

Faerie Magazine is now

ENCHANTED LIVING

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Into **THE FOREST** *Issue*

**MAI
NIEMI**
FINNISH FAIRYTALE



Photo by Gesi/ART Photography

Helsinki, Finland
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Eco-style | Slow Fashion | Magic



“I have my way of / praying, as you no doubt have yours.”
—Mary Oliver in “How I Go to the Woods”



We spent the last several issues of *Enchanted Living* (formerly *Faerie Magazine*) exploring themes and topics as diverse as the celestial skies, J.R.R. Tolkien, *Outlander*, the medieval world, *Practical Magic*, and mermaids, all viewed through an enchanted yet real-life lens, with each issue filled with recipes, tutorials, tips, poems, and more. In this spring issue, we wanted to go back to the mother of all things enchanted: the forest. What could be more fundamentally magical than the woods? And at the same time, what could be more essential, more of this world? A leaf, a patch of moss, a bright blossom?

The forest is how many of us learned that enchantment was real in the first place—through the fairy tales set there and the endless stories of gnomes and other creatures who haunt every tree and bush, the fairies who inhabit each flower, the trolls who live inside caves, the witches and wizards who live in wooden cottages who may or may not reveal themselves to passersby. It’s hard to enter the forest without imagining that all these creatures are there, just out of sight, alongside the foxes and fawns and birds who enchant us in plain view. The late poet Mary Oliver wrote about the small kingdoms breathing in the wood, the luminous doom, and how, during a night sleeping in the wood, she “had vanished at least a dozen times into something better.” Who doesn’t want that type of vanishing? We can forget sometimes how easy it is to find enchantment in the world, which is what we try to illuminate here as much as we can.

So we thought that in this issue we’d celebrate the forest in as many forms as we could, filling our pages with woodland wonders: everything from fiddlehead-fern recipes to tutorials for making fabric toadstools to meditations to bring the forest to you, wherever you are in the world. Janne Eikeblad visits eco-dwellings in Wales, inhabited by people who have dedicated themselves to living in closer harmony with the earth, while Grace Nuth points out signs that you might be a wood nymph—which, we suspect, you are. We visit enchanted creatures like Ellen Tyn in Russia and Michaela Durisova and her mother in Slovakia, as well as actual enchanted forests as witnessed by some of our favorite photographers.

And we also asked our readers how they themselves get lost in the woods. “A forest needs us to slow down to let in its secrets,” reader Line Herikstad said. “I will never stop listening to the rustling of leaves or the gentle flow of an underground stream. I will never stop looking for doors in fallen-over tree roots, or expecting a little woodland creature to step out on the trail in front of me. I will never stop expecting magic to happen as soon as the trees close around me, blocking the sight and sound of the city.”

Neither, we hope, will we or you.

Love,
Carolyn Turgeon



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FOUNDER and PUBLISHER
Kim Cross

EDITOR-IN-CHIEF
Carolyn Turgeon

ART DIRECTOR
Lisa Gill

PHOTO EDITOR
Steve Parke

SENIOR EDITOR
Grace Nuth

POETRY EDITOR
Mary McMyne

TRAVEL EDITOR
Jill Gleeson

COPY EDITOR
Robert Horning

ADVERTISING SALES
Sara Vesely
sara@faeriemag.com

EDITORIAL CONSULTANT
Rona Berg

CONTRIBUTORS

Megan Cash, Monica Crosson, Michaela Durisova, Janne Eikeblad, Sara Ghedina, Theodora Goss, Lauren LaRocca, Alise Marie, Lindsey Márton O'Brien, Timothy Schaffert, Ellen Tyn, Veronica Varlow, Gather Victoria, The Wondersmith, Emily Yeadon

ARTISTS and PHOTOGRAPHERS

Carri Angel Photography, Ellen Borggreve, Neil J. Burnell, Elizabeth Elder, Ange Harper, Kathleen Jennings, Ulrike Klumpp, Garrett Mensching, Martin Podt, Kilian Schoenberger, Guinevere von Sneeden

CONTACT US:

info@faeriemag.com
Enchanted Living
P.O. Box 26452
Gwynn Oak, MD 21207

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ISSUE 46 | Spring

FICTION, POETRY & ESSAYS

7 SIGNS YOU MAY BE A WOOD NYMPH by *Grace Nuth*
Illustration by *Guinevere von Sneeden*

22 GRANDMOTHER ELDER by *Monica Crosson*

53 WHAT YOU WISH FOR by *Grace Nuth*, Illustration by *Guinevere von Sneeden*



58 MR. FOX by *Theodora Goss*
Art by *Kathleen Jennings*

87 THINGS WE LOVE Illustration by *Guinevere von Sneeden*



HOME, FASHION & BEAUTY

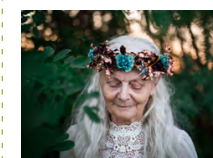
8 THINGS WE LOVE
Meadow and Fawn

9 THINGS WE LOVE
Ceramic Tales Pottery

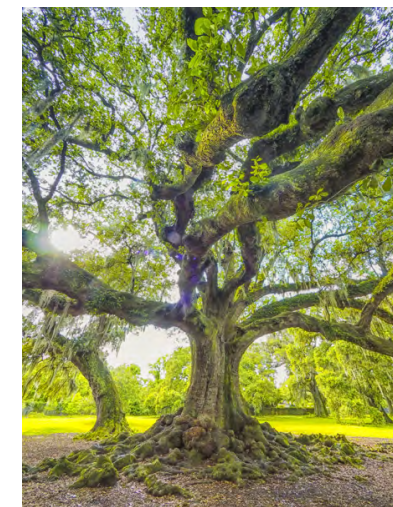
54 ENCHANTING PRIMROSE CORDIAL by *Gather Victoria*

80 STORYBOOK COUTURE by *Carolyn Turgeon*

83 BEAUTY SECRETS OF A WOOD NYMPH by *Alise Marie*, *The Beauty Witch*



106 MY PERSONAL FAIRY by *Carolyn Turgeon*



41 INTO THE FOREST



14 FIDDLEHEADS

Recipes and photography by Sara Ghedina

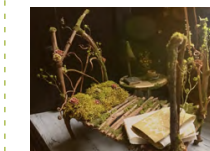


26 A FOREST FABLE *Photography by Carri Angel Photography and Ange Harper*

SPECIAL FEATURES

20 AN INTERVIEW WITH HOLLY BLACK on her new book *The Wicked King*

25 A GUIDED MEDITATION by *Meghan Pell*

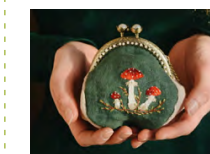


34 WHERE FAIRIES DWELL by *Jill Gleeson*

67 MUSHROOM MAGIC by *Rona Berg*

68 THE BEAUTY OF NATURAL ESSENCES by *Lindsey Márton O'Brien*

72 MEDICINE AND MAGIC by *Lauren LaRocca*
Photography by Steve Parke



76 THE ENCHANTMENT OF ELLEN TYN by *Grace Nuth*

88 THE WILD-CRAFTED CUISINE OF BAIERSBRONN by *Jill Gleeson*

110 THE SECRET TO WILD PLANTS by *The Wondersmith*



COLUMNS

32 VOLATILE DEGRADATION: THE PERFUME OF PULP AND PAPER by *Timothy Schaffert*

57 LIFE OF A LOVE WITCH: A WILD FOREST RITUAL by *Veronica Varlow*

114 FROM OUR READERS



10 ON OUR COVER: ADORNED BY THE FOREST by *Grace Nuth*
Photography by Elizabeth Elder



94 FAIRYTALE ECO HOUSES IN WALES by *Janne Eikeblad*



60 HOMEMADE TRAP by *Carolyn Turgeon*



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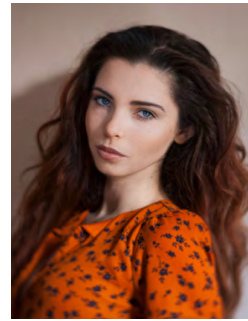
CONTRIBUTORS

Enchanted Living's Into the Forest Issue



Carri Angel

Carri Angel is a full-time commercial photography lecturer. She's also an established costume designer and founder of The Dark Angel Design Co., an alternative clothing label. For the past eighteen years, photography has been the main aspect of her creative practice, and her fantasy imagery is regularly featured in publications worldwide. Her studio is located on the edge of Dartmoor, England, where the wild unspoiled moors and magical mossy woodlands inspire much of her work. "A Forest Fable," featured in this issue, was shot locally in a forest of rare dwarf oak trees. "Photography," she says, "enables me to bring fantasy to life. And for a short time that magic is real."



Elizabeth Elder

Elizabeth Elder is a Los Angeles-based fine art photographer. At sixteen, she found inspiration from the website deviantart.com that drove her to practice what turned out to be her passion, photography. As time passed she had the pleasure of meeting wonderful costume designers and models who helped her emotively create captivating images. She's had her photographs published in several magazines, including last summer's mermaid issue of *Faerie Magazine*. For this issue of *Enchanted Living*, she shot the magical cover image and cover feature. "It was wonderful," she says, "to see the amount of artistic team effort that went into this photo shoot."



Kathleen Jennings

Kathleen Jennings was raised on fairy tales in Western Queensland. Now an illustrator and writer in Brisbane, Australia, she's been shortlisted three times for the World Fantasy Awards, and once for a Hugo, and has won several Ditmar Awards. She recently completed an illustrated dissertation on Australian Gothic literature (with an emphasis on its enchanted influences). She's worked on the land and as a lawyer and translator, but these stories have always been the mirror through which she views the world. "Fairy tales," she says, "are the province of bold, brave girls, and wise cleverness, and it's a joy to illuminate their moments of benevolent mischief."



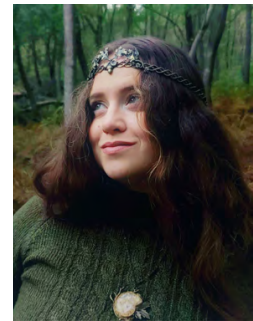
Lauren LaRocca

Lauren LaRocca is a writer, astrologer, herbalist, and energy worker who has lived in various parts of Appalachia throughout her life, from Pittsburgh to Western North Carolina. After studying creative writing at Warren Wilson College, she's worked as a newspaper and magazine editor, with a focus on arts and culture, the environment, health, and spirituality. "I was drawn to Anam Cara Apothecary because it was founded on a belief that I live by: that the medicine is in the Earth—and all its plants and stones—and it's also inside you. I've always found my most profound healing to come when I go into the woods and get quiet."



Lindsey Márton O'Brien

Lindsey Márton O'Brien is an artist, photographer, graphic designer, and perfumer in Lancaster, Pennsylvania. She creates artwork inspired by nature, dreams, and otherworldly magic, as well as botanical perfumes for her business Lumina Noctis. She also photographs and designs custom art for weddings through Luminous Creative Studio. In "The Beauty of Natural Essences," she encourages readers to explore the world of natural ingredients. "Natural perfume and other botanical treasures uplift us in multifaceted ways," she says. "We can go deeper in our appreciation of them by intentionally crafting meaningful items that honor our important life moments."



Meghan Pell

Meghan Pell resides in central New Jersey, nestled between the forest and the shore. She's an artist of many mediums, though her subject matter is almost always the same—the magic and deep lore found in nature. Most known for her nature photography and handmade jewelry, she also enjoys crafting with words from time to time. In "Cultivating Your Inner Forest," she shares a way to keep the forest with you no matter where you roam. "I forget how old I was when someone very dear to me introduced me to the idea of creating a sacred space inside my head," she says, "It can be anything you want it to be ... all that matters is that it's yours."

Signs You May Be A WOOD NYMPH

by Grace Nuth

Illustration by Guinevere von Sneed

- If you go longer than a week without visiting the woods, you start to fade and pine, whether it's the hottest day of summer or icicles are dripping from the trees.
- When you spy a mushroom, you know fairies are nearby. When you see a fern, you imagine how beautiful the fronds would be woven into your hair.
- You wonder why everyone hikes in the woods as if they had some other place they had to be. Wander. Sit. Observe. Be.
- If someone asked you to list some of your tree friends, you could answer in an instant with specific names and descriptions.
- You would never dare travel in the forest without gifts in your pockets for the fairies, for the trees, for the wildflowers and squirrels.
- You wear practical shoes and flowing dresses in the forest. Yes, the skirts get tangled and torn, but don't they look even more beautiful laced with thorns and leaves?
- Seeing an animal in the woods, whether it be a bird or squirrel, deer or fox, leaves you with a sense of wonder and beauty that lasts for days or longer.
- Your favorite word is *Waldeinsamkeit*, German for "a feeling of being alone in the woods, completely surrounded by nature."
- You can't pass a patch of moss without touching it or considering a nap.
- You enter the forest bareheaded and leave with a crown of flowers and fallen leaves.
- You have a story for every dried flower, pressed leaf, and pebble you display in your cabinets at home.
 - ...But is it really your home?
The forest beckons you.



Polymer clay artist Alexis Savopoulos, known as **Meadow and Fawn**, creates miniature worlds through her sculpted animal figures, adding paper flowers (poppies, in this case), foliage, and preserved lichens and mosses to capture magical moments in time. We want to shrink down to fairy size to take a forest nap with this dear little fox! meadowandfawn.com



We are utterly smitten with this beautiful plate, cup, and spoon from Russian artist Valentina Fadeeva, known as **Ceramic Tales**. Each piece is freeform sculpted from white clay, and covered with speckled dots to resemble the Amanita muscaria mushroom of fairy tale lore before being glazed and fired to create a unique and useful art piece. etsy.com/shop/CeramicTale



ADORNED *by the* FOREST

by GRACE NUTH
Photography by ELIZABETH ELDER

The fairies must have had their hand in making sure these beautiful images were created. When we learned, last minute, that Dutch corsetiere Joni Steinmann of Rainbow Curve Corsetry would be visiting Los Angeles, we contacted model Jessica Dru, who jumped at the chance to model Steinmann's incredible bespoke mushroom corset. But she had almost no time to find a photographer and arrange details. Add the fact that the shoot was to take place in Southern California in midsummer, when beautiful beaches are easy to find but vivid green forests have gone dry and are elusive as unicorns, and it certainly took a bit of pixie dust to pull things off.

But the images speak for themselves. Jessica called upon her friend Bryan Forrest (yes, that's really his last name), an actor, stuntman, and blacksmith. She had heard that his struggle to find fantastical locations for productions prompted him to transform his front yard into a fantasy landscape, with all manner of secret hidden conveniences (industry secrets, he says, but we suspect sprites are involved) that make filming and photographing there very easy.

The group converged on Forrest's home, and Dru had her first chance to see in person the stunning corset that had inspired this month's theme. "Steinmann is one of those artists where you see their work in a photo and swoon over it," Dru says. "But when you see it in person, you are in awe because of how much more detail and effort and magic there is up close."

Forrest, beautifully dressed in his own thematic garb by Christy Hauptman, engaged in a method he uses

often to get into character as he prepared. "I grew up in the theater so connecting with wardrobe and letting that inform my character is a big part for me," he says. "As I lace up the costume's boots they become my boots that I wear to explore the great bogs of the misty marsh lands. This ring I place on my finger is an ancestral ring of my tribe that allows me to face the great orc horde amassing on the border to my village."

