you tell us about the bone feather necklaces you had made to help readers bring some of Languoreth’s magic into their own lives?

**SP:** At an important moment in the book, Languoreth is given a falcon feather she wears as a talisman. Feathers are meaningful to me, and I wanted to bring something out of the book that I could hold and wear in the third dimension. I discovered Silver Hawk Studios, a third-generation, family-owned company that makes hand-painted feathers carved from repurposed bison bone. We teamed up to create a feather based on the description in the book. I wear mine constantly. Let me tell you, these necklaces have good juju! And a generous percentage of the proceeds go to protect birds of prey. They’re available on my website.

**FM:** Did you do any glamorous overseas travel for research?

**SP:** Yes! Although it’s felt far from glamorous at times. At one battle site in the Scottish Borders, I had to pull myself up a stinging-nettle-infested hillside slick with sheep poop by gripping a barbed-wire fence—you’ve got to be up for that sort of thing. I don’t mind the effort. It’s incredible to stand where my characters once stood. Plus, it’s the best way to get the flora and fauna right. I seek out artifacts while there and have met with archeologists who uncover early medieval digs.

**FM:** Any tales from your travels for *The Lost Queen* that you can share? Any unexplained enchantment this time around?

**SP:** Readers may know I tend to find a lot of bird feathers in my path, especially when I’m doing something for work. On my last big trip to Scotland, I visited Languoreth’s childhood home (now Chatelherault Country Park in Hamilton), and as I walked the woods she once played in, I was finding feathers every hundred or so feet. If I’d collected each one, I would’ve had enough to stuff a small pillow. To me that’s a sign that I’m in the right place, that I’m working in partnership with something unexplainable, something greater.

**FM:** This issue’s theme is *Outlander*. Was *The Lost Queen* inspired by the *Outlander* universe at all? And what might lovers of the *Outlander* universe find to love in *The Lost Queen*?

**SP:** Well, I’m a tremendous *Outlander* fan. But the truth is, the *Outlander* universe and *The Lost Queen* are both inspired by the same thing: Scotland, with its magnificent people, mystical scenery, and remarkable history. My books offer a glimpse into the pre-*Outlander* world. So much has been written about the Jacobite era. It was a hugely important moment in Scotland’s past. But early medieval Scotland has been entirely overlooked. It’s full of all the same sorts of beauty, music, metalwork, warriors, weaponry, and intrigue. Its people are brimming with the same tough, witty, and endearing sense of humor that so defines the Celts—it’s something Diana Gabaldon quite deftly portrays and one of the many things I admire about her books.

The Lost Queen by Simon & Schuster was published in September 2018. Read more about Signe at [signepike.com](http://signepike.com).

# Make a Magic Potion

by The Wondersmith



Have you ever wanted to make your own magic potion? Then read on, my friends! Not only is this elixir chock-full of healing herbs and berries (mostly foraged), it also looks like liquid gold. A spoonful of shimmer makes the medicine go down. (Not that it's needed—this medicine is pretty tasty!) It's an almost alchemical concoction of plant medicine, kitchen witchery, and a little bit of changing elderberry juice into gold. This is about as valuable *as* gold to have around during cold and flu season and would also make an excellent gift when topped with a snazzy bottle topper.

Here's what's in it:

**Elderberries:** as a general strong immune booster, plus delicious wild flavor!

**Honey:** because it is soothing, antibacterial, anti-inflammatory, and acts as a cough suppressant\*

**Mullein:** for chest congestion and other respiratory complaints

**Horehound:** to soothe sore throats and aid digestion

**Star anise:** for a delicious licorice flavor to balance the brew, and also because it is frequently used to treat coughs and flus, alleviate cramps, and reduce nausea

The **secret ingredient** for magical shimmer: edible luster dust

And that's it! Well, and some **bourbon** if you're like me and prefer to gently spike your cold medicine.

When crafting this special recipe, I didn't just think about the medicinal aspects of the plants that are in it; I also thought of the flavors and how they would balance each other out. Elderberries are tart and fruity, with a subtle delicious aroma that is unlike anything else. Horehound is distinctly bitter but not in an unpleasant way when balanced by other ingredients. Mullein has a very subtle flavor and is mostly in the mix for its powerful medicinal benefits. Star anise is delightfully warming, with a sweet spiciness that balances out the tartness and bitterness of the other ingredients wonderfully. This stuff is so good I could eat it by the spoonful. And have. Hey, I'm fighting a cold, okay? If you want to infuse your elixir with a little extra magic, you can hold your intentions in your mind or speak them aloud as you add each ingredient. I love using this as a

meditative process—I picture the parts of my body that each plant will affect and imagine them warming up as I hold the herb in my hands. For example, as I hold the mullein I picture warm healing energy flowing into my lungs and making them glow gold. (That is actually where the inspiration to add shimmering gold came from—a half-asleep vision of golden energy entering my body and healing me, one area at a time.) Perhaps this is a visualization that you'll find helpful. If not, the potion is still delightful ...

And without further ado, here's the recipe:

## Ingredients:

*1 cup elderberry juice (see below)*

*1 cup honey*

*2 star anise pieces*

*2 mullein leaves*

*2 fresh horehound sprigs*

*A few pinches of edible luster dust*

*1 to 2 cups bourbon, optional*

A note on this recipe: I included measurements for those who want to follow the recipe exactly, but it's written in such a way that you can adapt it to however much elderberry juice you make!

## Directions:

To make the elderberry juice: Just barely cover your fresh elderberries with water, then bring to a simmer over medium heat. Allow to cook until the berries start popping, about 25 minutes. Let cool a bit, then strain through a sieve, pressing on the berries with a wooden spoon to help them release their juice. Discard the skins and seeds left in the strainer. (Note: If you're making this out of dried elderberries, just use one part

berries to four parts water and let it cook for an hour before straining it. You can buy elderberries and the other herbs in this recipe at Mountain Rose Herbs if you aren't able to forage your own!)

Measure your elderberry juice and add it to a small saucepan. Add an equal amount of honey. Stir over medium heat until well incorporated. Add the star anise and mullein leaves and cook for five minutes. Add the horehound sprigs and turn it down to a simmer for about 20 minutes.

Add a few pinches of edible luster dust (I used "antique gold") and stir well. Strain the mixture through a kitchen strainer to remove the plant material.

By now your liquid should be pretty thick. You can use it as is, or dilute it a little with a bit of water. You can also add up to an equal part of bourbon to make the viscosity runnier as well. (Keep in mind that if you do this, this recipe is no longer appropriate for children.)

Take ½ teaspoon every few hours when you have a cold, or mix it into a delicious drink. One of my favorite ways to enjoy this magic potion is to simply add about 2 teaspoons of syrup to a glass and top with ginger beer or sparkling water and stir. The shimmery luster looks lovely when suspended in a drink! And when combined with ginger, you get the benefits it adds—ginger is wonderful for both colds and stomachaches. It helps your body digest and warms you as well.

Though this brew is made out of gentle ingredients, it is not appropriate for children under one year or pregnant women. Always take care when taking herbal medicine and talk to your doctor if you have any questions or concerns.

\*according to the Mayo Clinic

*Miss Wondersmith highlights the beauty of her Pacific Northwest home through her handcrafted glass and ceramic artwork, recipes featuring foraged foods, and carefully-curated experiences for strangers (which she gifts through invites hidden in public places!). Visit her online at [thewondersmith.com](http://thewondersmith.com).*



# ELDRUM HERB COTTAGE

by Grace Nuth  
Photography by Bryony Whistlecraft

Step into herbalist Ali English’s rural village home in Lincolnshire, England, and you might suspect you’ve been transported back in time. Heavy wood cabinetry filled to the brim with jars of herbs in an abundance of dusky colors, bundles of drying plants hanging from the rafters, clay pots with tinctures and remedies tucked away inside—all nestle cozily against dark forest-colored walls hand-stenciled with looping botanical borders. Touches of Faerie abound: Brian Froud paintings are framed on the walls; velvety toadstools sprout unexpectedly from above the fireplace mantel and in the corners. It’s as if the fairy queen Titania took lessons from *Outlander*’s Claire Fraser on how to decorate an herbalist’s cottage but still left a few hints of her magical self here and there.

English’s love for herbs and gardening developed at an early age. She was especially influenced by her mother’s love for plants and gardening at their house in Suffolk. When English was thirteen, she begged her mother for a garden of her own and was given a small, round herb garden with a sundial at the center and three herbs to go in it: lemon balm, thyme, and sage. Just a year later, English managed to squeeze nearly forty herbs into the small space, with help from a copy of *Culpeper’s Complete Herbal* that she’d read from cover to cover. In 2009, English completed an honors degree in herbalism from University of Lincoln and has taught several classes on the subject.

“There’s something really magical about herbs, wildflowers, vegetables, and natural dyes,” says English, “about watching the plants through the seasons, from the first tiny leaves of spring to the last twigs and stems of fall. I love everything about it—getting elderberry purple stains on my fingers in the late summer, mud under my nails in the spring, seeds and bits of leaf and twig in my hair whenever I’m out gathering. There’s a certain enchantment to learning to listen to the plants, to slowing down enough to watch their growing and flowering, fruiting and fading, and it makes me feel calm, centered, and

fully aware of the magic of this world that constantly ripples under the surface of every day.”

English feels both lucky and somewhat hobbled to live in today’s world as an herbalist, compared with the 18th century Scotland in which Claire worked. “Herbalism is not a frontline form of medicine for most people, so we don’t get the experience of treating some of the stuff Claire ends up dealing with. We do, however, have access to more equipment. I like to think that the way I do things has the best of both worlds—old world charm and new world knowledge, underpinned with an ancient spirituality that many herbalists have always had when dealing with the plants themselves.”

Although she has not read the *Outlander* books, English has seen the television show and can see similarities between her workspace and Claire’s. “I think my space is a little similar to hers in that my herb room is shady and filled with dark wood furniture, bottles, and jars of herbs crammed into every space. This home was built in the 1800s, we think, and has barely a straight line and proper corner anywhere. It has a

quirky charm that really lends itself to how we want to live.”

Of course English has a beautiful and growing garden outside the redbrick semi-detached cottage she has called home for almost four years now. A spiral herb garden is a standout feature on the beautiful grounds, and she feels like ever since she installed it a year ago, there is a difference in the atmosphere—something ancient and strange about the space. The magical intention of her work in her garden is transported inside with every bundle of blooms and botanicals she gathers and brings indoors.

When asked about fairies in her home or garden, English replies, “I haven’t seen fairies in the garden personally, but I’ve had students who are far more sensitive to these things than I am mention that there are definitely folk dwelling in the garden, which I take as a high compliment. I don’t own this land, I just tend it—and I try to make sure that a feeling of welcome is there for everyone who visits, whatever their species.”

*“There’s a certain enchantment to learning to listen to the plants, to slowing down enough to watch their growing and flowering, fruiting and fading, and it makes me feel calm, centered, and fully aware of the magic of this world that constantly ripples under the surface of every day.”*



## HOW TO GATHER AND DRY HERBS

by *Alli English*



Gathering and drying herbs can be both a delight and a challenge! First up, you need to decide which room will best be suited to the job. Ideally it needs to be well ventilated and not too sunny. If you're worried about it or can't decide, gather small bunches of three stems of herbs, tie them up with a rubber band, and hang one bunch in each room, keeping an eye on them as they dry.

Gather your herbs on a dry day, preferably between 11:00 a.m. and 3:00

p.m. if you're gathering leaves or flowers, as this is when the most energy is in the leaves and stems. Make sure you pick good healthy plants, avoiding those with rusty spots, speckles, or any kind of animal excrement on them. Bundle them up using a rubber band in groups of up to fifteen stems, depending on the herb and how thick the stems are. I tend to avoid twine because stems shrink as they dry. It can be rather vexing to find your carefully bundled

herbs mixed up on the ground one morning! Hang the bunches about four inches away from each other if possible to allow for adequate airflow.

Let your herbs hang for as long as they need to dry, which will vary from plant to plant. Some plants will dry in a week; others will take a month. They're dry when they break easily but still have a good green color and scent to them. Dried herbs can be broken up by hand or in a food processor or mortar and pestle, and stored in glass jars. Go for colored glass if you want to keep them on the side, unless you have a really shady kitchen like mine, in which case clear glass is great. I use old coffee jars and

the old Belgian glass jars that can be found in charity and thrift shops.

Herbs can be kept for between a year and three years, depending on the plant. As a rule of thumb, if it smells good, looks good, and still has a strong flavor, it is still fine to use. If it has gone brown or gray, smells musty or of nothing at all, then compost it and start again. Don't forget to label your jars with both the English and Latin names and the date you put them into jars. I like to use parchment effect paper with a torn border and a fancy font on the computer or calligraphy to write on the front, sealing it in place with book-cover plastic.