For the shoot, Dru and Forrest met by a mist-laden pond, and photographer Elizabeth Elder captured every magical moment. The concept they kept in mind while posing was perfect: two powerful forest guardians crossing paths in an enchanted glade where fae folk come to meet in mutual respect. "The best part about photo shoots is thinking about who you are becoming as you style your makeup and hair, and then getting to bring your own internal fantasy to life with the photographer and, in this case, alongside Bryan," says Dru. "So our poses were both coming from a loving and longing sort of place, and we got to progressively tell a story between the two of us throughout the shoot. It's really delightful, like slow-motion silent acting."

The acting became a little too real, however, for Forrest, who had never experienced wearing moss as makeup before. "I didn't realize what happens to moss when it gets wet," he says. "So as we finished the shoot and I got more and more pond water on me, the moss started to absorb it and spread out. It brought out the bouquet of scents that were held inside." The fantasy turned into reality, both heady and pungent. "Needless to say I sat on the edge when we went out to eat afterward," he joked.

Illustration © Guinevere von Sneedden



Photography: **Elizabeth Elder** Costume Designer: **Joni Steinmann of Rainbow Curve Corsetry**
Models: **Jessica Dru, Bryan Forrest** Additional costuming (Bryan's costume): **Christy Hauptman**
Location: **The Forrest Manor**



Steinmann, the corsetiere behind Rainbow Curve Corsetry, has been an artist for many years but is relatively new to corsetry. She started her company in 2015 after a year and a half of making corsets for friends and herself. Over time, her designs have evolved into more and more sculptural concepts. This corset, named Beautiful Decay, was Steinmann's attempt to confront her fear of fungi through a study of the innate beauty of the shapes and colors of mushrooms. "The title hints at the circle of life—fungi and other microorganisms break everything down as they return to the earth," she says. "Making this piece was in essence a reflection on the ephemeral nature of everything: a memento mori."

The piece is hand-felted, using hand-dyed organza silk squares, glass beads, and Angeline fibers to add shimmer and texture. Its creation took over 150 hours.

Steinmann is thrilled with the images of her corset: "Jessica brought a sense of mystery and otherworldly charm. She looked so pretty and formed a unity with the green surrounding her, as if she had emerged from the earth itself. It was magical to watch her and Bryan pose together among the fog and foliage."



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.



A large pile of cooked fiddleheads, the furred fronds of a young fern, is shown on a dark, textured surface. The fiddleheads are bright green and have a spiral, coiled appearance. They are piled together, with some showing the intricate details of their fronds. The background is a dark, almost black, surface with some lighter, mottled areas, possibly a stone or metal surface. The lighting is dramatic, highlighting the texture and color of the fiddleheads.

FIDDLEHEADS

RECIPES AND PHOTOGRAPHY BY SARA GHEDINA

Fiddleheads, or the furred fronds of a young fern, might be one of the most alluring of vegetables, available only fleetingly every spring. The taste is strong and distinctive—some say it's like a cross between asparagus and spinach, others that it's more like grass or nuts. Most say that the fiddlehead tastes like springtime. See for yourself by trying one of the following recipes, or another that you come across, but for proper levels of enchantedness, be sure to clean and cook your fiddleheads—boil them for at least fifteen minutes before sautéing or otherwise preparing them.

**FIDDLEHEAD EDAMAME SALAD
WITH ORANGE AND HAZELNUTS**
Add some protein to make a
meal of this hearty salad. The
oranges, cheese, and hazelnuts
help balance the fiddleheads'
unique, fairy-friendly flavor.



**FLATBREAD WITH
KALE PESTO, GREEN PEAS,
AND FIDDLEHEADS**
This recipe calls for lavash
bread, but you can also use pizza
dough or focaccia. Regular lemons
are fine too. The many flavors here
can temper the wild taste of fern
for those less enamored.





FLATBREAD WITH KALE PESTO, GREEN PEAS, AND FIDDLEHEADS

(serves 4)

- 1 sheet lavash bread, 16 x 10 in.
- 15 to 20 fiddleheads
- 1 cup fresh green peas
- 1 leek
- 2 garlic cloves
- 3 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil
- 1 Meyer lemon, juice and zest
- ½ teaspoon chili pepper
- ½ cup chopped parsley
- Salt and pepper, to taste
- ¾ cup kale pesto

For the kale pesto

- 2 cups baby kale leaves, chopped
- 2 cups kale leaves, chopped
- ¼ cup sunflower seeds
- ¼ cup cashews
- 2 garlic cloves
- 3 tablespoons olive oil
- Juice of 1 lemon
- Salt and pepper, to taste

Preheat oven to 400°F.

Prepare the pesto: In a food processor, add sunflower seeds and cashews and process for about 30 seconds on high, until broken into crumbs. Add the rest of the ingredients and blend until combined. Adjust seasoning if needed.

Trim the fiddlehead ferns, discarding any brown ends and mushy parts, rinse and cook in lightly salted boiling water for about 15 minutes. Drain and keep aside.

Thinly slice the leek, removing the dark green leaf and the root end. Peel and slice garlic. Heat olive oil in a large skillet, add chili pepper, garlic, and leek, and cook for 2 to 3 minutes. Add fiddleheads and green peas, and season with salt and pepper. Stir and cook for 5 minutes. Add half the parsley and the juice of the Meyer lemon, and cook on high heat until it's evaporated. Turn off the heat and set aside.

Place lavash bread on a baking sheet lined with parchment paper. Bake for 3 minutes, turn over, and then spread it with pesto and top with the fiddlehead-peas mixture. Sprinkle with zest of the Meyer lemon and the remaining parsley, and bake for another 5 to 6 minutes until the edges of the flatbread are nicely browned.

Serve immediately.

SAUTÉED FIDDLEHEADS WITH TOASTED BREADCRUMBS

(serves 4)

- 1 lb. fiddleheads
- 2 garlic cloves
- 3 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil
- ¾ cup panko breadcrumbs
- ¼ cup plus 1 tablespoon chopped parsley
- Zest of 1 lemon
- Salt and pepper, to taste

Trim the fiddlehead ferns, discarding any brown ends and mushy parts. Rinse and cook in lightly salted boiling water for about 15 minutes. Drain and keep aside.

Prepare the breadcrumbs: Heat 1 tablespoon olive oil in a skillet, add breadcrumbs, and cook for about 3 to 4 minutes until lightly golden brown, stirring constantly. Add 1 garlic clove, minced, and cook for an additional minute. Take off the heat and season with ¼ cup parsley and lemon zest. Stir and set aside.

Peel and slice the other garlic clove. In a large frying pan, heat 2 tablespoons olive oil over medium-high heat, add garlic, and sauté until fragrant, about 1 minute. Add blanched fiddleheads, season with salt and pepper, and cook until they start to brown on the edges, about 5 minutes.

Place fiddleheads on a serving dish, top with seasoned bread crumbs, and sprinkle with 1 tablespoon of chopped parsley. Serve immediately.

FIDDLEHEAD EDAMAME SALAD WITH ORANGE AND HAZELNUTS

(serves 4)

- ¾ lb. fiddleheads
- 1 cup edamame, cooked and shelled
- 2 oranges
- ¾ cup toasted hazelnuts
- ¼ cup crumbled feta or goat cheese
- 3 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil
- Salt and pepper, to taste

Trim the fiddlehead ferns, discarding any brown ends and mushy parts. Rinse and cook in lightly salted boiling water for about 15 minutes. Drain, mix with edamame, and set aside.

Combine juice of half an orange and the olive oil in a small bowl, whisk together, and season with salt and pepper to taste. Reserve.

Peel and slice the other orange, removing the white pit and the inner segments, and set aside. Coarsely chop the hazelnuts.

Toss fiddleheads and edamame with orange juice dressing just before serving. Place on a serving dish and top with orange slices, toasted hazelnuts, and feta cheese.

When she's not at farmers markets, or stirring yet another jam, or photographing an artichoke, Sara Ghedina might be running in Golden Gate Park or in warrior pose. Find out more at saraghedina.com.



SAUTÉED FIDDLEHEADS WITH TOASTED BREADCRUMBS
The toasted bread crumbs add crunchiness and lemon adds a freshness to this simple yet delectable springtime side dish.



AN INTERVIEW WITH HOLLY BLACK

*We talk to the best-selling author and enchantress about her love for the forest and her new book **The Wicked King**.*

Enchanted Living: Can you describe your idea of an enchanted forest?

Holly Black: There's this line in *The Cruel Prince*, where a mortal girl who has been raised in Faerie is observing another girl: *She's looking around the forest, as though if she can prove it isn't magic, then nothing else is, either. Which is stupid. All forests are magic.*

And I am going to stand by that. There's just something about entering even a small patch of woods and drinking in the smells of leaf mold and moss and ferns that is calming and invigorating at once.

EL: Much of your work centers on enchanted woods. Why has the forest been such a compelling setting for you?

HB: Woods are liminal spaces in fairy tales—the place where the witches and wolves are, the place where one hides from the evil queen, a place of danger and transformation. But growing up in the suburbs, woods are liminal spaces too. Places you can play as a child and feel very far from your home, even if you're only a few blocks away. Places you can sneak off to and drink with your friends as a teenager. And so I think they're really resonant for me as a setting for lots of different stories.

EL: Why do you think the forest is so central to fairy tales generally?

HB: I think it's immensely useful as a symbol of the wild chaos of nature in opposition to the orderliness of town.

EL: Are any of the wooded encounters in your books based on experiences you've had in nature?

HB: Not the experiences themselves but certainly the woods. In particular, there was a spot in my first book that I called “the glass swamp” because that's what we called it when we were kids. It wasn't at all a swamp—just an extremely tiny stream surrounded by trees and a lot of broken glass.

And in *The Cruel Prince*, I drew a lot of inspiration from the woods of Cornwall and Devon, which I found immensely magical when I visited them.

EL: Do you have a favorite forest or a favorite spot in nature where you like to spend time?

HB: The Julius Lester trail near Puffer's Pond in the town where I live. It's just a really lovely stretch of woods, with a stream running through it, strange little bridges, and a wonderful canopy of leaves overhead.

EL: What is your favorite way to lose yourself in the woods?

HB: I like to go for walks, especially when I am stuck on a plot thing. And I like wandering with my family. My son loves to throw sticks into water and watch them sail away or skip stones. There's always something to see in the forest.

EL: Your characters often start out in familiar places and are then thrust into magical encounters. How would you fare if you were suddenly dropped into Faerie or an enchanted forest?

HB: Well, I think it's useful to know some of the rules, but I imagine I would quickly find myself drunk on faerie wine and devastatingly enchanted.

EL: Do you have a favorite forest-themed fairy tale?

HB: I think “Vasilisa the Beautiful” is maybe the best example of how the forest works as a place of both danger and opportunity. In it, Vasilisa is sent by her wicked stepmother to fetch fire from the witch Baba Yaga's hut. Baba Yaga sets her a series of impossible tasks and tells her that she will kill her if she doesn't accomplish them. Luckily, Vasilisa has the help of a little doll that her mother gave her on her deathbed. With the doll's help, she does all that's asked of her and is able to return home with a skull with flaming eyes to light her way. Upon arriving home, the fire springs out and burns her wicked stepmother and stepsisters to ash.

EL: Can you tell us more about your new book *The Wicked King*?

HB: *The Wicked King* is the second book in the *Folk of the Air* trilogy. They're about a mortal girl named Jude who is raised in Faerie by the murderer of her parents, the Grand General of the High Court of Elfhome. She wants to find a place for herself in the High Court but is thwarted by the youngest—and to her mind, worst—of the princes, Prince Cardan.

The Cruel Prince asks what Jude is willing to do for power, and *The Wicked King* asks what she will do to hang on to it.

EL: Do you have any advice for aspiring writers?

HB: Here's the best advice I have gotten and given over the years: First, write to please your reader self and not your writer self. Second, finish what you start. Third, unless you're totally against the idea, find a critique partner with whom you can pass things back and forth.

EL: And finally, how do you stay enchanted?

HB: It's hard to feel magical all the time. When you're working a lot and busy, it can be hard to feel magical at all. But I think there are a few things that help—being around beautiful things, experiencing art and music and writing, taking moments to light candles. But I think the most important thing is to have people in your life who look for enchantment too.



You can find Holly Black's work at blackholly.com or follow her on Instagram @blackholly.



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GRANDMOTHER ELDER

by Monica Crosson

My grandmother was a mysterious woman—quiet and stern, her burdens etched harshly across her face. Her home was unremarkable, uncluttered, and as sensible as the black-soled shoes she always wore. Grandmother didn't have a chest filled with toys or a dress-up box for young visitors to explore on visits to her home. And you never asked her for a cookie but always waited for her to offer, and those offerings were few and far between. But when Grandmother took one of us for a walk among her treasured trees of the woodland that kept her property enchantedly wild, she changed. Her steps lightened, and the lines that told a story of a life filled with hardship faded. She was frolicsome, and it was in that forest that I saw in her the girl she was meant to be.

"Over here, child," she motioned, always three steps ahead of me. "Say hello to this fine elder who protects your grandmother from what's beyond the veil."

"Hello, Elder," I said, stroking the mottled gray bark, whose ghostly demeanor beckons to me even now. "Can I ask you a question, Grandma?"

"Of course, child. But be careful of the Bleeding Heart" she warned, as I stumbled over moss-coated roots that rose from beneath the forest's debris.

"Why do you tie things in that tree?" I pointed to what I know now as an Elder. The tree wore the blush of spring's new green and was covered with milky white flowers and several bright red cloth strips tied loosely in her branches.

Grandmother was still for a moment. "Those are my prayers, child," she said and placed a basket just below the Elder's small trunk.

I watched as she bowed before the tree and mumbled indiscernibly. She was quiet as she worked, picking blossoms that I recognized as an ingredient in a tea she always made. As this ritual played out, the forest grew quiet and I remember hearing only the soft dropping of the blooms into the basket and my own breath.

When she was finished, she grabbed my hand and spoke to me of the old ways and of the wizened Elder Mother who resided within the tree. We walked slowly back to her home. "When I die someday," she said. "I will become a tree. For that," she pointed to her unadorned little house, "is not my home. I belong to the trees."