## BRINGING THE OUTSIDE IN *by Ali English*

*Lest we think the warm and inviting atmosphere of English's home is all due to energy and intention, and not hard work and effort as well, she has tips for the romantic who may want to add a love of plants and nature to their home.*

- 🌿 Decorate in natural colors—greens, browns, russets, and bronzes, with plenty of earthy décor.
  - 🌿 Use botanical prints and paintings, both old and new, including framed plant oracle cards and old paintings from thrift and charity shops.
  - 🌿 Tuck bottles, bowls, and brewing paraphernalia into cabinets, along with unusual and fascinating odds and ends from nature and antique shops.
  - 🌿 Stencil Arts and Crafts and medieval motifs around the walls, in doorways, or wherever you want an extra touch of magic.
  - 🌿 Use ivy wreaths and good quality silk flowers to keep your home looking natural inside even in the middle of winter.
  - 🌿 Accent with wall hangings, throws, cushions, etc., in natural themes, like those from Morris & Co.
  - 🌿 Don't be afraid to raid thrift and charity shops, or rummage through eBay, Gumtree, and/or any other secondhand site or shop you can find. Ninety percent of the furniture and decorations in my house are secondhand, repurposed, or cleaned up and upcycled.
  - 🌿 Put your personal touch on the items in your house.
- Painting and stenciling to create a unique piece can be very satisfying. Working to decorate is an expression of love for a space and helps invite the energy you want your home to have.
  - 🌿 Consider your house to be a giant artist's canvas. Shuffle things around, finding exactly where pieces of furniture need to go. Trust me—when it is in the right space, the room just flows. You can feel the whole energy of the place change.
  - 🌿 Let the furniture and décor in your house tell a story. Try to tie things together to make a whole that is intriguing to look at and deeply magical.
  - 🌿 Bring the outside in! Bring in your herbs for drying. Bring in beautiful stones, bark, wood, old nests that have been abandoned. (For an example, see the cloche on opposite page.)
  - 🌿 Use natural fibers and materials as much as you can.
  - 🌿 Most important, love your home! Lavish care and attention on it. Make it a place of tranquility and magic as much as you can, both for you and for those who visit. Allow it to grow into a place of healing, and share it as much as you are able with those who are unable to do the same with their home.

Find Bryony Whistlecraft's work at [mooredgeinthemist.com](http://mooredgeinthemist.com).

Follow Ali English on Instagram @ravenwortwyfe and find her herbalism and art at [eldwolf.co.uk](http://eldwolf.co.uk)





# A Tutorial for Outlander-Inspired DRUID LANTERNS

BY SHEILA ECHOLS-SMESNY

Since that first mesmerizing episode of *Outlander*, with the dancing druids performing their celestial ritual, I have wanted to duplicate the lanterns. From Pinterest, I discovered that these signature accessories were actually made from two-liter soda bottles! So using the bottles as a foundation, I made two lanterns in an afternoon—one for me and one for a friend ... because friends don't let friends druid alone.



**Step 1:**  
I emptied, cleaned, and cut off the bottom of each bottle. The dowel rods were heavily sanded down to fit into the mouth of each bottle snugly, but for peace of mind I also secured them with glue.

**Step 2:**  
I then glued each half of the wine cork to the top of the dowel rods at the mouth of the bottles. Using a tea candle as a stencil, I cut foam circles to use as pads and glued them to the top of the corks. With self-adhesive Velcro, I stuck one half onto the candle (leaving room to turn it on and off at the switch) and the other half onto the foam. This keeps the candles from rolling around in the lantern and allows them to be removed or replaced.

**Step 3:**  
I hot-glued a corner of fabric to the bottom of the dowel rod on each lantern and twist-wrapped the fabric up the rod and bottle until I could fold the fabric inside the top, and I glued wherever necessary. I cut the floral bunches off the main stem and bent them into circles, dividing the flower circles in two for my two lanterns. Inverting the lanterns, I slid the floral circles down the dowel rods and glued them in place at the base of the lantern.

**Step 4:**  
And that's it! Just add druids and standing stones!



**MATERIALS USED FOR EACH LANTERN:**

2-liter soda bottle

3/8 inch dowel rod, 8 inches long

Hot glue and/or E6000 adhesive

Battery-operated flickering tea candle

Velcro circles

Foam (or felt)

Wine cork (optional: cut in half)

1 bunch artificial flowers with leaves included

Thin off-white fabric scraps



Follow Sheila Echols-Smesny on her blog at [redshoesredwine.com](http://redshoesredwine.com) or on Instagram @redshoesredwine.

# Gaelic Beauty

by Alise Marie

Across fragrant heather moor,  
and beneath murky swells of  
mist, a craggy mass of unforgiving  
floor lies in wait. There is movement  
beyond the opaque curtain of fog  
that beckons the unaware, luring  
them ever closer. If you could make  
out the forms that dance within the  
milky shadows, you would find the  
wise ones, conjuring to protect their  
sacred lands from the uninvited.

# Gaelic Beauty

Alise Marie

Ancient witchcraft in the Scottish Highlands was performed by the Picts, a tribe of gifted herbalists who embraced magic as part of their everyday life. Unlike most witches of old, the Picts practiced, by necessity of terrain and distance, as solitary conjurers. They placed emphasis on the magical aspects of their rites rather than the religious, living close to the land, revering it above all else. Though they observed a pantheon of gods, the emphasis on them was relatively minimal. Like the druids, they were essentially a sun cult, worshipping solar power as the force that ruled the day and going into seclusion during the evening hours.

The earth was indeed so precious to them that they honored an empathy with nature more intensely than other early witchcraft teachings. Oaths were sworn, sacred contracts were made, and children were conceived by and upon the hallowed land. In fact, ancient fields in Scotland were kept untilled until the late 19th century by the force of local people who were simply unwilling, en masse, to disturb sacrosanct ground. Similarly, places dedicated to “the good people”—fairies—also remained untouched until that time.

Though Pictish tribes prayed to the sun as their life force, they also revered the moon, believing that lunar power could

exert stronger magical influences. They understood the cosmic balance of light and dark. It is essential that we too embrace this balance and carry forth the love and respect for the power of all things given to us by nature in her endlessly varied and effortlessly splendid guises.

The Picts were great visualizers, which helped their magic to be incredibly potent. If you align yourself with this practice, always remember to infuse your potions with their intended purpose.

The great harvest festival of Samhain this season gives us a splendid opportunity to let go of the old year while embracing the new, as we are able to catch a glimpse of what is to come through the now delicate gauze that lies between the worlds.

As you charge yourself with the uniquely witchy energies of autumn, bring that magic into your beauty potions and rituals with inspiration from the wise primordial spirits of the ruggedly stunning Scottish landscape. I have prepared three powerful blends just for you, my darlings! Infused with healing plants of early Scottish herbalism alongside seasonal favorites, these superstars will boost your immune system as the wheel of the year turns, help your skin to revitalize after a long summer, and lovingly prepare it for the coming months.



## MISTY MOORS FACIAL MASQUE AND EXFOLIANT

For 8 to 10 treatments

- ¼ cup rolled oats
- ¼ cup garbanzo flour
- 1 tablespoon Moroccan red clay
- Lavender essential oil
- Spring water

You can make a batch of dry ingredients ahead of time and store it, then add the liquid as needed per facial. First, pulse the rolled oats in a coffee-bean grinder for a few seconds until they are very fine and powdery. Pour into a bowl, then combine with garbanzo flour. Add the red clay, and whisk it all together until fully blended. Keep the mixture in an airtight container, refrigerated, until you are ready to use. (As you know, I like to make potions on the new moon, but you can concoct this any time during the waxing phase.) When you are ready for a fabulous facial, take a teaspoon of the blend and place it in a small bowl. Add eight drops of lavender essential oil and just enough water to create a paste. You can also use lavender tea or a lavender hydrosol if you like in place of the water. If so, you may want to adjust the amount of essential oil, depending on your skin type: If you are more oily or irritated, you can use six to eight drops. If you are extremely sensitive or dry, you can lessen it to three drops.

This simple little treatment is sure to become one of your



Bonny Lass Facial Oil

**BEAUTY WITCH TIP**  
Try mixing thirteen drops of Bonny Lass Facial Oil into your favorite natural skin cream for an added dose of its beautifying magic.



Highland Tonic

BONNY LASS FACIAL OIL

Yields approximately two ounces

- 1.5 oz. grapeseed oil
- 3 tablespoons cloudberry seed oil
- 9 drops marjoram essential oil
- 6 drops pine essential oil

Decant the grapeseed oil into a glass bottle. Add in the cloudberry seed oil, and swirl clockwise thirteen times. Now drop in the essential oils, one at a time. Give it another good swirl and cap tightly. Use this earthy, nourishing age fighter daily, or whenever your skin needs a little extra moxie.

Grapeseed oil is an amazing base for any facial serum. It’s light enough to absorb quickly into the skin, yet possesses great moisturizing prowess. Suitable for even very sensitive skin, it contains antioxidants and vitamins that penetrate deeply into your skin while it firms and tightens, giving you an overall rejuvenated appearance. Cranberry seed oil is a star unto itself, brimming with antioxidants and a perfect ratio of omega fatty acids. Highly protective, thanks to its ruler Mars, cranberry oil guards skin against the elements and restores youthful radiance. Marjoram oil is valued for not only a high antioxidant content but also for its ability to brighten and balance skin tone, which can be important in banishing that post-summer discoloration. Majestic and protective, pine brings fertile, creative energy in, along with the ability to firm and heal skin.

HIGHLAND TONIC

Serves two

- 1 teaspoon wild marjoram
- 1 teaspoon burdock root
- ¼ teaspoon wild thyme
- 2 cups spring water
- ½ apple
- 1 cup blackberries
- pinch of cinnamon
- 1 teaspoon raw coconut nectar, or to taste

Begin by making an herbal infusion. You can use either fresh or dried herbs here, though dried will be easiest to procure year-round. You can do this one of two ways: by warming the spring water until just hot (but not boiling) and steeping the herbs for ten minutes, or by placing the herbs in a jar with the water, and allow them to mingle for at least thirty minutes. When the tea is ready, strain the herbs, and pour into a high-speed blender. Add the apples, blackberries, cinnamon, and coconut nectar. Blend until smooth. Adjust the sweetness to your liking (as the herbs give it a little kick), pour into fetching glasses, and enjoy! This lightly spiced libation also makes a delightful warm brew on a chilly evening. Perhaps with a splash of earthy red wine? Sounds like a fabulous post-ritual toast to me!

Besides being delicious and *very* pretty, this libation keeps your body and your beauty in top form as you navigate the changing seasons by boosting your immune system, fortifying your skin, and offering strong support should you fall prey to seasonal snuffles.

Abundant and classically autumnal, apples are Venus-ruled bringers of love, health, and peace. In ancient Egypt they were believed to bestow the gift of eternal youth upon the gods and indeed will extend that offering to you by way of vitamins A, B, and C. Long linked to spirituality on the British Isles, these juicy ladies provide UV protection, help rebuild cells, reduce wrinkles, and keep you glowing from head to toe.

Bombshell blackberries are also fruits of the love goddess. Though their myriad seeds are symbolic of sexual magic, blackberry vines are also used in protection spells. Traditionally consumed at harvest festivals, they contain high levels of antioxidants, which are key factors in the anti-aging nutrient process. They also contain lots of vitalizing vitamins A, C, E, and K, plus essential minerals for powerhouse radiant beauty.

Aromatic wild marjoram, known as “Scot’s oregano,” communicates love, peace, and good health to us by way of elemental air and was believed to be created by Aphrodite herself. Both antiviral and antifungal, it is immensely useful for sinusitis and colds, and eases inflammation throughout the body. It can also be used to guard against negative spells.

Burdock is a classic witchy favorite, used regularly by the Picts to purify the system. Indeed, it does a marvelous job of detoxing the liver, aiding digestion, and building immunity. Venus-ruled, this dear friend has been used for ages in protection rituals, though one of my favorite ways to work with burdock is for strength, both physical and emotional.

Another revered Venusian witchy herb is surely wild thyme. Possessing the magic of love, psychic awareness, purification, healing powers, and courage, these scented sprigs are potent both in their energy and their health benefits. Believe it or not, their tiny leaves hold an enormous amount of nutrients, including a saucy measure of iron! A bit of this will aid in pretty much whatever ails you—from indigestion to coughs and sore throats—while delaying the signs of aging. The sweet fire of cinnamon is added here as a sultry warming touch and a magical bringer of love and money.

Have a most exciting autumn, my loves, and come visit me at [faeriemagazine.com](http://faeriemagazine.com) for your monthly Beauty Witch forecasts!



Alise Marie is an actress, writer, and certified holistic nutritionist. Potions and rituals like these can be found in her forthcoming book, The Beauty Witch Guide to The Moon, The Stars, and Your Heavenly Body. She can be found at [thebeautywitch.com](http://thebeautywitch.com).



As Rosemary is to the Spirit, so  
Lavender is to the Soul. —Anonymous

Herbal extracts make powerful curatives, and they have been the basis for some good medicine over the centuries. But that is not the only reason these divine plants have long been held sacred.

Beautiful botanicals like lavender, mint, juniper, thyme, cinnamon, clove, pomegranate, rosemary, lemon balm, yarrow, and more were popular ingredients in tinctures, pomades, cleansing oils, and unguents for the hair and skin in 18th century Scotland.

Here are some gorgeous modern versions that embrace the potent plants, herbs, and fruits so well used in the *Outlander* days.

Pangea Organics Himalayan Geranium & Pomegranate Balancing Oil

Pomegranates are full of antioxidants and vitamins that nourish and hydrate the skin, and may help prevent the collagen from breaking down. [pangeaorganics.com](http://pangeaorganics.com)

Fig + Yarrow Cleansing Nectar

The founders of this company love yarrow so much, they named their company after it. This washless cleanser—apply to cotton, swipe over the face and remove excess with cotton—features a lavender hydrosol to calm the skin, manuka honey and apple cider vinegar to gently exfoliate, and antibacterial aloe vera and soothing calendula. [figandyarrow.co](http://figandyarrow.co).