THE ELDER TREE

If you're walking near the hedgerow on an evening when the air is tinged with the scent of woodbine and the breeze ruffles your magical senses, and you pass an elder tree, don't forget to tip your hat in respect for the wizened woman, Elder Mother,

who resides within. She is the crone of winter whose lessons can be gleaned from the rise of smoke of the communal fire and frost patterns on leaves. She is the aspect of the spirit that draws us inward, so we can gather our energy and eventually blossom. To our ancient relatives the elder tree was surrounded by taboo and was approached with caution and ritual. No forester would dare take from the lady tree before asking:

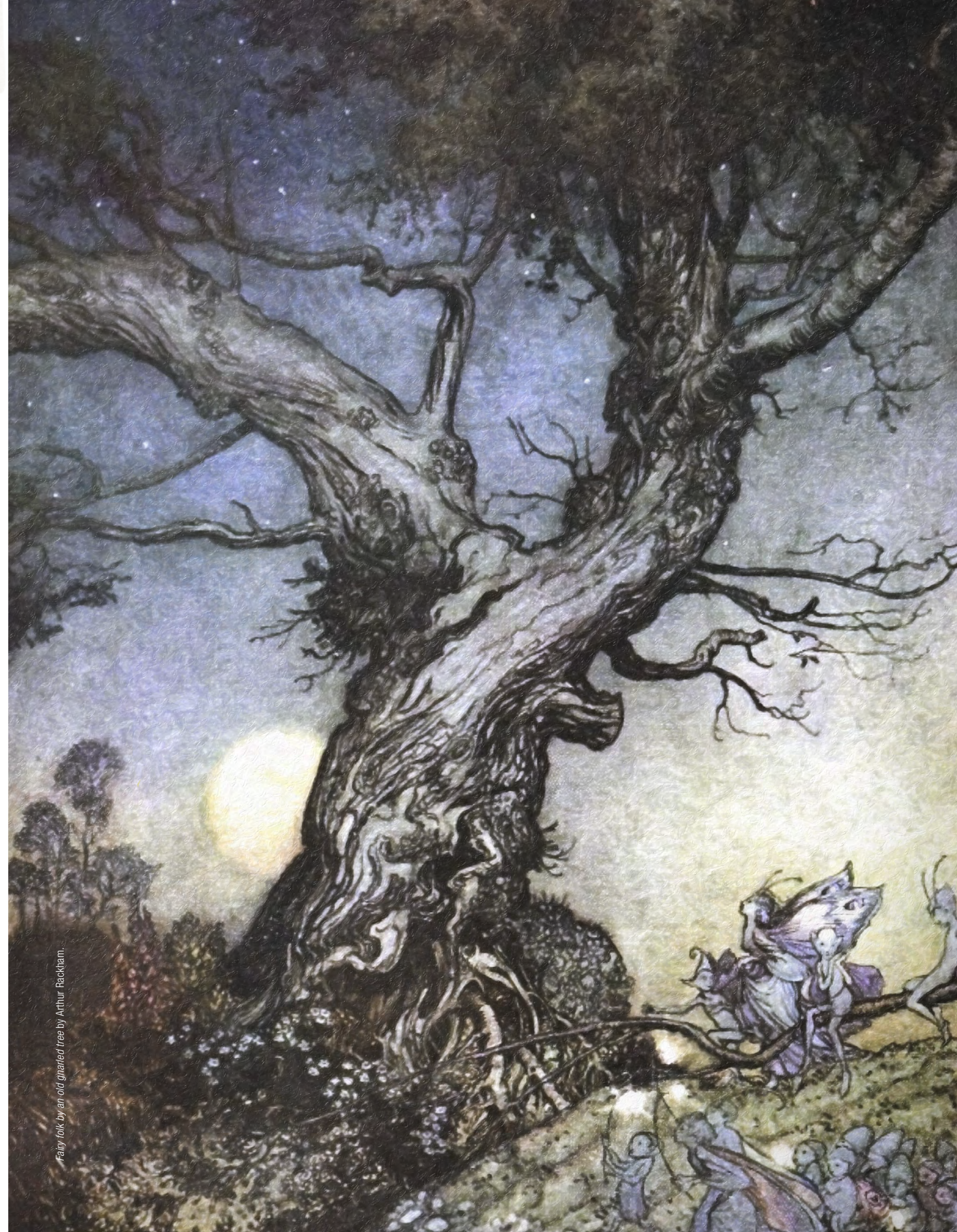
*Owd Girl, give of thy wood,
An' I will give thee some of mine,
When I become a tree.*

The Elder Mother was thought to be connected to the White Goddess of Winter, who was known as Hel or Hella in Scandinavian lore, Holda or Bertha in Germanic mythology, or Holde on the British Isles. She is the goddess of rejuvenation and transformation. She is the dark mother who holds our hand as we look deep into the cauldron of our soul, knowing that only by manifesting metaphorical death can rebirth begin.

The elder tree is a small tree that grows along country paths and along hedgerows. The European elderberry (*Sambucus nigra*) grows taller (up to twenty feet) than its American cousin (*Sambucus canadensis*), but both bear clumps of sweet-smelling white flowers in the spring and deep blue berries that hang in massive clumps during the late summer and early autumn months. There is also a red variety (*Sambucus racemose*) that produce berries that are slightly toxic, and of course, there are many other cultivars available at your local nursery or garden center that have been hybridized as ornamental shrubs or for maximum fruit production.

This bent but formidable tree that imbues the magic of the crone leads us through the dark half of the year in more ways than one. The berries of the elder tree that are harvested in early fall are rich in vitamin C and chemical compounds called anthocyanidins, which makes syrups and tea that can be a powerful medicine for combating wintertime colds and flus. Infusions made of the flowers in late spring can be used to ease head colds and can be used as a gargle for sore throats. It may also relieve the symptoms of ailments such as bronchitis, fever, and gout. The bark is a strong diuretic and was used in ancient times as a purgative in cases of food poisoning. Leaves can be used as a poultice for inflammation, and the young shoots to clear phlegm from the lungs and head.

Elder guards the gateway to the otherworld. To meditate under her branches brings you closer to the land of fae. In fact, it is said that if one takes in the fragrance of the elder's blossoms on May eve, you will see the fairy king and his entourage. For



Fairy folk by an old gnarled tree by Arthur Rackham.

GRANDMOTHER'S ELDERFLOWER TEA

2 parts dried elderflowers
1 part dried chamomile
½ part dried nettle

This sweet and slightly earthy tea blend harnesses all the goodness of spring along the forest's edge. Place tea in a tea ball and drop into your favorite mug. Pour boiling water into mug, cover, and let steep for five minutes. Remove tea ball and enjoy. Add honey or cream to taste.

communication with the otherworld, play a flute or whistle made from the wood of the elder. And for the rest of us who are not adept at making woodwind instruments, sit quietly under the branches and gently ring a bell three times before meditating. This will not only clear away the negativity, but it will also draw the fae to you.

Elder guards against negativity. Plant an elderberry in your garden to protect your property and to enjoy its delicious and healthful fruit. Wands made from elder can be used to dispel negativity and in spells for healing, prosperity, exorcism, and protection.

The use of elder flowers at weddings was thought to bring good fortune to the newly married couple, and elder leaves were once carried to help one avoid adulterous temptations.

My daughter was only three years old when my grandmother passed on. Every spring after her passing, just as spring ignites, spreading its green fire throughout the woodland, we bring a basket and bow to the Elder. "Hello, Grandmother," I say. "I miss you and would appreciate it if we could take a few blossoms for tea. And, Grandmother," I say as I tie a silken ribbon loosely around a branch, "I promise to give back when I become a tree."

Follow Monica Crosson on Instagram @monicacrosson or visit her website at monicacrosson.com.



Honoring the Forest A GUIDED MEDITATION by Meghan Pell

Honoring the forest is an easy thing. Arched boughs and weaving trails practically demand reverence. Those of us who feel drawn to nature often bring a token of our appreciation, something to leave in the hollow of a log or the perfect cup of a knotted root. We speak to the trees, revel in streams, dance to the music of rustling leaves.

But what about when the days grow cold and short, or when the pilgrimage is too far to make? When life grows busy and we become disconnected from the green places we love so much? What if you could go there anytime, no matter where you are, in the blink of an eye?

I forget how old I was when someone very dear to me first introduced me to the idea of creating a sacred space inside my head—a place that would always be with me and available, whenever I needed it. It's a fun thing to do, to create your own mental sanctuary. It's an exercise in imagination, as well as a chance to get to know yourself better.

My space is a small meadow surrounded by tall hills. There are mountains in the distance if you look hard enough. There's a small waterfall flowing down into a glassy pool, perfectly outlined by smooth rocks. Toward the center of the clearing is a large willow tree with a boulder that serves as an altar, and just outside the clearing is a dense forest of oaks and maples and countless trails leading who knows where. This is where I go to think, to escape, to connect with myself and the earth.

Think of your favorite place in nature. Where do you feel the most relaxed? Conjure up an image in your mind's eye of this special place, or think of your favorite tree or terrain. It can be anything you want it to be. The trees can be purple, it can always be twilight, whatever you like—all that matters is that it's yours, and you feel safe here.

Here's a guided meditation to help you get familiar with this place:

GUIDED MEDITATION

- Relax in a place where you won't be disturbed. Close your eyes and take one deep breath, then another. Feel the muscles in your neck and shoulders relax, and the tension in your back loosen.
- Take one more deep breath, and imagine yourself standing at the beginning of a forest trail. The trees on either side of you are tall and strong, arching toward each other. You smile as a light breeze moves through the leaves and brushes against your cheek. Feeling welcome, you begin making your way down the path. You take in the sunlight, the birds that dart this way and that overhead. As you walk, you run your hand along the bark of the trees, enjoying the roughness on your fingertips, the strength of the massive trunks.

- As you make your way down the path, you see that it ends at the foot of a large wooden door. You approach the door curiously. It's open just enough for a sliver of light to break through. You lean forward, and the door swings slowly open, revealing a serene forest landscape that sprawls out as far as you can see. A narrow, mossy footpath leads from the doorway down into a small glen, tall grasses swaying on either side.
- Step forward now, and explore this place. Follow the path down and take in the sights, the smells, the tastes. Feel the ground beneath your feet, the soft moss, the smooth stones. Perhaps you take a drink from a cool spring. Perhaps a goblet lies waiting for you on a stone table.
- Take time to breathe. Feel yourself let go of anything that does not exist right here, right now, in this place. Immerse yourself in your surroundings. Explore. Investigate. Discover. Most important, take your time. After a while, you feel a gentle nudge at the back of your mind, and you know it's time to go.
- Slowly make your way back up the footpath to the door. As you pull open the door, take one more look at your newfound haven. Then step over the threshold and back onto the main path. The breeze picks up again, beckoning you back the way you came. The birds keep you company until you find yourself stepping out of the forest and into the here and now.

You may find that, when you visit this place, it will be easier to think and breathe. Sometimes animals, helpful guides, or spirits will visit you or perhaps even leave gifts for you. You may want to have a notebook handy so you can jot down any ideas or messages you get while you're there. You don't have to do a full meditation to visit this place, either. You can go there whenever you like, wherever you are. It gets easier to visualize the more you think about and visit your space. Drawing, finding photos or talismans to represent it, or even creating a playlist of songs that remind you of it can help strengthen your connection to that peaceful place here in the all-too-often chaotic physical realm.

While there is certainly nothing as magical as standing in a real wood and taking in the sights and sounds, having a personal piece of forest within ourselves can help bring relief when the real thing is inaccessible!



Follow Meghan Pell on Instagram @themedievalmouse.



A Forest Fable

Photography by
CARRI ANGEL PHOTOGRAPHY
and ANGE HARPER



When model and artist (and elf) Ian Hencher learned that we were doing a forest-themed issue, he knew he wanted to collaborate with a team that could “connect with nature and fairy tales.” So he went to photographers Carri Angel and Ange Harper, as well as designer Helen Nevett of Under the Ivy—all of whom we’ve featured previously! “We agreed that these characters needed to belong in the forest as opposed to glamorizing

them,” Hencher says, explaining how Nevett conjured “mossy garlands almost blending into the trees and the subtle fairy wings that catch the light” to create an immersive, believably magical quality. And though the lost children of Neverland were mentioned, the story was left intentionally vague. Angel, Hencher says, “likes to loosely base her stories on fairy tales and allow viewers to interpret.” What kind of story do you imagine in this enchanted wood?

Photographer/Costumes: **Carri Angel Photography** Second Photographer: **Ange Harper**
Models: **Ian Hencher, Sorcha Verey, The Druidess Of Midian** Headdress: **Under the Ivy**



THE ECCENTRICITIES OF GENTLEMEN

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

VOLATILE DEGRADATION *The Perfume of Pulp and Paper*



“Like when you suddenly recall not only the title of a child’s book but the feel of the cover, the smell of the paper, the very heft of the volume.” —Henry Miller, *The Books in My Life*

Hold this magazine (if you are indeed holding this magazine) to your nose. Inhale deep. Are your eyes burning? Your throat? Have you fainted? If so, you might be allergic to the paper. The wood pulp, the inks—they might all conspire to send you into convulsions if you read too close. If you’re feeling queasy, ask your postal carrier to iron the magazine for you next time—the heat can help break down whatever chemicals might

be spiking your sensitivities.

“Some of your own recent issues, Mr. Editor,” wrote a reader of *The Inland Printer* in 1902, “have given forth a really dreadful odor on being opened. One does not like to have to hold one’s nose when reading one’s favorite journal.”

Many books and magazines have explored the scent and stench of books and magazines, but for most people, paper

holds a hypnotic perfume and a nostalgia trip. Memories of the classroom carry the haunting smells of deforestation: musty textbooks, pencil shavings, paper freshly torn from a notebook or freshly churned from the mimeograph, literally intoxicating with the fumes from its bruise-colored ink.

The journal *Analytical Chemistry*, in 2009, published a study of the chemical breakdown that produces that sweet-rich, sneeze-tickling smell of old books. To put it simply: “Using supervised and unsupervised methods of multivariate data analysis, we were able to quantitatively correlate volatile degradation products with properties important for the preservation of historic paper: rosin, lignin and carbonyl group content, degree of polymerization of cellulose, and paper acidity.”

Lignin is the key here. That’s the chemical that stirs up the scent of vanilla and must, that cake-left-out-in-the-rain smell. Even if you avoid libraries, you can still indulge in the scent: Any number of candle dippers peddling their wares on Etsy feature “old book” products scented with paper, vanilla, and leather. And publisher Gerhard Steidl released Paper Passion perfume in 2012, a fragrance designed by Geza Schoen, who characterized it as a celebration of the “gloriosensuality” of books.

Currently “out of print,” bottles of Paper Passion perfume came embedded in the pages of a specially designed book, with text by Nobel Prize winner Günter Grass. Perhaps the cutaway pages to situate the bottle might be interpreted as a nod to the literary weevils that do their part to contribute to that scent of book decay. In 1880, bibliophile and author William Blades devoted a chapter in his *The Enemies of the Book* to the bookworm. Blades seems almost to pity the starving larva that couldn’t feast as effectively on the modern novel as it can with the classics:

One result of the extensive adulteration of modern paper is that the worm will not touch it. His instinct forbids him to eat the china clay, the bleaches, the plaster of Paris, the sulphate of barytes, the scores of adulterants now used to mix with the fiber, and, so far, the wise pages of the old literature are, in the race against Time with the modern rubbish, heavily handicapped.

Bookworms have also had to contend with out-and-out chemical warfare in their efforts to kick up pulp perfume; librarians in the early 20th century were advised to rub books down with a mixture of powdered alum and pepper. Publishers sometimes worked poison into the paste of their binding materials, such as the glue mashed together from toxic bluebell bulbs.

“The book-worms will find death instead of life in the Book of Life in Ocean Island,” notes an edition of the *United Opinion* of Vermont (1922), “if the plans of the American Bible Society don’t miscarry, for the Bibles which are sent to this destination are glued with poisoned glue. The book-worms they are after are not the two-legged variety.”

The American Bible Society also cited its advancements in

distributing Bibles in Peking, in its annual report in 1913: “In the past the would-be buyer would usually first smell the book, and if at all able to detect any strange odor or think he did, he would not have the book as a gift.” The source of this suspicion of missionaries might be traced back to the peculiar smell of the Bibles described in an 1886 edition of *The Chinese Recorder* and attributed to the ink: “Many seriously suppose that the books are drugged and sold cheaply to injure people’s eyes, and over a large extent of country the impression prevails that reading the ‘smelling books’ causes headaches.”

While some have sought to eliminate the smell of paper, others have enhanced it, such as scientist Albert J. Dillinger, profiled in *Popular Mechanics* in 1949: “For an insurance firm, he produced an ink that smelled like a fire-gutted house. Used on a direct-mail pamphlet, it startled many prospects into signing on the dotted line.”