Little Barn Apothecary Peppermint + Sea Salt Bath Soak

With sea salt, green clay, and organic peppermint essential oil, this foot or body soak will soothe achy feet, ease sore muscles, and perk up the spirit with its bright peppermint scent. [littlebarnapothecary.com](http://littlebarnapothecary.com)

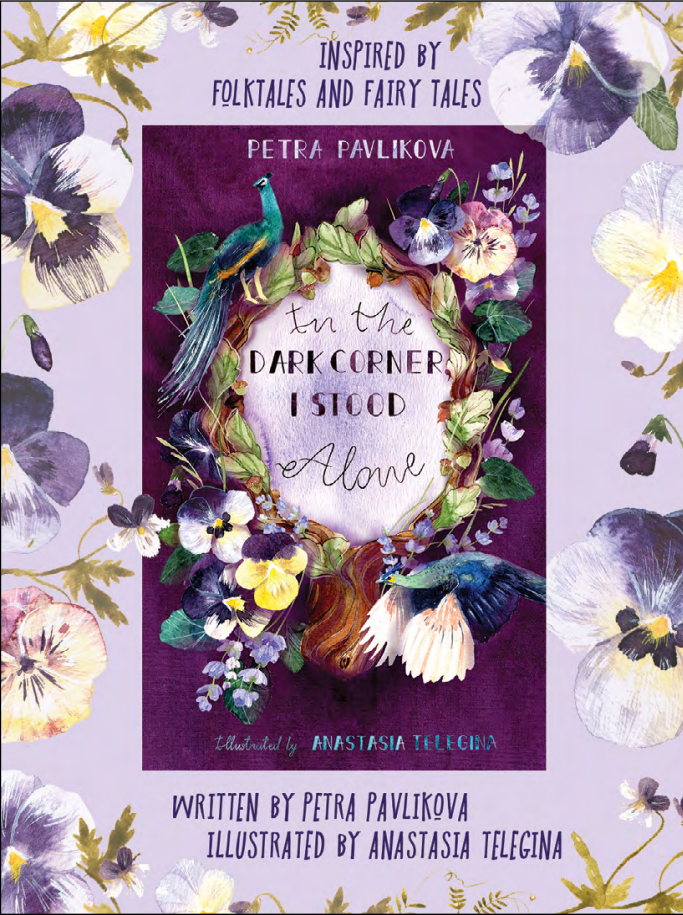
Hollybeth Organics Body Balm

This luscious body balm will soothe even the driest skin, and a dab will also moisturize and de-frizz parched hair. With pomegranate seed oil, beeswax, and clove flower oil, from a woman-owned company in Atlanta, it leaves skin glowing. [hollybethorganics.com](http://hollybethorganics.com)

Aveda Rosemary Mint Shampoo

A lightweight shampoo, with rosemary to help keep hair shiny and tamp away oil from hair and the scalp. Mint stimulates the circulation in the scalp to help healthy hair growth. [aveda.com](http://aveda.com)

—Rosie Shannon





AF Archive / Alamy Stock Photo

# A Wild Yarn

## THE KNITTED SORCERY OF FLORA KENNEDY



BY STEPHANIE STEWART-HOWARD

When it comes to costuming, enchantment lies in the details. Flora Kennedy’s exquisite accent pieces add layers of wonder and complexity to the costume design in the Starz series *Outlander*. Kennedy comes from a Hebridean family and learned to knit traditionally from her mother, then branched out into her own wild creations before returning to tradition—and to the Hebrides—to mix in what she’d learned. A multi-dimensional artist whose knits you want to wear and whose books you want to read, Kennedy proves you can do a little of everything and master it all in exquisite, beautiful ways.

**Stephanie Stewart-Howard: How did you get started knitting and who taught you?**

**Flora Kennedy:** I feel blessed now that I grew up with a mother who knitted almost constantly. She could knit anything. As a teenager I was mad about clothes and loved the idea of using what I wore as a way to define who I was, which in my mind was different. Soon I had knitting needles in my hands, and she was showing me how to hold them, how to cast on, and how to knit ... I had practical support from the start, and we kept it fun. Soon I was making entire sweaters myself, and once you knit something you like, it just lights the fire to make something else. It’s really a magical thing to create your own garment.

**SSH: Is there something about the folklore of knitting, the history of knitting that draws you to it?**

**FK:** Oh my goodness, yes! My mother grew up on a tiny croft in the Outer Hebrides, where she and her six brothers and sisters were all involved in washing, carding, spinning, and knitting wool from the family’s sheep. As the first of my Hebridean family to be born off a croft, I feel I’m just the latest extension of that knowledge, albeit in a vastly different world. When I knit, especially using native breed wools, I feel a deep sense of connection with my ancestors—extraordinary, hardy, big-hearted, wild men and women. For them, knitting was a skill required for survival. Pure wool socks and sweaters clothed their kin against brutal weather. When my mother taught me to knit, she was also teaching me an ancient, practical Hebridean craft. This thread has been something of a centering pivot point for me in my life, living all over the world in different cultures and always knitting.

**SSH: What is it that created your love of knitting—history, texture, just working with the yarn?**

**FK:** In the beginning, I was all about creating wild outfits and working with all kinds of fancy yarns—really the exact opposite of the wools I’d grown up wearing. I took great pleasure in knitting with wire one day, a super-soft luxury baby yarn the next. Everything you knit makes you more confident as a knitter, and there is



always something new to learn. You also get to find what kind of knitting fits your nature, and that feels really good. And you can express your love in an original way through your hand knits.

Coming home to the Hebrides, I've come full circle, feeling that we are all continuations on a theme, that we belong, and it is deeply satisfying. I am fascinated now by the history of knitting in the Hebrides and proud of my people—women who tended, fed, and lambed their own sheep, sheared them by hand, washed fleeces in streams, dried them on tussocks of heather in the sun, carded wool, and had their children card the wool, and then clacked away in the peat-smoke-filled stone croft houses on spinning wheels and clicked away on knitting needles. I like the idea of our all having individual yet ultimately similar stories and taking strength from them, and I have felt the power of this myself. It is a beautiful truth for us all and how we love to hear each other's stories.

**SSH: You have a very diverse collection of artistic skills at your disposal. How do you balance knitting, other design, and writing?**

**FK:** I just go where the mood takes me. It's important for me to be in flow. I am at my best when I'm able to be in the moment and move along pathways of inspiration in the moment. The

mental activity of writing is beautifully counterbalanced by the soothing, menial quality of knitting. It's also wonderful to knit while working through a concept, whether design or writing. It helps calm the mind so that good thoughts come easy.

**SSH: How did the producers of *Outlander* select your work for the show?**

**FK:** I was hand-knitting Scottish garments and accessories that had a whimsical quality, a wildness of spirit, and having fun presenting them in my Inner Wild Etsy shop. Some of these items fit with what the *Outlander* costume department had in mind for several of the characters in season one, so they just bought things they liked from my store like every other customer. This was such a joy for me because I was an *Outlander* fan myself and had no idea a TV series was being made. The first item they bought from my shop was my Wolf in Sheep's Clothing Capelet, which was worn by Claire.