Dillinger also made the letterhead of a mountain resort smell of pine. Scented stationery has been both recommended and discouraged for decades, in one moment celebrated for its romance, in the next dismissed as gawdy. In 1885, *Good Housekeeping* declared that “the only perfume which is ever admissible [in letter paper] is the very faintest fragrance of orris root,” while in 1899, stationers of London were promoting stationery that featured a circle of perfume in the upper left corner of the page, known as “the kissing spot.” *The Delineator* magazine in 1920 insisted that “persons of good taste are wary both of tinted and scented paper,” while a few years later the Essence De L’Ame Perfume Company of New York promoted an extensive line of patented perfumed writing paper and visiting cards.

But perhaps the most poignant examination of paper and scent can be found on a prisontalk.com forum, stirred up by the question “Has anyone ever sprayed perfume on their letters? Are there any rules against this? I think Jason would like that, to be able to smell my perfume, I know I still have his cologne that I spray on my teddy bear a lot.” The concern: letters to your beloved behind bars might be returned unread if the jailer fears the letters have been treated with an unidentified substance.

What follows the question is a page of charming advice: Spray the air and wave the paper through the cloud; lotion your hands and press them against the paper; spritz the air and let the mist fall across the page; put paper in a bag with perfumed cotton balls.

The women testify to their own perfuming of their lovers’ letters: “he loves for me to wear ‘Falling In Love’ by philosophy and ‘Amazing Grace’ also by philosophy,” one woman writes. “he feels in the clouds lol when he smells it.”

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.

Where Fairies Dwell



The MAGICAL MINIATURES of THE FAERY FOREST

BY JILL GLEESON

If you gaze at Megan Cash’s magical miniatures long enough, you just may start to spy the fae materializing around them, dancing and darting, flitting and flying, from one whimsical, captivating piece to the next. At least it feels as though you might, so precise and perfect is the wee furniture Cash crafts carefully by hand for sprites and those who love them. Ready to steal your heart in Cash’s Etsy shop are sweet little acorn cap cups sitting atop a tiny table constructed from a wood slice, alongside chairs made from mushrooms, all of it just waiting for two fairies to stop by for sip of tea. A bitsy bookshelf, an itty-bitty bed—even an entire office, a powder room, an art easel, and more—can be found at the shop, all equally delightful and all created mostly from natural elements Cash gathers herself.

It is no surprise, then, to discover Cash—who is twenty-nine but speaks with thoughtfulness of an elder and the sweetness of child—has long found fairies fascinating. “I always kind of had an obsession with nature, trees in particular,” she says. “And when I was exposed to fairies when I was younger, you know, through reading about them, watching movies, there was something so enchanting about them that it just stuck. I loved the idea of living with and being in harmony with nature, so it was the perfect theme for me. It’s like I was a fairy in my past life! I felt I was related to them.”

Enchanted Living Instagram followers no doubt agree. Photographs of Cash’s miniatures took our feed by storm, winning two spots in our top nine most popular Instagram posts of last year. As *Enchanted Living*’s Editor-in-Chief Carolyn Turgeon says, “We share a lot of amazing images that get a lot of likes, so to have two of the top nine is pretty amazing.”

Cash was born near Houston, in a little town called League City. She still lives there, alongside her husband of five years, Joey Cash, a tattoo artist and woodworker. Joey is responsible for much of the cutting and some of the carving that help produce Megan’s miniatures, a creative partnership for which, she says, they are incredibly grateful. “We’re always learning from each other, teaching each other,” Cash notes, “so we both get a lot of joy out of it.”

Along with nature, Cash loved miniatures and art from an early age. As a child she would steal away to her room, playing for hours with her dolls, fashioning furniture and even houses for them from whatever was available. She dabbled in sketching as well, but it wasn’t until she took an art class her senior year in high school that Cash fell in love with the creative discipline. She majored in art, with a focus on painting, at the University of Houston–Clear Lake, earning her bachelor of fine arts degree in 2016.

But Cash’s love of the fae never really left her. “All through my college career I always had in the back of my mind that fairies

were my true calling,” she says, “and I wanted to do something with that, whether it was painting or sculpture or just something themed with fairies. My miniatures started out as a hobby around 2014. I was making stuff for myself to have around the house, to decorate the shelves with, and I showed some of it to my friends and family. They loved it, so I made some fairy houses and things like that for them. But I was really thinking I would just do it on the side, because my major was painting and drawing.”

As they tend to do, however, the fairies had utterly captivated Cash. There was no turning back, no turning away from them. Just after graduating, Cash founded the Faery Forest on Etsy, finding inspiration for her collection from some long-loved favorites. “The story of Peter Pan and Tinkerbell was one that always really stuck out to me,” Cash says. “Tinkerbell now actually has a franchise and there’s a Disney fairies’ franchise. There’s a ton of books and movies, and those always inspire me. I love seeing the illustrations that show where the fairies live and what their furniture looks like. And other artists inspire me too. Amy Brown is wonderful! I was exposed to her work at a really young age and she was always fascinating to me.”

“I loved the idea of living with and being in harmony with nature, so it was the perfect theme for me. It’s like I was a fairy in my past life! I felt I was related to them.”

To find much of the materials she uses to fashion her remarkable miniatures, Cash keeps her eyes downward. Refusing to harm anything living, she sources ethically only what has already fallen to the ground, including bits of sticks, tree bark, acorn caps, even driftwood and seashells when she and Joey visit the shore.

Occasionally, to supplement the bounty that nature provides, Cash will purchase items like dried florals and mosses from hobby shops and craft stores.

Sometime within the next couple of months, visitors to Cash’s Etsy shop will receive a wonderful surprise. The artist is set to begin offering her beloved fairy houses for sale again, priced at about \$400 to \$500 for an unfurnished home. “They come out so wonderfully, and I love the way they look,” Cash says. “Generally, I try to stay at the one-twelve scale, so they’re about fifteen to eighteen inches in height and probably about fifteen inches in width. They all turn out so differently! There are so many possibilities. We can do two stories, we can do staircases and different windows and doors, we can really get creative with them. They’re a little more expensive because they take a lot more time—they’re completely hand-sculpted.”

Should you decide to purchase one of Cash’s fairy dwellings, or a winsome and wonderful piece of fairy furnishing, the artist would like you to know you’re getting a little piece of her heart and soul with it. “At the end of the day my fairy furniture and homes are a representation of me,” Cash says, “and the world I imagine fairies to live in. I always imagine and keep in mind that



if I were a fairy, what I would like my furniture to look like and what materials from nature I would use.”

When asked what she loves best about creating her fairy furnishings, Cash replies easily and with clear pleasure, “Oh, it makes me feel like a kid again, because that was what I loved to do. But also, I think when we are children our world is so different. We have so much more imagination. Even if we can’t see them, we can have the feeling that fairies are real, that they are right there beside us. That’s the main thing I love to hear from customers—that the joy they find in my miniatures makes them feel like a kid again too.”



For more information and to purchase pieces from the Faery Forest, visit [Etsy.com/shop/thefaeryforest](https://www.etsy.com/shop/thefaeryforest).

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





Miniature Fairy Tea Set TUTORIAL

BY MEGAN CASH
FROM THE FAERY FOREST

TOOLS*

A pair of garden clippers Ruler
Hot glue or quick bonding glue Craft glue (any plain white craft glue)
Small paint brush Tweezers (optional)

*The tools and materials used here can be found in most hobby stores and out in nature (ethically, of course!)

TIP: Be careful when using hot glue or quick bonding glue. Keep a bowl of cold water nearby for rinsing, or use gloves if necessary

FAERY CHAIR MATERIALS*

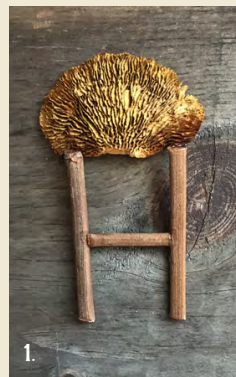
1 small dried mushroom cap, about 2 inches across
2 sticks, 2 inches long (for the back legs)
1 stick, 1/4 inches long (for the back brace)
2 sticks, 1 inch long (for the arms)
2 sticks, just less than 1 inch long (for the side braces)
2 sticks, 1 1/2 inches long (for the front legs)
6 or 7 sticks, 1 3/4 inches long (for the seat)
Real or fake flowers, 1/2 inch or smaller
Real or fake moss (for this tutorial I am using a fine turf diorama moss)

*NOTE: These instructions are for one chair, but if you'd like to make two chairs for this tea set, simply double the materials and repeat the same steps

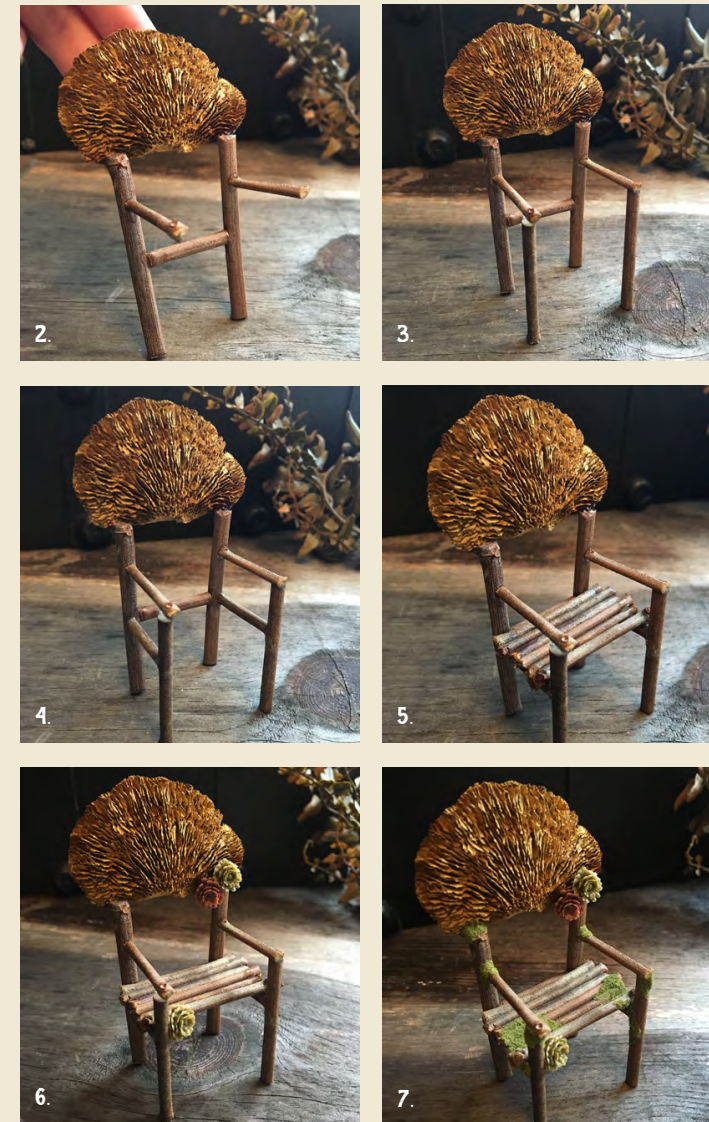


STEPS FOR FAERY CHAIR

- Using hot glue or quick bonding glue, take the two 2-inch sticks and glue them directly to the bottom of the mushroom cap. Space them about 1 1/4 inches apart. These will be the back legs of the chair. Then, take the 1/4-inch stick for the back brace and glue this in between the two sticks horizontally, about 1 inch down from the bottom of the mushroom cap.



- For the arms of the chair, take the two 1-inch sticks and glue them at a 90-degree angle on each leg, about 1/2 inch down from the mushroom. Do this on each side.
- For the two front legs, take the two 1 1/2-inch sticks and glue them on each side directly under the ends of the arms vertically. The chair should now stand up on its own. Make sure it is level. If the chair legs are uneven and wobble, glue a little bit of moss under the short legs to even them out.
- After you have glued on the two front legs, take the two sticks that are less than an inch long and glue them horizontally in between the front and back legs on each side. Try to make them even with the stick on the back. These are the support braces for the chair and will determine the height of the seat, so try to line them all up together as close as you can.
- Take the remaining six or seven 1 3/4-inch sticks and glue them across the two support braces to make the seat. The sticks for the seat should just rest on top of them.
- Use the hot glue or quick bonding glue to glue on your flowers. You can add as many flowers as you want and place them wherever you like. This is also a good time to go over all the spots you just glued and add another drop of glue to make sure everything is secure.
- Pour out a little bit of the plain white craft glue on the side and grab the small paintbrush. Dip the paintbrush into the glue and paint over any dried glue on the chair that is showing and you want to cover. While the craft glue is wet, stick your moss on and let dry. Repeat this on the entire chair and cover all joints and spots that are showing any dried glue.



FAERY TEA TABLE MATERIALS

One tree slice, about 2 1/2 inches in diameter (for the table top)
One thick stick, 1 1/2 inches long (for the table leg)
Three small acorn caps, one slightly larger than the other two (for the flower vase)
Two tiny grapevine tendrils, cut into a "C" shape (for the handles on the acorn tea cups)
Two small seashells (for saucers)
Real or fake dried flowers with stems
Real or fake moss

STEPS FOR FAERY TEA TABLE

- Using hot glue or quick bonding glue, glue the tree slice to the table leg. Make sure it is centered and level.



Faery Tea Set Tutorial

Megan Cash

2. Glue the larger acorn (flower vase) to the tabletop, as well as the seashell saucers. Space them as close or far apart as you'd like.
3. Glue one of the "C"-shaped grapevine tendrils to the side of each of the two smaller acorn caps. These will be the handles for the cups. Use tweezers if needed.
4. To make the flower arrangement in the larger acorn cap (vase), put a few drops of white craft glue into the acorn. Add a little bit of moss on top of the glue and then stick your flowers with stems into the acorn cap. You can also add some other dried florals for fullness. You can now glue your acorn tea cups into the saucers. Make sure they are level and centered inside the sea shells.
5. Finally, paint white craft glue with a small paintbrush onto any spots showing dried glue that you want to cover. Add moss on top of the glue while it's wet and then let dry. Feel free to add moss to any other spots as well.



INTO THE FOREST

We asked a few of our favorite forest photographers to tell us about some of their most enchanted woodland images.

GARETT MENSCHING

I discovered this tree while walking on a misty, rainy, but deeply inspiring afternoon in the Lake District National Park around Keswick, Cumbria. This small patch of woodland was adorned in extraordinarily vibrant moss, with so many delightful trees and vistas of the surrounding lakes and fells. This singular tree caught my attention because of how distinctive it was compared to any of the others I saw that day. It truly looked like a tree you'd find in Middle Earth.

facebook.com/garettphotography



"Lilium Regale"
by Guinevere von Sneed

A photograph of a forest path lined with ancient oak trees in autumn. The trees have thick, gnarled trunks and dense canopies of leaves in shades of yellow, orange, and green. The path is covered in fallen leaves and leads into the distance, where the trees are shrouded in a soft, misty light. The overall atmosphere is serene and magical.

ELLEN BORGGREVE

This path lined with whimsically shaped oak trees is situated on the Veluwe in the Netherlands and was once a road that connected two small villages. Many of the trees are more than 250 years old and saw many of my ancestors pass by, which is why this is such a sacred place to me. I love oak trees for their twisting branches and storybook-like appearance. To me they depict the most magical side of reality, which is what I'm always aiming to capture.

ellenborggreve.com



NEIL J. BURNELL

These images were shot over several months in Wistman's Wood on Dartmoor, in Devon, England, as part of my project *Mystical*, which focuses on the fairy-tale atmosphere within woodlands. Wistman's is one of the most atmospheric places I've visited. It's also notoriously difficult to photograph. I probably visited it around twenty times in the last year, but it had the required mist on only two occasions. I've now started on a new series of images which sees me revisit Wistman's along with other moorland woodlands.

neilburnell.com





KILIAN SCHOENBERGER

Spring is a magic season in the forests of Western Europe, but one forest stands out of this blooming spectacle—Hallerbos, just outside the Belgian capital Brussels. It's an old beechwood, and the forest floor is covered by one of the biggest bluebell carpets in the world. I prefer to stroll around Hallerbos early in the morning, when there are fewer visitors and the blue flowers and trees are shrouded by fog and mist. Then it's like walking through a real fairy tale.

kilianschoenberger.de



STEVE PARKE

New Orleans is home to the Tree of Life, which stands in a neighborhood park, though you'd think you were in the middle of a dense forest. Estimated to be between 100 and 500 years old, it feels like something out of Tolkien. The size is overwhelming, but apparently the tree is climbable—I saw several small children attempt to get their arms around the massive branches. I love how the roots bunch up at its base, like an artist's brush trailed bark in its wake.

steveparke.com



MARTIN PODT

I took this shot in Madeira, Portugal. This place is absolutely magical. It's an ancient forest called Fanal with old laurel trees. I have been here several times, and I hope to come back again. The second image [page 52] is from Regensburg, Germany. It's actually not made in a forest but in an alley in the city at the Oberen Wöhrd, which is a small island in the river Donau. When I was there, I didn't have the conditions I like so much: There was no fog. Fog always gives a mystical mood to a forest. But even without fog, this place is really special.

martinpodt.com



WHAT YOU WISH FOR by Grace Nuth

I sat on the borderland between two worlds: In front of me was the ocean, mist-cloudy and tumultuous; behind me was the lush, old-growth Oregon forest, dripping with moss and shouting out its throbbingly vibrant green. A little cold and a little wet, I balanced precariously on a fallen tree next to a freshwater stream that wound past fern and fairy dell, evergreens and mossy stones, to tumble into the ocean a few yards from my feet. I knew I was in a place of magic: The fairies love liminal spaces like bridges, borders, and crossroads. And I was here because of my own crossroads: During a year of great upheaval, I chose to return to a place I hadn't been for eighteen years but that felt like home. I wanted to ask the universe, ask magic, what I should do, where I was supposed to go from here. I wanted answers.

After a while, when my backside was starting to get sore from my awkward perch on the tree, I stumbled to my feet again, awash with the tranquility that can come only from spending quiet time in nature, listening to the still, small, magic voice that speaks in solitude. Despite still having so many questions, I was grateful that I could be in such a beautiful place, where I could feel the presence of wonder all around me.

Quietly I asked the fairies to please help guide me to a seeing stone. I didn't want much, I explained. Just one seeing stone, and I would be so thankful. I pictured to myself a small stone the size of a silver dollar with a hole in its side—something I could string on a chain and wear around my neck as a reminder of the magic I felt on this day. This was what I pictured in my mind, but when I spoke out loud, I simply asked for one seeing stone.

Seeing stones, or hag stones, are rocks through which a hole has been worn by some natural means. They are especially prevalent near running water, where one rock might grind against another over time. In fairy lore, seeing stones are a way to peer into the Realm of Faerie. Just look through the hole, and

you may be able to see what is normally hidden from view.

After about a half hour of searching, leaping from rock to rock along the path of the stream, I still hadn't found anything. And then, I did. Looking at my feet, I saw a rock the size of a hardcover novel, rounded at the top and narrow at the bottom like a planchette, with a hole right at the top ... about the size of a dime. This rock must have weighed at least fifteen pounds, and it would have been a struggle to fit it in my luggage for the plane ride home, let alone to wear it strung delicately around my neck.

The moment I saw the rock, I burst into a fit of laughter. How could you not? The fairies had played a trick on me, giving me exactly what I had asked for—but not what I had been silently picturing. "Very funny," I muttered, still chuckling. "Now let's find me a real seeing stone."

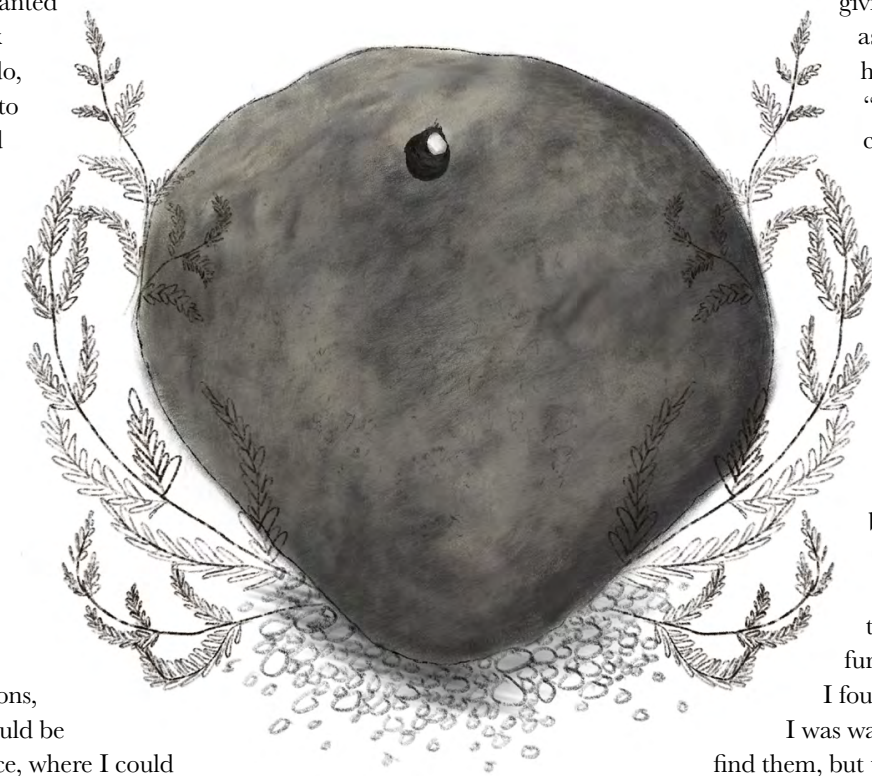
I must have cut quite a bizarre figure to the local surfers who walked along the beach that day: I was dressed in a white hooded sweater and a long white skirt as I walked along the rocky shore staring at the stones by my feet, muttering and crouching down occasionally to pull bits and pieces from the earth. But after an hour further of perseverant scouring, I found no more seeing stones.

I was walking in the perfect place to find them, but they were all hidden. I could almost picture small sprites pushing each holed stone under the top layer of pebbles, shaking a fist at me like the small goblins offended at Sarah's lipstick marks in the movie *Labyrinth*.

A little disappointed, I gathered my bag and belongings from where I had left them and walked back up the forest trail to my rental car, leaving the fairy planchette stone behind as a reminder to the next person: When you make a wish to the fairies, be very specific about what you want, because you just might get it.



Follow Grace Nuth on Instagram @gracesidhe.



ENCHANTING PRIMROSE CORDIAL



When it comes to casting springtime spells of allure and amour, this delicately flavored and jewel-colored primrose cordial is easy to make and versatile to use. But whether sipped straight up or added to cocktails or a cup of warm fragrant tea, be warned: Primrose packs a libidinous punch. This “first rose” is not only renowned for her magical potency in love and beauty spells but reputed to bring on “wantonness”—hence Shakespeare’s famous phrase the “primrose path of dalliance”!



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

Primrose Cordial Recipe

Gather Victoria



In early spring, as the seductive and procreative power of mother nature prepares to burst forth in a cascade of swelling blossoms, it is the bright palette of pinks, reds, blues, and purples of primrose that first brighten wintry garden beds, flower pots, and balcony boxes. But in forests across Europe, the original chaste white and yellow woodland primrose still grows wild. Nestling under trees or in shady pastures, large patches are said to be portals into the fairy realms, and in Irish legend, primroses bloomed in Tir na nÓg, the Land of Eternal Youth. Morning dew gathered from their blossoms was considered a beauty potion par excellence.

Her botanical name is *Primula vulgaris* (from the family Primulaceae), and her slightly sweet blossoms were prized in wine, spirits, cordials, jams, tarts, curds, and confections and as a “curing herb” for all manner of ills, rheumatics, gout, headaches, sleeplessness, chest problems, and “nervous hysterical disorders.” In modern herbal medicine, *Primula vulgaris* is considered sedative and antispasmodic, and infusions of flowers are still used to soothe migraine headaches, insomnia, anxiety, PMS, rheumatism, and skin conditions. (Note: Pregnant women or people taking anticoagulant medicine are

advised against consuming primrose.)

Whether the vivid colors of modern cultivated varieties retain the same medicinal potency as their wild counterparts isn't clear. But several studies suggest they contain many of the same anti-inflammatory and immune-system-boosting phytonutrients and antioxidants found in brightly colored fruits and vegetables. Which is good!

All varieties of *Primula vulgaris* are edible biennials that reseed themselves and often remain growing in the garden for several seasons. I recommend consuming these instead of newly purchased flowers from big-box stores or supermarkets, as it's likely they still contain pesticide residues. But be careful that you're not dealing with *Primula obconica*, as it can cause skin rashes.

Capturing the flavor and colors of primrose in a cordial is simply a matter of picking the blossoms and infusing them in syrups and spirit. You can skip the spirits, but as alcohol acts as a preservative, your non-alcoholic cordial won't have a long shelf life (two to three weeks). Cordials were originally created by 13th century alchemists by infusing herbs, blossoms, roots, and bark in alcohol. These life-giving elixirs were prescribed not just to cure disease but to revitalize the heart,

body, and spirit. Gradually they began to be sweetened, evolving into 18th liqueurs consumed more for pleasure than health.

Today floral cordials may have fallen out of fashion, but they're one of my favorite ways for capturing the scent, color, medicine, beauty, and mystery of flowers. And what better way to indulge in a little old-world romance than this primrose cordial? I promise, just a couple of sparkling tablespoons stirred into a warm cup of tea will turn your next quiet moment into an enchanted occasion!

PRIMROSE CORDIAL RECIPE

Ingredients

3 cups of primrose blossoms,
lightly rinsed and roughly chopped
2 cups of sugar
1 cup of water
½ cup of your spirit of choice
(vodka, rum, brandy, gin)

Directions

Primrose Infused Spirits:

Place half of your chopped primrose blossoms in a mason jar with your alcohol of choice. Press down with a fork until blossoms are fully submerged. Seal and let sit in a dark place for at least a week; two to three weeks is best. Once ready, strain blossoms and put aside.

Primrose Syrup:

Take sugar and water and combine in a saucepan. Gently raise to boil and stir until sugar is completely dissolved. After five minutes, remove syrup from heat. Add the other half of your blossoms, stir, cover, and let sit overnight. The next day, strain the spent blossoms from your syrup.

Mix this syrup with your primrose-infused spirits in a clean sterilized jar or pretty bottle. Cap and shake well. Your Primrose Cordial is ready to serve.



Follow Danielle Prohom Olson (a.k.a. Gather Victoria) on her blog at gathervictoria.com.



A Wild Forest Ritual

The Strawberry Full Moon of June had arrived. Her lunar glow drenched the mossy floor of the forest and lit up the slow ripples of the river in diamonds. Big Dipper fireflies illuminated the forest around us in a symphony of light. In the center of the circle of sixteen, the campfire flames licked the night sky. The moon of the forest witnessed the shades of all of us, pale ivory to warm honeyed chocolate, sisters from far reaches of the world, gathered together for a ritual.

We sang, voices mingling together in full sound that carried across the forest, and then we threw our heads back and howled.

We said good night to the stars, to the moon, and held hands as we walked back to Magic House. That night, I watched the last small dances of the bonfire from my little bed hidden behind the fireplace, until sleep peeked into the room. At dawn, it would be our wedding day.

It was the day we would each individually commit to our own selves, to our own dreams, to our own desires, to our own individual legacies of love. To magnetize the most wild and beautiful loves to us, we had to say yes to ourselves first. One by one, we would proclaim our vow to ourselves and the most luscious life we could commit to, as fifteen other women stood witness to the words.

When I was daydreaming about this ceremony and crafting the idea months before, one place kept coming up in my fantasy: the magic forest of Woodstock, New York.

As the sun celebrated with pinks and golds on the summer morning of our magic wedding day, I wandered down the stairs past the vintage dresses that I hung to lure in the three muses. In the center was my favorite, a cream-colored

lace Victorian dress with a long train and delicate cuffs of cream crochet and pearl buttons. The dresses had been hanging there for the three years since we all built Magic House together, and it was one of the very first things I hung to encourage creativity and inspiration in the house. I had found a vintage white slip that I was originally going to wear on that day, but now the Muses had turned my eyes to that Victorian wedding dress in the middle.

Downstairs, the sounds of morning had already begun, and my hands moved to take the dress before my mind could contemplate it fully. Sometimes our body knows things that our mind can't entirely grasp yet. I pulled the dress on and noticed some of the fabric giving way from age at the hem and the neck. I looked at my reflection in the mirror—jet black hair, hazel eyes staring back at me, the 100-year-old, slightly tattered dress clinging to my body. This was the dress that I borrowed from the Muses themselves, and it was perfectly imperfect. It was a mix of beautiful and worn, of classic and punk rock, of delicate and wild. It mirrored the story of my life in its fabric.

I was met downstairs by Contessa and Nicole, with little Ninety (the chihuahua wolf of the witches) jumping up happily to greet me. Cream-colored flower crowns were pinned in their hair, and their vintage dresses kissed the floorboards of Magic House. Nicole and I sat side by side, pulling on our matching black Doc Martens and lacing them up for the hike to the forest. The sisters all gathered together, carrying rose petals and rattles, drums and candles, bags of herbs and crystals, as we began our walk.

There was movement up ahead, and Heather spotted him first, a buck with curved antlers standing in the path. One

of Heather's abilities is drawing in the deer energy and calling them in, both in the fairy tales she writes and in life. We all stood still as our eyes met his. It was like a silent blessing of the forest had been bestowed on our day as he nodded his head for us to continue to pass and moved along the river.

One by one, we held hands as our legs dipped into the river, and eventually we stood in the center of it, arms entwined in a wheel shape to the heavens. Each sister took turns stepping into the center of the circle to proclaim her vow to her wild beautiful life. On that day, the river carried the hems of our dresses as if we were floating, the creatures of the forest bore witness, the dragonflies zipped back and forth sewing up the summer air with blessings, and the leaves of the trees nodded an enthusiastic *yes* on the wind.



Read more about Veronica Varlow's Witch Camp and Love Witch Tarot School on lovetwitch.com. Instagram: [@veronicavarlow](https://www.instagram.com/veronicavarlow).



When I first fell in love with Mr. Fox, he warned me:
You can't trust me, my dear.
Just when you think I am there,
I am gone, I am nowhere.
Look, I'm wearing a mask. Who does that? Thieves.
By the time the autumn leaves have fallen,
you will mourn my absence.

And yet, I couldn't help it. After all,
he was wearing such a dashing red coat,
like a soldier. He had such a twinkle in his eye.
He danced so nimbly, holding my hands
in paws on which he wore black kid gloves.
His tail ended in a white tuft.
I knew about the others, of course—or at least
I'd heard rumors. I knew he was no innocent.
I knew about the one who had drowned
herself in a river, her muslin gown floating
around her. I knew about the one who had locked
herself away in a convent.

How does one fall out of love with a thief
who has already stolen one's heart?
But I was cautious: I went to his castle in the woods.
Be bold, said the sign above the gate. *Be bold*.
But not too bold. I have never been good
at listening to advice, or taking it.
I was too bold, as usual.