**SSH: I love the aesthetic you work with—the rich, chunky textures and the saturated natural dye colors. Is this from Scottish tradition or some other inspiration?**

**FK:** I feel my affinity for chunky textures—an abundance



© Flora Kennedy



© Flora Kennedy

of fabric working in pleasing rhythm and the patterns that creates—comes from my childhood of wearing hand-knitted Aran, Lopi, and Fair Isle sweaters. I like to modernize traditional stitches, take them in new directions by applying them to different garments—using a body cable pattern as an edging and so on.

I've noticed my sense of color has morphed and muted living so close to nature. I'm more attuned to noticing and appreciating sparks of bright color on muted gray, blue, brown, green palettes, like wildflowers suddenly blossoming on the machair near the shore.

**SSH: How historically accurate are the knits you create for the time of *Outlander*?**

**FK:** The stitches are the same, of course, as they have always been. And while native breed Scottish wools are not easy to find, this is changing. Wools like Hebridean, Black Face, and other North Atlantic breeds are becoming more popular. I love working with these wools. They are quite different to knit with, having their own life and energy to them.

**SSH: I'm sure you wear things you make yourself. What are your favorite pieces?**

**FK:** I have a pair of Celtic mitts in Harris Tweed wool I plied myself, which have molded themselves into the shape of my hands over two years. I always put them on to chop wood, saw things, or work in the garden because they make me feel more adept when I wear them! I also love a cable bodice I knitted in a very precious handspun yarn—a mix of lamb's wool and my Alaskan Malamute Boo's undercoat fur—so beautiful and also sentimental.

**SSH: I have to ask—do you believe in magic?**

**FK:** Yes, I do. I see magic in everything. And let's always remember the beautiful line repeated many times in Frances Hodson Burnett's book *The Secret Garden*: "The magic is in me!"

Follow Flora Kennedy on Twitter @innerwild.

Visit Stephanie Stewart-Howard on Instagram @stephaniegwen13.

# DESIGNING *With* TIME

BY JILL GLEESON



PHOTOGRAPHY BY STEVE PARKE



They don't necessarily feature precious gemstones, the material needed to ensure safe passage back and forth through the centuries in *Outlander*, but Sue Beatrice's pocket-watch sculptures are every bit as concerned with time as the blockbuster books and series. The sculptor, who fashions her micro-miniature pieces in a Sea Cliff, New York, studio filled with the antique timepiece parts she uses to create her art, spent her formative years tinkering with the old, busted watches her grandfather kept in a box. Rather than actually tell time, however, her work today presents Lilliputian scenes set in pocket-watch cases that are sometimes whimsical, sometimes poignant, and often both.

According to Beatrice, these sculptures all share the central, if subtle, theme of time—or more precisely, the passing of it. “The watches that I work with are designed to last,” she says, “which is the opposite of everything we have now. Our iPhones are good for a year and a half before it's time to upgrade. Everything is plastic and disposable and temporary. I think the more I worked with these watches, the more I began contemplating what time means, what heirlooms mean.”

After a pause—just a slip of time, really—Beatrice adds, “I felt like I could create an art form that could be passed down through generations and maintain that heirloom quality. And

I also felt that it spoke not only to timelessness but also to the brevity of life. All the people who created these watches that I admire so much are long gone, generations gone. I think of who owned them, who looked at them daily to tell what time it was. It's fascinating to me to think about all that has passed in the time since this piece was engraved and this chain was made. It makes you contemplate what's important.”

Crafted only by commission, Beatrice's pocket-watch sculptures can take months to make as she waits for the perfect parts to appear. They find their way to her from a variety of sources, including estate sales and eBay, and from countries as far-flung as Romania and Argentina. Her only caveat is that she will not use working timepieces or even broken ones that might be repaired because, as she says, “I respect them too much.” Instead Beatrice seeks corroded movements and cases, items she knows can never again be used for anything but art.

She also looks specifically for watches and watch parts created before 1850. “I've discovered that items that were made prior to mass production are truly exquisite,” she says. “Because they were handmade by the artist, they were engraved inside, they had beauty to them and a patina on them that just couldn't be matched by anything that was made in the past century and a half.”

Beatrice's clients usually approach her knowing what scenes or items they would like her to re-create, though the artist says she has “complete creative control in how to get there.” They range from besotted hobbyists' objects of affection, including sailboats, motorcycles, and World War II-era biplanes, as well as more sentimental subjects, like dearly departed pets and, in one especially moving case, a father holding his young daughter's hand as they journey together through life.

“The little girl represents both the woman who commissioned the piece with her father and her young daughter with her grandfather—the same man,” Beatrice says. “The background is somewhat abstract with whirling gears and watch hands that appear to point the way. Perspective lines pull them forward into unknown, magical realms. The little girl's favorite red shoes were created out of watch rubies. This sculpture was both a celebration of the continuity of love through generations and a gentle reminder of the passage of time and how precious those moments are. The recipient was very touched by the piece.”

Other sculptures incorporate movement, like a jaw-dropping tribute to Edgar Allan Poe, which features a swinging pendulum, a reference to Poe's celebrated short story *The Pit and the Pendulum*. The tiny face in the watch case *really* does look like the long-departed, famously depressed literary genius. Perhaps even more fun, or at least more stylish, is the sculpture Beatrice created for footwear designer Steve Madden. It has shoes that kick and move when the watch case is popped open.

Beatrice, who grew up southern New Jersey, was destined to make art. Drawing, painting, and sketching (along with her grandfather's watches) consumed her from a young age. When the time came for college, the Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Arts in Philadelphia was a logical choice. Beatrice was already more successful than most of her peers, selling her wildlife paintings and exhibiting them in places like the congressional office buildings in Washington, D.C., which hosted her work when she was just fifteen. But it wasn't until she took a sculpture class at the academy that she discovered her true love. Already aching to create form and frustrated with the limited dimensionality of painting, Beatrice found freedom in sculpture.

Her star continued to ascend, but in a new galaxy. Before Beatrice could finish her classes she'd been recruited by the Franklin Mint. She sculpted coins and other relief pieces for the collectibles company for four years, moving on next to the toy industry, where her first project was designing figurines for the wildly popular Cabbage Patch Kids line. Over the following few decades, Beatrice would create crystal for Waterford Crystal, chocolate for Frankford Candy, and character sculptures for studios including Disney and Warner Bros.

“I often had the opportunity to create sculptures of products from upcoming movies before the public was aware that they were in the works,” Beatrice says. “I would get to view style guides and storyboards that were still being created. From this





Designing With Time

Jill Gleeson

information I sculpted characters from *The Lion King*, *The Hunchback of Notre Dame*, *Mulan*, *Little Mermaid*, *Cars*, and characters from classic films such as *Pinocchio* and *Snow White*. Over the years I think I worked on pretty much every Disney character you could think of, from Pooh to Maleficent, and of course, Mickey and the gang. For Warner Bros. I worked on Bugs Bunny, Taz, Animaniacs, Harry Potter, and many more—too many to recall, really.”