What did I find? First, a pleasant parlor,
with blue silk curtains and rosewood furniture,
perfectly charming. Then, a library
filled with books, from Shakespeare to W.B. Yeats.
A kitchen with no implements more dangerous
than a paring knife, beside a barrel of apples
waiting to be turned into cider.
Bathrooms with modern plumbing, a dining room
that contained a mahogany table large enough
for banquets, but seldom used, judging
by the dust. Where was his secret chamber?
There must be one. On top of a desk in his study,
I'd seen a photograph of the girl who drowned,
beside a vase of lilies, like a memorial.

And there it was, at the end of a carpeted hallway.
I knew what it must lead to, that small door.
It was locked, of course, but I took out my lockpick tools
(if he was a thief, I was another).
It opened easily.

There was no blood on the floor. There were
no dead, dismembered wives hanging from hooks.
Instead, the walls were covered with masks:
fox, badger, mole, boar, weasel,
otter, squirrel, even one that resembled a tree.
All the masks he had worn, presumably.
And on one wall, opposite the window,
which badly needed washing, was a portrait
of an ordinary man with sandy hair
and tired eyes.

I locked the room behind me. At our wedding,
he said, "Are you sure, my dear?" with a toothy grin
that seemed wicked, but was, I thought, a little anxious.
"To marry the dangerous Mr. Fox?" I asked.
"Who knows, you might gobble me up,
but I'll take my chances." He seemed satisfied,
and swung me into a waltz. There's a moral to this story:
ladies, have your own set of lockpick tools. Also,
be bold and wise and cunning,
like a fox.



Theodora Goss is the World Fantasy, Locus, and Rhysling Award-winning author or editor of nine books, including the short-story and poetry collection Snow White Learns Witchcraft, her debut novel The Strange Case of the Alchemist's Daughter, and sequel European Travel for the Monstrous Gentlewoman. She teaches at Boston University and in the Stonecoast MFA program, where she specializes in fantasy, fairy tales, and the Gothic.

Learn more about Kathleen Jennings online at kathleenjennings.com.





HOMEMADE TRAP



AKA EMILY YEADON

BY CAROLYN TURGEON

*We ask the artist of embroidered insects and fungi about her magical work,
and she teaches us to make our own fly agarics*

Enchanted Living: Can you tell us when and why you began making embroidered insects and fungi?

Emily Yeadon: My work is heavily influenced by a particular museum that I discovered at the age of eleven while I was studying at a performing arts boarding school in Tring, U.K.. The Walter Rothschild Zoological Museum is famous for holding one of the finest collections of stuffed mammals, birds, reptiles, and insects, and this amazing collection of animals is what triggered my obsession with taxidermy.

I started to re-create faux-entomology collections around four years ago, and created 2-D moth and butterfly sculptures from black beading wire. One evening, I randomly decided to dust off my old sewing machine and rekindled my love for textiles. I gradually began to incorporate fabrics and machine and hand embroidery into my wire creations at the very end of 2017. Adding vibrancy, new textures and techniques to my moths and butterflies really brought them to life and helped them evolve into what they are now.

I love experimenting with mixed mediums and became curious of what else I could create. I started to explore the world of fungus at the end of the 2018 and have become increasingly intrigued by the huge variety of colors and patterns that they have to offer.

EL: Do you have a special affinity for moths or other creatures? If so, why?

EY: I grew up in a very rural part of the north of England, and I spent the majority of my childhood playing in our secluded and overgrown back garden. I was absolutely fascinated by animals, and I was desperate for them to be my friend.

I would spend most evenings sitting among the branches of an old willow tree, building nests from moss and twigs while eagerly watching the birds nervously flutter around me. I would take photographs of the birds, collect snails and ladybirds in empty jam jars, and build makeshift traps in attempts to catch mice. I'd spend hours studying the creatures I'd find, watching their behaviors and taking note of their colorings and patterns. When the sun set, I'd retreat to my bedroom and draw what I'd discovered that day.

At a young age I became pretty good at identifying birds and insects, and that connection has remained with me.

EL: How and where do you do your work?

EY: I currently work at home in a small village in West Yorkshire called Haworth. I'm a self-taught artist, so the way I work is on a trial-and-error basis. I spend a good proportion of my days researching different species and figuring out ways that I can create them.

EL: Can you tell us a story of how one of your creations came about?

EY: I'm currently making giant garden snails, which I initially thought would be simple to create but, after tons of research and experimenting, it's ended up being one of the most complex creatures I've ever made.

When starting on anything new, I almost always begin by researching three things: the creature, its colorings, patterns, and structure; the techniques I'll need to use; and the materials I'll require.

When creating the snails, I began by collating images and watching lots of videos of snails in the wild. As I began to ponder over how I would re-create them, I was immediately presented with my first obstacle. Being completely self-taught, I have little to no experience in creating fabric patterns, and I was now faced with designing a three-dimensional spiraled sphere from fabric. I scoured the internet for any advice (which I couldn't find) and was ultimately forced to improvise. I created at least four prototypes of the shell, experimenting with different fabrics and dimensions. Finally, I landed on the jackpot design.

My next challenge was to figure out how I'd replicate their colorings, patterns, and textures in the most realistic way. This led me on to experimenting with the application of various paints and glues to create the hard shiny shell and slimy looking body.

After a couple of days of researching and experimenting with different techniques and materials, I finally felt confident in creating my first snail. Referring to my prototype snails, I was able to create a template of my most successful pattern, which made it much easier and quicker for me to re-create a family of identical looking snails. I've continued to make small changes to my process here and there, but ultimately, after a lot of dedication, I'm really pleased with how they've turned out.



EL: Are you inspired by the forest specifically?

EY: Woodlands and forests are a huge inspiration for me. I regard them as being my “magical place,” a place deep in nature that awakens my imagination.

When I was younger, my parents would take me and my sisters on a walk to a place they named the Bluebell Wood. We’d spend hours walking through the maze of elegantly perfumed bluebells, while dappled light that shone through the branches of old majestic trees danced around us.

My mum loved Cicely Mary Barker’s Flower Fairies and would often have us gathered around a mound of mossy rocks adorned with wildflowers while she told us sweet stories of fairies who lived there.

I often think about how wonderful those walks were, how calming it is to be surrounded by nature and allowing yourself to have a moment of calm to let your mind wander.

EL: How do you incorporate enchantment into your own life?

EY: My favorite way to seek enchantment is by taking long walks. I’ve always loved climbing mountains in the Lake District with my dad and our family dog, Toby.

That moment when we finally reach the summit—icy winds whipping around us as damp heavy clouds form a blanket over our view. A peaceful moment in nature, tranquil and calm.

EL: Can you say a few words about the mushroom tutorial? What draws you to mushrooms?

EY: The first toadstool I made was the fly agaric. I’ve always loved this toadstool. The first time I saw one was about ten years ago while I was on a walk, and I was completely fascinated by it. It was so striking against the brown leafy ground. It just seemed completely surreal to me. I remember taking so many photos of it, and I just thought it was the coolest-looking thing. So when I came to making my first mushroom, creating the fly agaric seemed like the obvious choice to me.

I initially began making mushrooms as props for my moths and butterflies to perch on top of. I never intended to make them as stand-alone pieces. But while I was in the middle of creating my first fly agaric, I suddenly realized that I was having so much fun! I remember immediately searching into different types of fungi, and I was mesmerized. I couldn’t wait to start making more. I’m so drawn to how weirdly diverse they are. They’re just so magical and look like they’ve been picked from another planet.



Follow Carolyn Turgeon on Instagram @carolynturgeon.



See the tutorial to create these on the following pages!

Toadstool Tutorial

Homemade Trap



MATERIALS

You will need:

- Medium-weight calico fabric
- Toy stuffing
- 1-mm beading wire
- Thread
- Red, yellow, and black watercolor paint
- White acrylic paint
- Glue gun
- Pliers
- Scissors
- Compass
- Paint brushes
- Reindeer moss

TOADSTOOL TUTORIAL

STEP 1: CREATING THE TOADSTOOL CAP AND INNER STRUCTURE

To create the toadstool cap: Use a compass to draw a circle directly onto the calico fabric approximately 16 cm in diameter. Then, draw a second circle within the larger circle, approximately 14.5 cm in diameter. The inner circle will be used as a guide to stitch around later.

To create the inner structure: Use a compass to draw a circle directly onto the calico fabric, approximately 10 cm in diameter.

The size of the circles should be based on the size you would like your toadstool to be.

STEP 2: PREPARE THE FABRIC

Toadstool cap: Using a pair of scissors, cut around the larger circle and put this aside; we will be using this later on.

Inner structure: Pin a piece of fabric to the back of the smaller circle.

STEP 3: CREATING THE INNER STRUCTURE

Using a sewing machine, stitch around the penciled mark you created, leaving a 3-cm opening for stuffing.

STEP 4:

Cut around the edge of the circle, leaving a 1-cm edge, and lightly stuff with toy stuffing.

STEP 5:

Using a needle and thread, close the opening so that the stuffing is held securely inside.



STEP 6 : CREATING THE TOADSTOOL STALK

Cut a piece of wire approximately 20 cm long and pierce it directly through the center of the stuffed circle. Bend the wire into loops at both ends to secure into place.

STEP 7:

Cut thin, long strips of calico approximately 2 cm wide and 60 cm long and wrap them tightly around the wire. Secure them in place by tying knots through the wire loop at the end of the stalk. The extra fabric on the ends of the knots will eventually form the roots, so don't cut off the extra fabric.

STEP 8: CREATING THE GILLS

Cut a strip of calico fabric approximately 60 cm long by 15 cm wide and add a running stitch 1 cm from the edge, making sure the thread is securely tied at one end.

STEP 9:

Gently pull the thread to create ruched pleats.



STEP 10:

Wrap the pleated fabric around the stalk of the toadstool and then stitch both ends of the pleated fabric together to secure in place.

STEP 11:

Create small, tight pleats by folding the fabric and securing in place with pins.

STEP 12:

Remove the extra fabric with a pair of scissors, leaving a 1-cm edge. Then stitch the pleated fabric into place using a running stitch and remove the pins.

STEP 13: CREATING THE CAP

Using the larger circle you prepared earlier, add a running stitch around the inner circle you created as a stitch guide.

STEP 14:

Pull the thread to draw the circle together to create a pouch, and then form the cap by gently tucking the extra fabric into itself. Place the cap atop the toadstool.

STEP 15:

Push the toy stuffing under the cap.



Toadstool Tutorial

Homemade Trap

STEP 16:

Gently pull the thread to draw the cap around the toadstool, securing the toy stuffing, and then stitch the cap in place.

STEP 17: CREATING THE FRILLY ANNULUS

Cut a strip of fabric approximately 30 cm long and 4 cm wide and add a running stitch down one edge. Gently pull the thread to create ruffled pleats.

STEP 18:

Wrap the strip of fabric around the stalk and stitch into place.

STEP 19: FINISHING TOUCHES

Add vibrant color to the cap of the toadstool by using watercolor paint. As you get closer to the center of the cap, add more water to the paint to dilute the color. This will create a gradient effect. Add touches of yellow or orange to add more dimension.

STEP 20:

Paint the stalk and annulus with white acrylic paint and then leave to dry.

STEP 21:

Add the white spots to the cap with white acrylic paint. Create a variety of sizes and place them randomly all over the cap.

STEP 22:

Use diluted black watercolor paint to add texture and dimension to the gills and stalk.

STEP 23:

Fray the extra material at the end of the stalk to create long roots.

STEP 24:

Use a glue gun to add moss. As a nice finishing touch I also like to use the glue gun to create tiny dew droplets.

To see more of Emily Yeadon's work, follow her on Instagram @homemadetrap.



Mushroom Magic by RONA BERG

As the snow thaws high in the Swiss Alps, tufts of wheat-colored grasses sprout in the Engadine Valley, thick and bristly as a horse's mane. Tender wildflowers gently push their brightly colored blooms through the snow, and the wild mushrooms follow, poking through the moist forest floor.

That's when Claudio Laager, food and beverage manager at the Tschuggen Grand, a gorgeous five-star hotel tucked in close to the side of a ski mountain in Arosa, Switzerland, begins to go foraging.

Laager was born in the mountains, in St. Moritz, and he is as familiar with all manner of wild mushrooms on the slopes as I am with the streets of my hometown, New York City. He began to learn about mushrooms at the age of seven by following his mother into the woods. "She was the person who explained about the mushrooms in our area," Laager says, "and I also started to study some mycology from current books."

Mycology is the scientific study of fungi and how they affect humans. Mycologists learn to distinguish poisonous mushrooms from the delicious, edible kind. They also study how they work to decompose organic materials on the forest floor, as well as investigate their many roles in medicine, food production—and fine dining. Mycologists spend a lot of time in the lab, teasing out the biochemical properties of fungi, and they do fieldwork to collect samples from forests, lakes, and streams. "The region around Arosa and the Tschuggen Grand Hotel is well known for its fabulous chanterelle and porcini mushrooms," Laager says. "Those are also my preferred mushrooms to eat." The season starts in July and lasts until the end of September.

There is something incredibly life-affirming about the connection with nature that can be made in these mountains. The air is fresh and sweet. The quiet is enveloping. If your eyes are sharp, it's easy to spot wildlife like alpine ibex, chamois, red deer, and rabbit grazing in the forest. This is the place where Laager comes to relax, and he wanted to share that feeling with the guests at the hotel, which is why he created the mushroom foraging experience.

"I thought it was a good idea to do things I like together with our guests," says Laager. "This is authentic and has a personal

touch, which is important for us, running a five-star hotel." At the Tschuggen Grand, the staff enjoys sharing their local passions with the guests. In the summer, the general manager, Stefan Noll, an avid cyclist, guides guests on cycling tours like the Tour de Tschuggen, a breathtaking ride through the Alps on a racing bike, and the executive assistant manager, Leonie Schefenacker, takes groups out at midnight to gaze up at stars in the bright clear sky.

When guests sign up for foraging with the concierge team, they meet in the lobby early in the morning and head into the mountains. Says Laager, "It is just a short drive from the hotel to the hot spots." It is important to be guided by an expert who not only knows where the mushrooms are hiding but also can prevent you from making a potentially deadly mistake.

"You should never pick mushrooms if you do not know them," he says. "Sometimes mushrooms look different in different places, and it can be really dangerous if you pick the wrong ones.

"However, it is safe if you are accompanied by a local guide who knows all the mushrooms in the region." When Laager forages with guests, they share the thrill of the hunt and the pleasure of feasting together on their shared bounty. "When I head out with guests we usually find, clean, and cook the mushrooms together in our kitchen," he says. "It is a special event since you spend a half day together, and in the end you enjoy a risotto with your self-collected mushrooms for lunch." Which, by the way, may well be the best risotto you've ever had.

Laager says you should never carry mushrooms in plastic bags. Instead, use cotton bags or open baskets so that the mushrooms remain nice and fresh.

"I like the feeling of adventure," he says. "It is like a hunt, and, of course, I like to eat them. I love being in nature. Nature is very important in my life. I am very connected to all wildlife and the habitat they live in. It is the place where I can relax." An Alpine foraging expedition is a great gift for anyone who wants to learn to relax too.



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The Beauty of Natural Essences

Text and photography by Lindsey Márton O'Brien

Since time immemorial, the transcendent allure of scent has played an important role in the human experience, inspiring the imagination of all societies to craft botanical recipes that enhance mind, body, and spirit. Natural essences have been so highly esteemed and sought after because of the deeply ingrained universal truth that smell and memory are powerfully interwoven. As our olfactory sensations are the roots that ground our memories in precious moments and places, natural ingredients are the essences that create a soulful and direct connection to the earth. They enrich our collective consciousness and provide a blossoming diversity to match every season, mood, and skin chemistry.

Natural perfume, with its delicate and complex, shifting nature, has a powerful and unique capability of immediately connecting us to emotions, memories, and the world around us. The scent of a sprig of French lavender from a bride's bouquet can immediately transport her back to that beautiful day full of radiant joy. The dewy green scent of moss conjures up a peaceful memory of a barefoot walk down a hidden woodland path, punctuated with the distinct scent of lush growth, lichen, earthy mushrooms, rich soil, and rejuvenating ozone. Knowing this innate transporting power of scent, we can use natural perfume and essences as tools to help us recall memories.

Until the development of synthetics in the late 1800s, natural ingredients were the sole source of all our perfumes, medicine, cosmetics, and culinary delights. In our modern age, with synthetic ingredients increasingly taking over the market, it is important to remember the original natural sources and revisit their benefits and wonderfully multifaceted natures, lest we forget their unique and irreplaceable qualities.

Synthetic ingredients can be useful for their creative, practical, and economical potential, but they are no match for the depth, beauty, and therapeutic synergy of real essences derived from the vastness of the plant world. Synthetic ingredients tend to be quite flat and linear, while a drop of pure, sumptuous, heavenly rose oil is an exquisite unfurling of sensorial delight, with an indulgent richness of depth that is impossible to fully mimic. The aroma of natural rose reminds our collective consciousness of the fine adornments of kings and queens throughout the ages. It is impossible not to feel regal when wearing the incomparable scent of this extraordinary flower.

We can appreciate this luxury all the more when we consider

that a rose blossom contains only about 0.02% essential oil. It takes about 60,000 roses to produce just one ounce of oil! In its purest form, just a single drop requires about thirty roses. It is no surprise, then, that gathering and knowing how to work with these materials requires an intensive amount of focus and dedication and a long-term relationship with the natural wonders of the earth. When we create recipes with such exquisite flowers as rose, jasmine, and orange blossom neroli, there is no doubt that we are crafting with some of the most treasured of all-natural essences—earth's own beloved, fragrant crown jewels.

Still further, we appreciate the diversity of natural essences and the possibilities for crafting scents to match every seasonal, emotional, and physical uniqueness. Their complexity can be appreciated by observing how their distinct and ephemeral layers move and morph with skin chemistry and time. Our appreciation of scents and natural essences goes well beyond the purely cosmetic and aesthetic. Since the dawn of time, we have revered these ingredients for their spiritual and emotional benefits as well. We worked with botanicals to formulate ointments, cosmetics, herbal remedies, dye, textiles, sacred incense, and perfume—one of the most costly and precious of possessions, a thing of ethereal, mysterious, incomparable, and elusive beauty. Sacred incense of resins, woods, and spices, and ancient temples carved and constructed from fragrant woods like sandalwood remind us of the sacredness and preciousness of nature throughout time. When we appreciate the grounding, earthy, damp darkness of an aged patchouli oil, or meditate upon the fragrant smoke from smoldering tears of frankincense, we are reminded of our connection to the earth, from which we came and will someday return.

While the connection to earth and memory is universal in the human experience, it is important to note there are beautiful differences between varieties. Roses have a natural complexity; their layers of fruit, spice, and sweet floral notes morph dramatically from country to country, each variety imparting a lovely and unique fragrance profile. A rose from Egypt will have a more distinctly robust honeyed scent profile compared with a rose from Morocco, with its sweet fruity spice notes, or Bulgaria, with its lighter, ethereal, floral notes. This diversity allows us to craft blends that match each unique profile. We can create a scent to perfectly complement every mood, season, and





ritual in life. When we inhale the scent of an heirloom garden rose and gently nourish our skin with its oil, sip exquisite fine tea perfumed with its petals, or bake with dried flower powder, we are loving that part of ourselves that is as old as time, honoring the synergy of humans, spirit, and nature.

Natural ingredients also have inherently therapeutic and dyeing properties. Juicy blood-orange essential oil, with its tart, plump raspberry notes, brings about feelings of abundant joy and can be especially useful in the bleak cold months of the year. Beets and hibiscus are other useful ingredients beloved for their bold, deep magenta-red color. They work phenomenally as a natural blush, cosmetic stain, and dye for textiles. The delicate little flowers of fragrant lavender exude a powerful herbal

presence that is deeply calming to both skin and mind. This multifaceted gem of the plant world is exceptional for everything from perfumery, skin care, and tea to cooking, medicine, and aromatherapeutic use.

There is nothing quite as grounding and fulfilling as creating a recipe that works with your unique chemistry. As long as we work to re-establish equilibrium, honor our unique connection with our earth, the cyclical nature and beauty of the botanical world will unfold in harmony. Creating with natural essences helps us be present in the moment, as well as remember the scent memories of the past, communing with nature as we appreciate its gifts. Let the items you create be reminders to weave layers of meaning into daily existence. Use your creations



as tools of romanticism, to simultaneously embrace the present, remember the past, and honor intangible, ephemeral moments in time.



Lindsey Márton O'Brien is an artist, photographer, perfumer, and graphic designer from Lancaster, Pennsylvania. Her handcrafted botanical perfumes, art, and herbal creations are available at luminanoctisart.com. You can find her on Instagram, Facebook, and Twitter @LuminaNoctis.

*Models: Meg Eubank, Eric Smolitsky, and Caroline Singh
Fog Wrangler & Assistant: Vidar O'Brien*

This enchanting photoshoot was brought to life by a dazzling assortment of costumes and botanicals. Costumes featured: Meg's robe by Ashley Rose Couture, moth necklace by Run 2 the Wild, and a custom skirt by Annette Eubank; Caroline's elaborately sequined embroidered shawl and Eric's exquisite robe by Dress Art Mystery; and a regal crown by La Camara Del Alquimista. Lindsey incorporated the use of botanicals throughout the shoot, which included prepping the models with wonderfully fragrant Lumina Noctis Rose Serum, which is excellent for all skin types and adds an ethereal glow to one's complexion. The models also wore Lumina Noctis all natural blush, which is lovingly crafted from organic beets and flower petals.



MEDICINE and MAGIC

This atypical apothecary is a treat for the senses

BY LAUREN LAROCCA
PHOTOGRAPHY BY STEVE PARKE

It's estimated that only about 1 percent of people possess the sense of smell in their dreams. It may come as no surprise that Amye Clark, a master clinical aromatherapist, not only smells while dreaming but often wakes up with inspired thoughts. A scented oil or herb will come to her in the dream world, and she'll know to add it to a formula she's working on.

In 2014, Clark and her daughter, Chelsea Matuskey, opened Anam Cara Apothecary as a place for sharing the wonderment of aromatherapy, while empowering people in the process.

"I believe in kingdoms," Clark says. "Mankind is a kingdom, but it was never meant to dominate the others. I believe there is a crystal kingdom that has its own order, its own energy, its own journey, its own everything. The animal kingdom, the mineral kingdom, the plant kingdom work cohesively together while allowing their separateness to be uniquely amazing. Understanding and working with them together—that's what this shop does, and that is what the apothecary is."

Situated in charming downtown Frederick, Maryland, the woody, whimsical shop is lined with oils and perfumes. While an apothecary without herbal tinctures might seem atypical, all essential oils are plant-based, and they not only smell wonderful but are powerful medicine. Just as potent in the shop is the array of gemstones.

"People like to just come in and feel a certain way," Matuskey says. "A lot of people say they feel calm or safe. It's aromatherapy working."

Aesthetically, the shop feels like an enchanted fairyland: an accent wall is painted to resemble malachite, vintage hardback books are artfully used as shelving to display crystals, the cash register sits atop an old card catalog, dried flower bouquets

hang from lines, and products include sparkly Unicorn Kisses body cream (the key ingredient of which is none other than the essential oil of hay) and fairy dust necklaces. Some oil blends have names that read like mantras: "I Am Grounded," "I Am Clear," "I Am Protected."

The potion blending bar, handmade with special and sentimental stones cast in cement, sits near the back of the store. Potion master Elizabeth Jenkins is often there, mixing batches that smell heavenly.

Frankly, with all manner of these handcrafted oils, balms, creams, lotions, and sprays filling the space, it just might be the best-smelling apothecary on the East Coast.

Clark has been drawn to essential oils and stones for longer than she can remember. Growing up in the '70s, she always carried stones, acorns, and leaves in her pockets. She'd save quarters to buy perfumes—and then experiment with mixing them to create new ones. Later, she would travel by horseback to gather wild medicine for her formulas.

"I believe very strongly that when we incarnate, we have paths," she says. "I've been involved in this world for several lifetimes. I understand it and know it and it clicks with me. That's why I love formulating. I know who the characters are, and I love to see what happens when I put them together in different strengths and concentrations."

Both Clark and Matuskey are reflexologists, and as Clark worked with clients, she began making essential oil blends for them to take home and use until their next appointment. Because the blends were so effective and popular, Matuskey suggested that her mom consider a brick and mortar. They first set up shop as a popup inside Maven Beauty Bar, also in downtown Frederick, but outgrew that

Medicine and Magic

Lauren LaRocca



space in less than a year. They grew out of their second space, too, and moved into their current location, 113 E. Patrick St., in 2016.

Anam Cara is Gaelic for “soul friend,” a name chosen by Clark after reading John O’Donohue’s *Anam Cara: A Book of Celtic Wisdom*. “Anam Cara is the energetic part of who we are that travels with us,” Clark explains. “It does not need language, and yet, when we cross into someone else’s auric field, we can hear, know, and understand things about that person.”



While several blends state their medicinal uses (anything from eczema to muscle cramps), Clark and Matuskey stress that each formula works on multiple levels, treating the emotional body conjunctively with the physical. For instance, arthritis might imply a need to stay in the same place to feel safe or a resistance to seeing a new perspective. A wart might represent an invasion—something parasitic you’re letting into your life. Where the malady is located is also indicative of its emotional meaning.

Gemstones are allies, too. Because they each hold a steady vibrational frequency, when we have them near us, we resonate with them. They help us to hold a frequency and we, in effect, feel less chaotic or unbalanced in their presence.

“Sometimes it’s not even about remedies; it’s about an understanding, and then the symptoms go away,” Clark says. “It’s taught in many of the ancient systems of medicine that we are spirits using bodies, and that when our body has a problem—be it a bone break, a weeping womb, diabetes—it’s the physical manifestation of something off in our emotional-spiritual aspects.”

“If you have a liver issue, we’re gonna treat your anger,” Matuskey echoes. “People come to us who have not been able to find answers anywhere else—because they haven’t made the mind-body connection yet.”

Clark leads workshops and classes in the space on everything from herbal formulation and crystal grids to archetypes and physiognomy. For visitors, the shop includes educational verbiage next to nearly all of the crystal specimens and herbal products. Education and self-empowerment are clearly huge components to the shop.

And yet, you will often hear Clark coaxing people to get out of their left brain, stop reading, and pay attention to what they’re drawn to. “I tell them to notice what they feel, what’s going on in their body,” she says. “And people learn to trust their intuition, which is a very smart place to be.”

Visit *Anam Cara* online at anamcaraapothecary.com.

Learn more about Lauren LaRocca on Instagram @karmarocca.
Find photographer Steve Parke at steveparke.com.



Woodland Wonderment: The Enchantment of Ellen Tyn

by Grace Nuth

She strikes an elf-like and enchanting figure on her Instagram, her riotous fluffy mass of sun-blond hair flying behind her as she runs through the sunlit trees, sits by ponds playing a tin flute, or gathers berries to create incredible homespun recipes. Russian sprite Ellen Tyn is known as [@liskin_dol](#) on Instagram (where she boasts over 111,000 followers), Foxy Chest on Etsy (where, if your fingers are fast enough, you can catch her hand-embroidered and handmade goods before they disappear seconds after being listed), and Woodland Patterns on YouTube (a channel full of dreamlike and idyllic videos sharing cozy recipes and forest walks through the four seasons). But little is known of her beyond the magical glimpses we get into her life, happily lived in a cabin on the edge of the Karelian forests in Russia. We had to know more about this incredible young woman who embodies both Mori Girl magic and fairy-tale fantasy.

When we asked Tyn about her love of the forest, her enthusiasm was palpable. “I call myself a woodland creature because I just can’t imagine my life without high pine trees and moss-covered lands. The forest is my friend,” she says. “It’s a great creature, hugging me and telling me fairy tales to inspire. It always makes me absolutely happy.” The forests outside her home, where she roams daily, are full of lush wonders. She describes recent encounters with foxes as she passed through the woods, with hedgehogs in her garden, and with roe deer and rabbits. The most dangerous encounter in her memory was meeting an elk when she was out gathering blueberries. But surprisingly, even the rabbits of her woods can be loud. “Once, I felt like the earth was shaking,” she recalls. “I thought the biggest animal was running toward me, but when I turned around I saw a rabbit—a big one, admittedly!”



When she is not able to be out in her beloved woods, she brings the woods to her. Her home is filled with pinecones, branches, and lichens. Such mementos are a necessity for her, since she often creates crafts and takes photos with the beautiful bits and pieces of nature. However, the wonderful side effect is a house that smells like the woodland surrounding her. Tyn

also tries to bring charms and enchantments into her daily tasks. “I think of them like kinds of magic,” she says. “You cook breakfast—you make magic, for example. Isn’t it wonderful—you take various ingredients and then make something very delicious!” Tyn is self-taught, and learned many skills from her mother as well.

Spring is a special season in her domestic pursuits. Floral cuisine is a spring ritual: She makes jam from rose petals, dandelion wine, lilac ice-cream, and nettle pancakes. Many of these items are harvested from foraging trips out into the woods. Herbs, mushrooms, and berries are all delicious ingredients she gathers from the woods and fields.

Certainly Tyn lives a whimsical and charming life,

one she has learned to share with her global audience in a way that makes us all want to run away to a cottage on the edge of the forest. But it isn’t always easy. “I can’t call my life slow, because living in nature isn’t easy, and you always keep busy with many things to do every day,” she says. “If you want to be productive, you can’t afford to sit in blankets and sip coffee for hours. So I just try to live with no fuss, focusing on the tasks at hand and pausing sometimes to enjoy the moment, the beauty of the world.”

Follow Grace Nuth on Instagram [@gracesidhe](#).





"I call myself a woodland creature because I just can't imagine my life without high pine trees and moss-covered lands. The forest is my friend."



STORYBOOK COUTURE

BY CAROLYN TURGEON

French designer Sylvie Facon takes fairy-tale couture to a new level with her intricate, otherworldly, and seemingly impossible gowns that are themselves storybooks. You might have seen her Arras dress (left) that went viral last year, including on our own social media accounts—a dress she made to honor and celebrate her pretty hometown in northern France.

“Love for my city motivated this project,” she says. “I wanted that at first sight, the Arrageois, or inhabitants of Arras, would recognize their city. I wanted to make a series of dresses using the emblems of Arras and take pictures of them on my beautiful friends in the beautiful places of our city.”

To compose the dress, she chose elements in the city’s architecture and history, as well as the treasures of the city’s museum, “which is the best known and which represents our city.” Among the real-life Arras details and people that adorn the gown are the Flemish Baroque-style houses that surround the town’s main square, the 13th century gilded wood angels from the Church of Saudemont, the 14th century countess Mahaut of Artois, and the golden statue of the lion of Arras that stands atop the bell tower.