Beatrice was making a comfortable living as a commercial artist specializing in licensed products, but she wasn’t happy. The hours were grueling, the work was repetitive, and most of it was headed to China by then anyway. Just as crucially, Beatrice wanted creative control over the forms her hands shaped. She wanted to make what she wanted to make. So she took a deep breath and did the most terrifying, most fulfilling thing an artist can do. She quit her paying work to focus on what made her soul sing: her own art.

Shortly after, in 2011, Beatrice moved to New York and founded her own company, All Natural Arts. By all appearances it is just as successful as everything else the artist has done. Her pocket-watch sculptures now fetch from \$1,500 to \$7,500, depending on the additional elements Beatrice and her client want to add to a piece, including stands, fobs, chains, engravings, and more. The average cost for one is about \$2,000.

Drawn to nature since childhood, the artist began creating things out of organic material like sticks, clay, and insect wings, perhaps even snakeskin. Some of the pieces were miniature and all the more delicate for it. “I started encasing them in antique watch cases,” Beatrice says, “because I thought it was a beautiful way to display them. And when I bought the cases, they often came with gears or things that were loose that I started to



incorporate into some movements. The more I incorporated gears and such, the more popular the designs became. I began to transition and use less and less of the natural elements, although I still sometimes throw in natural elements because it’s a nice dichotomy between the harsh metal pieces and the soft natural forms.”

Beatrice begins each commission by digging up photographic reference material for accuracy and making a sketch to help with composition. The actual work itself is, not surprisingly, slow and deliberate, what Beatrice calls “a painstaking process involving a lot of temporary placement of pieces while I decide if I can find something that fits the spot better.

Whenever possible, I attach pieces mechanically, using screws or wire through pre-existing holes. When this isn’t possible, I use a combination of methods, from metal epoxy to resins and occasionally soldering. Many small parts are too delicate to solder.”

Still, Beatrice says creating her pocket-watch sculptures doesn’t involve much patience because she loves what’s she doing. So do her clients. “Generally when people buy these pieces, they’ll buy them as gifts,” she says. “Sometimes they’ll buy them for themselves, but either way they’re meant to be kept and eventually passed on to family members. This isn’t something that people do lightly. They pour a lot of emotions into coming up with ideas for their sculpture. And frequently when they receive them, they’ll be overcome with emotion, because they’re very meaningful to them.”



For more information about Sue Beatrice and her work, visit [allnaturalarts.com](http://allnaturalarts.com).



VERONICA VARLOW

Life of a Love Witch

My Grandma Helen lived her days surrounded by oracles in the natural world. Folklore and signs were woven into our everyday lives to predict the future or guide us through the day. A single broom dropping meant a journey, a spider in the house meant good news was coming, and leaving the cupboard doors open in the kitchen meant someone was talking about you.

In my childhood, memorizing and seeking the signs around me was just as important as learning to read my schoolbooks. I remember boiling eggs with Grandma when I noticed one cracked in the pot, indicating a visitor. “Throw another plate on the table for lunch, someone’s coming over!” I yelled. My Grandma Helen looked prouder than she did when I was first able to speak the words on a page of a Dr. Seuss book. A half hour later, her best friend Marilyn dropped by. Now, whether my Grandma secretly called Marilyn to come over when I wasn’t looking, I’ll never know. But in that moment, when the doorbell rang, a visitor standing in the door, I felt the mix of magic and exhilaration at my first prediction coming true.

Grandma’s cards were for playing bridge with her friends, but they also served as a bridge to the spirit world when she read them like tarot cards. Grandma’s porcelain tea cup that she used to sip Earl Grey was also a way to see signs in the leaves to predict the future.

Want to learn the art of tasseomancy? Come and sit for a spell with me and let’s put the kettle on.

I collect tea-leaf-reading cups from the 1930s because I love thinking of the women who brewed tea and swirled the leaves decades before me, using the very same cups that now belong to me. Every

time I decide to read the leaves, I honor their memory and their magic. However, the beauty of tea-leaf reading is that it is composed of things you probably already have at home. All you need is a teacup that is white inside, a saucer, a large pinch of loose-leaf tea leaves, and boiling water.

Let me share with you my personal tea-leaf-reading secret, a secret that you will never read in a book of tasseomancy, a secret of focus and calm that will give you the clarity to interpret the symbols with ease: Music.

Music helps boost ritual and divination work, particularly in the scrying realms. Scrying is the ability to see messages or patterns in a crystal ball, flame, mirror, or in this case, teacup. I used to have trouble focusing or quieting my mind to interpret the symbols, or I would try to “push” too hard to find certain symbols. As soon as I started using music in my readings, it quieted my mind to be able to take the time to really see the symbols clearly. I recommend listening to Chopin’s nocturnes to focus, or my go-to ritual song, “Host of Seraphim” by Dead Can Dance.

Let the music move you, and take a large pinch of loose tea leaves to place in the bottom of the cup. The ritual has begun.

Pour the boiling water over the loose tea leaves and let it steep for five minutes. This will allow the leaves to settle on the bottom. Use this steeping time for your own meditation. What is your question? What do you need to know right now? Phrase the question clearly and speak it out loud to the tea, so that the breath of your words cause ripples in the tea.

Now, sip the tea until a small amount of liquid is left. With your non-dominant hand, which is what my Grandma Helen referred to as the “spirit hand,” swirl the

tea in the cup three times in a clockwise motion, to move toward the future. Then, turn the teacup completely upside down on the saucer. Once it is upside down, rotate the cup three times in a counterclockwise motion to “seal” it. Kiss the bottom of the teacup once and then turn it right side up to reveal the leaves left over in the cup.

As the music plays, quiet your mind, and let yourself ease into a dreamlike state to see symbols. Tea-leaf reading is similar to the old summertime practice of lying on a blanket in a field and seeing pictures form in the clouds above. When you relax, it all floods in, it all makes sense, it all is revealed clearly. The clumps of leaves on the edge of the cup indicate the nearer future, while the bottom forecasts the future further away. Let the spirits of the women gathering in their parlors a century ago, doing this same practice, swirl around you and help you divine the symbols with ease.

Read more about Veronica Varlow’s *Witch Camp* and workshops on [lovewitch.com](http://lovewitch.com). Instagram: [@veronicavarlow](https://www.instagram.com/veronicavarlow).





## Lavender Wand Tutorial

BY CHARLOTTE BAKER

Think of lavender, and you might think of the famed lavender fields of Provence, or of stately formal gardens with orderly parterres of silver foliage, or of mounds of purple flowers, buzzing with bees, tumbling from the borders of quaint cottage gardens. You will certainly think of its delightful, clean fragrance, as that is perhaps the most recognizable trait of this garden favorite. (There's also Black Jack Randall using it to torture our boyfriend Jamie in *Outlander*, but we'll leave that aside for now.) The 17th century writer Izaak Walton wrote, "I long to be in a house where the sheets smell of lavender," affirming the long tradition of using lavender in the linen cupboard to impart a soothing, sedative fragrance and to protect the fabrics from the depredations of insects. Lavender wands, made with fresh stalks of lavender woven with ribbon, are a charming—and *Outlander*-esque—way to capture the aroma of this beloved herb for your own linen cupboard or armoire.

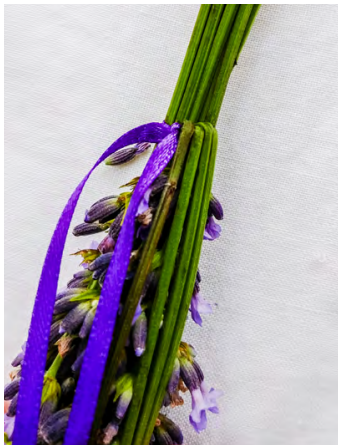
# Lavender Wand Tutorial

Charlotte Baker

*Step 1:* Harvest lavender early in the day, after the dew has dried but before the heat of the day. The oil content is highest when the bottom flowers have begun to open and most of the lower buds are starting to show color. Cut stalks that have stems at least 12 inches long. You will need an odd number of stems for the over-under weaving pattern, so cut at least 11 for a full wand. Remove any leaves from the stems.



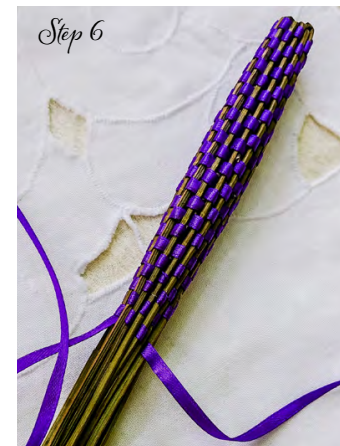
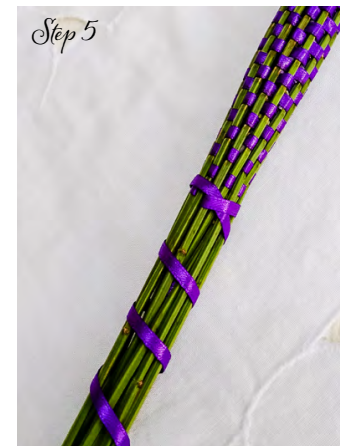
*Step 2:* Gather the stems in a bundle, with the bottoms of the flowerheads slightly staggered but forming a tight posy. Using the ribbon, tie the stems together tightly just below the flowerheads, leaving a tail about 16 inches long on one side and the longer working end on the other. Secure with a square knot. Trim the ends of the stems so that they're all the same length.



*Step 3:* Turn the bundle upside down and begin bending the stems down over the flowers, one at a time. To ensure that the stems bend and do not break, crimp each one with your thumbnail prior to bending.



*Step 4:* When all the stems are bent over and encasing the flowerheads, bring the longer end of the ribbon out between two stems at the very top of the bundle and begin weaving it over one stem and under the next. For the under passes, gently pulling the stems away from the bundle will make it easier to place the ribbon where it needs to be. Continue weaving, making sure each row is pushed snugly up against the preceding row. Keep the weaving tight by tugging gently on the ribbon after every under pass.



*Step 5:* When you've reached the end of the bundle of flowerheads, wrap the ribbon around the stems and secure it by passing the end of the ribbon under the wrap. Set aside in a warm place out of direct light for a few days to allow the lavender to start drying.

*Step 6:* After several days, the lavender will have shrunk considerably as it has begun to dry and the weaving will have become loose. Tighten the ribbon by inserting a toothpick or the tip of a skewer under the ribbon where you began weaving and gently pulling the slack out. Work your way around the bundle until you've reached the end of the weaving and the woven bundle is firm.

*Step 7:* Separate the short tail of ribbon from the stems at the bottom of the woven section and hold it aside. Wrap the weaving ribbon tightly around the stems in a spiral to about an inch from the stem ends, then wrap back up the stems to the point where the short tail emerges from the bundle. Make a couple more tight wraps around the stems, then tie the working end and the short tail in a square knot. Tie the tails in a bow, and trim the ribbon ends. Allow the wand to finish drying for several more days.



**Tip:** When the fragrance of the wand fades, roll the woven section between your palms to release more of the oils from the buds.

Find Charlotte Baker on her Etsy shop, [NightshadeHandmade](#); contact her via Facebook at [NightshadeArts](#) or on Instagram [@nightshade\\_handmade](#).



## From Our Readers

This month we asked our readers:  
What does *Outlander* mean to you?  
What do you love most about  
the books and series?



Illustrations © Guinevere von Sneed

I love how Scotland is so vividly portrayed as a character in the storytelling. Even when Claire and Jamie are far from home, their sense of place is always rooted in the magic, mystery, and fierce beauty of the Highlands.  
—*youarebeaut1ful*

It is such a connection to my own ancestry that I have no direct relation to. This show was the first time I heard Gaelic spoken in conversations. It makes me dream of my ancestors in the real-world version of old Scotland.  
—*awaking\_beauty*



I don't know where to start. The history, the herbalism and folklore, the heart and soul in it—above all though, the characters. It's also given me a thing for redheads.  
—*thegrowncountrylife*

There is truth, beauty, and magic in everything about *Outlander*, such that one can truly believe the seelie and sidhe await them to join in a druidic dance at twilight. Or to simply fall through time, to find yourself caught up in battles with Highland warriors!  
—*holliewoodvengenzmine*

I'm a Scot and didn't really expect to like it, but I think it's historically very well researched and I love the insight into how my ancestors lived, the herbalism, but most of all the depth of love, respect, and passion between Claire and Jamie.  
—*lulu.lum*

The *Outlander* series does such a bang-up job of juxtaposing opposites. I love how Claire's sensible, scientific approach to things is contradicted by a world filled to the brim with witchcraft, water horses, curses, and magic. Watching her grow as a character and learn to accept and embrace the magic in the world does my soul good.  
—*Sylvia Call*



The books magically transport the reader to a time and place where life was simpler and much more challenging at the same time—a place where magic is possible and intrigue probable, a time when every minute was spent in the art of survival and when love held everything together.  
—*Debbi Stricklan*

The book is full of amazing, strong women and men who are strong enough to love them. That's the real fantasy of the book.  
—*Donna Knott*

Diana Gabaldon's books: I most love her character development and how much I learned both about the history of my birth country, the U.S., and my ancestral homeland of Scotland. The series: Oh my god, I could just sit and watch Jamie Fraser (Sam Heughan) with the sound off and all would be right with the world ... who else is with me?!  
—*juliabonardi*

It was reading *Outlander* twenty years ago that inspired me to study herbal medicine.  
—*winter.cate*



I read it while fighting breast cancer. It took me to a magical place where cancer could not go, and it taught me that love lives on.  
—*groovy.ghoulie*

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