“For me, there are many ways to design dresses,” she says. “You can use beautiful materials such as lace, silk in all its aspects, and you can enrich them with pearls or embroidery. But what really interests me is to treat a theme or a feeling. A dress is a place of great expression, a painting where you can express everything with a universal language of beauty.” She likens it to a kind of poetry “that can only amaze and touch” and emerges from “the combination of finesse, the shimmer of colors, the originality of the materials, the balance of forms, the details brought and the work done in perfection.”

Facon was overwhelmed by the popularity of the dress, and the idea that she can create alone in the “calm and sweetness” of her studio while her creations take on a life of their own, shared by people all over the world.

Another of her creations that caused a social media sensation was her gown made entirely from old books. Facon explains that a friend of hers in Arras runs a bookstore where the upstairs shelves are filled with books that are no longer for sale. These books, she says “have no great value but in my eyes are very aesthetic.” The dress she made from them is the first in Facon’s steampunk series, though she became aware of the trend only after a website described the dress in this way. Inspired, she next created a stunning violin dress in which what appears to be an actual wooden violin lays across the torso, and the scroll and



tuning pegs jut from the shoulder. The flaring skirt seems to be made from lacy pages of music.

Her inspiration? Though she’s inspired by her town, by books, by the beauty of the world around her, she remains “a child in front of beautiful images of nature,” which is why she tries to add natural elements like wood to her design. “I particularly like forests and undergrowth, and I try to get closer to the atmosphere of Pre-Raphaelite paintings when I work,” she says. “There is always dark and bright, a form of enchanted atmosphere brought by a host of small elements, including tiny rhinestones.”

Because Facon doesn’t sell these one-of-a-kind storybook dresses (though she makes her living creating bridal gowns), she is not limited by practical concerns, whether a dress is washable or when and where it can be worn. She also falls in love with each dress and in fact cannot name a favorite. “I am forever passionate,” she says, “and this passion is my tree under which I shelter when life is not easy. And conversely, it also allows me to express happiness when I am happy and enthusiastic.”

Find Sylvie Facon on Instagram @sylviefaconcreatricefrance.

Follow Carolyn Turgeon on Instagram @carolynturgeon.



BEAUTY SECRETS OF A

Forest Nymph

BY ALISE MARIE
THE BEAUTY WITCH



*A*wakened by birdsong, her incandescent eyes flutter open to behold the verdant forest, lush and damp with newly fallen rains. Sweetly scented moss tickles her nose as the welcoming rustle of branches beckon her away from the seclusion of her winter's bed. She stretches in languor toward the sun, smiling hello to her forest friends once again. Rested and renewed, the nymph prepares for the growing season, abundant in the richness of her surroundings—nature is the ultimate *femme vitale*.



*Dryad Dreams
Hair Masque*

After a long winter's slumber, the cauldron of dreams begins to stir. Spring, in all its green beauty, holds the promise of those dreams taking form, somehow always arriving as if for the first time. All of nature must rise, for there is work to be done! Replenished by resting deep within our spirits, we reach outward once again, ready to nurture the growth of seeds planted carefully, lovingly within the richness of the earth.

A forest nymph certainly knows how to align with the beauty of nature. Working closely with the wisdom of trees, the varied treasure of wild flowers and herbs, and the high vibration of pure water, she concocts potions that enhance her natural beauty, attunes to nature spirits, and skillfully rouses the magic of heaven and earth.

And so, gorgeous nymphs, it is time to arise. Pop open from your buds and embrace spring and all her riches with these powerful offerings: three inspired potions to detoxify, nourish, and promote fresh new growth to your cells and your dreams. A mélange of woodland treasures mingle with timeless beautifiers in the thick of the forest to bestow their gifts upon you:

Nettles These wonderful little harbingers of Spring are Mars-ruled symbols of protection, their powers having been used in magic for ages. A favored herb of Thor, they also carry tremendous energy for banishing, healing, and sexual fire. When ingested, nettle provides nutrients, antioxidants, and minerals which support the entire system, including the skin and hair. It is an excellent tonic for libido, as well as an all-around healing herb for both female and male health. Nettle revs circulation, improves digestion, and helps with seasonal sniffles and bronchial woes. Used topically, it gently detoxifies and provides nourishment to skin, while helping to grow strong, thick, glossy new hair.

Pine Pollen Beloved pine trees are also fiery symbols of protection, healing, and fertility. Excellent for creating, they also gift us with their special faerie dust—pollen. Pine pollen acts as

a superior supplement as it contains an astounding amount of active vitamins, minerals and nutrients in each serving that is easily absorbed by the body. It also increases collagen and elastin production, delivers antioxidants, and promotes youthful skin texture. **If you have an allergy to pine, simply omit. The potions will still be brimming with beauty and magic!*

Spinach This bright green gift of Jupiter is simply packed with vital nutrition for cleansing and feeding your body. Full of powerhouse vitamins and minerals, spinach is an easy route to glowing skin both internally and applied to the surface. As a facial masque, it lessens the appearance of fine lines, adds elasticity, softens, and protects from UV damage. Used in hair, spinach soothes the scalp, promotes hair growth, and leaves a gorgeous shine. Added magical feature? Spinach attracts money!

Avocado As a high priestess of beauty, avocado is a force to be reckoned with. A rich, sensual fruit of Venus, avocado does wonders for the skin, hair, and the entire body. Ripe with a high concentration of fatty acids, it conditions hair from the scalp all the way down to the tips, bidding adieu to dry, frizzy, unmanageable strands. It also treats your skin by smoothing lines, plumping and hydrating while bringing love and peace magic straight to you.

Jasmine This precious moon flower gifts love, beauty, and riches in all forms. Its sweetly seductive aroma is an ancient aphrodisiac, and indeed sprinkles a bit of stardust into everything it touches. Jasmine is a light but potent hair oil that stimulates growth, detangles, and imparts a glossy sheen. Used on the skin, it moisturizes without clogging pores, evens skin tone, and wards off the signs of premature aging.

Almond is a fantastic beauty addition to the retinue above, as a non-abrasive exfoliant with the anti-aging benefits of vitamin E which repairs cells, protects from environmental damage, and fortifies skin. Taken internally, almonds provide protein and fiber, helping to lower blood sugar and keep you full without bloating. Magically, almonds bring healing and abundance.

DRYAD DREAMS HAIR MASQUE

Per treatment

A gorgeous treatment to bring in spring, this masque leaves your scalp revitalized and your strands smooth, glossy, and full of life. No more dryness, tangles, or dull strands tolerated!

*½ avocado, very ripe
1 cup spinach, finely chopped
1 tablespoon nettle
½ cup unsweetened almond milk
20 drops jasmine absolute*

Combine avocado, spinach, nettle, and almond milk in a high-speed blender, and pulse until very smooth. It's important to get the avocado and greens to resemble a smoothie as best as you can. This assures an even coating and an easier application. When you get the consistency you like, spoon the mixture into a small bowl, adding the jasmine just before using. Working with dry hair, begin at the scalp, applying the potion and massaging in as you go along, all the way to the ends. As you work the potion through, bring the beauty in and all the joy that comes with it. (Remember, there's money and passion in there too!) Leave it on for 10 to 20 minutes, then rinse very well with warm water. (Hair masques tend to get everywhere, so make sure to do a thorough cleanup afterward.) Wash with a gentle shampoo—you don't want to undo all this exquisite conditioning—then follow with your everyday conditioner. When your hair is dry, it will be *gorgeous*.

This fresh masque is best for one use. The recipe is based upon hair length and thickness, so if you have extra, share it!

WOODLAND WITCHERY FACIAL EXFOLIANT AND MASQUE

Makes approximately 6 treatments

This glowing green magic masque cleverly exfoliates and cleanses, then drapes your skin in a veil of bright, beautiful hydration. Prepare to dazzle!

*½ cup spring water
½ cup spinach
1 teaspoon nettles
¼ ripe avocado
1½ teaspoons pine pollen
2 tablespoons almond flour
13 drops jasmine absolute*

First, combine the water, spinach, and nettles in a high-speed blender, and pulse until completely smooth. This will make a paste. Add the greens to a ceramic or glass bowl, then mash in the avocado. Make sure the avocado is as smooth as you can get it—the back of a small spoon works well—so you have as few lumps as possible. Add pine pollen and almond flour, mixing well. As you concoct, bring forth the energy of beauty and confidence! Drop in the jasmine oil just as you are about to use the masque. Apply a layer to clean skin, lightly massaging in a circular motion. Add another layer and pat it in well. Allow it to work its magic for 10 to 20 minutes, then remove with a warm cloth. Rinse thoroughly, then apply your serums and moisturizers as needed. This makes a nice amount of potion, so share some with friends, maybe with a little witchy spa party!

The masque will keep refrigerated for three days.



*Woodland Witchery
Facial Exfoliant and Masque*

BEAUTY WITCH SECRET:

With both masques, add in the jasmine oil just before using, as all that green goodness can absorb its intoxicating scent when left sitting. If you have potion left for subsequent treatments, add a few refresher drops just before use.

FOREST FAERIE TONIC

Per serving

This bright, refreshing tonic delivers both cleansing and nutrient-dense power to you in an easily digested potion that will bring you back to life after a long winter's slumber. Get ready to take on the world!

- 1 cup spring water
- 1 cup spinach
- 1 tablespoon nettle
- 1 teaspoon pine pollen
- 13 leaves fresh mint
- Juice of half a lemon
- 1 to 2 teaspoons raw coconut nectar, or to taste

Pour the spring water into a high-speed blender, then add in the spinach, nettle, pine pollen, mint, and lemon. Blend until very smooth. Now pour in the coconut nectar, and adjust to taste. (Stevia can of course be substituted.) As you are concocting and sipping, visualize clearing away the seasons past. As you feel strong and clear, bring in the strength and new growth needed to achieve your dreams in the coming months.

Mint Cooling, aromatic mint bears gifts of purification and healing. Ruled by Mercury and air, it encourages ease of communication while stimulating the intellect. (Interestingly, it also carries the magic of sex!) Mint cleanses the system, eases digestion, strengthens eyesight, and is full of antioxidants.

“And into the forest I go, to lose my mind and find my soul.”

—John Muir

The trees and plants of the forest—herbs, low-growing vegetation, floral blooms—offer a whispering wellspring of beauty. They are lovely to look at and breathe in, but also to savor, as the forest serves up powerful and pure ingredients for skin and hair. Here are a few that we love.

Kypris Deep Forest Clay

This detoxifying and exfoliating mask brims with cleansing clays, mineral salts, and extracts from roots, leaves, trees, and flowers. kyprisbeauty.com

Teadora Brazilian Glow Ultra Silky Cleanser for Face and Body

Ripe with ingredients from the Amazon Rain Forest, with luscious superfruits that add intense moisture to the skin. teadorabeauty.com

EarthWise Beauty Ferns and Moss Face Serum

A deeply penetrating face oil for aging and sun-damaged skin—a little goes a long way, with extracts of balsam, seed and berry oils that are wild-crafted. earthwisebeauty.com

Korres Black Pine Antiwrinkle Night Cream

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—Rosie Shannon

Lemon Moon-ruled and a powerful purifier, bright and cheerful lemon holds a hefty dose of love and happiness magic. It cleanses the system and balances pH while providing vitamin C and a host of beautifying minerals.

Coconut Nectar The lunar coconut tree gives us this sweet, low-glycemic, mineral-rich sap that makes a lovely plant-based alternative to honey. Tinged with citrus, it has a delightful flavor enhanced by the magic of spirituality and psychic awareness.

BEAUTY WITCH SECRET:

Conjure these potions at the new moon or any time during the waxing-to-full phase. Though they contain detoxifiers, which work best during the waning phase—their energy is present to clear the way to fully receive the magical and beautifying properties. The cleansing is simply there to create the space, so the emphasis on absorbing becomes the dominant energy.

Enjoy the sorcery of spring, my beautiful woodland sprites! May you be cloaked in her magic, and may all your wishes come true.



Alise Marie is an actress, writer, and certified holistic nutritionist. Potions and rituals like these will be brewing in her upcoming book, The Beauty Witch Grimoire. She can be found at thebeautywitch.com.

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*“Fiddlehead”
by Guinevere von Sneed*



THE WILD-CRAFTED CUISINE OF BAIERSBRONN

by Jill Gleason

Photography by Ulrike Klumpp

Deep in heart of southwest Germany's Black Forest sits a picture-perfect little town named Baiersbronn. Surrounded by one of the most beautiful woodlands in all the world, a place of deep, dark wilds where spruce grow so thickly they give the landscape an ebony hue, Baiersbronn has become famed for its nearly 350 miles of serene, stunning hiking trails. They wind around glacier lakes, over gently rolling mountains and along clear, cool rivers and streams, and they are accessible year-round, thanks to the region's temperate climate. Here and there, stone fountains offer thirsty hikers spring water, which bubbles up pure and sweet from the earth, while charming little chalets called *Vesperstuben* serve hot, hearty fare, providing opportunity for a longer respite.

But in Baiersbronn, it's not just the traditional hiking huts that link food and Germany's favorite leisure pursuit—invented, it's said, in the Black Forest. A number of gastronomically themed guided hikes are now available in the area, as well as “Culinary Hiking Heaven,” which seeks, according to the tourism board that developed it, to teach “visitors the important relationship between nature and nourishment.”

The popular program includes “wild plant hosts,” eateries that prepare dishes using ingredients sourced from the forest; “wild plant guides,” who take visitors on walks through the local woods, foraging for herbs and other edible greenery along the way; and a self-guided “wild plants discovery trail” that hikers can supplement with a plant-identification brochure and a backpack filled with local delicacies for a flavorful picnic lunch.

It's an inspired idea, tying hiking to Baiersbronn's other celebrated pastime: eating. The little community of just 16,000 is the proud possessor of an astounding eight Michelin stars—one star for every 2,000 residents. (Paris, in comparison, has just one for every 16,000.) Two restaurants, Schwarzwaldstube and Bareiss, have won three stars each from the world's most respected culinary guidebook; Schlossberg has garnered two. With good reason residents and visitors alike in Baiersbronn take dining as seriously as they take hiking. Why not then, give them the chance to do both at once?

Baiersbronn

Jill Gleeson

“Culinary hikes offer three different delights,” says Friedrich Klumpp, proprietor of Hotel-Gasthof Rosengarten and a wild herb guide and cook. “You enjoy walking on the hike, you enjoy eating while having lunch. And for your soul and mind, a tour is a good opportunity to relax and take a rest. Some people even call it ‘soul food.’”

Klumpp, who began offering his tour in 2002, creates lauded feasts from what he gathers in the forest, including wild herbal creamed soup with fried herbs and the dish he has become famed for, parfait from spruce-leaf tips with rosé bubbly jelly. Klumpp believes the plants he picks along wooded paths have lessons to offer along with fine flavor. “We’re used to having everything at our disposal at any time and we can buy anything,” Klumpp says. “However, many wild herbs only grow at a special season and only then you can harvest them. So when you learn more about herbs, you learn to pay attention to nature’s cycles, and after some time you will be aware of your role as a human being in nature and of the interaction between nature and people. Maybe ‘humility’ is the right word to describe what I mean.”

Depending on the season, the edible plants available in the Black Forest around Baiersbronn include dandelion, oregano, ribwort, clover, sorrel, spruce needles, bistort, bedstraw, spicknel, watercress, garlic mustard, wild strawberry leaves, wild marjoram, red clover, beech leaves, birch leaves, and angelic. Klumpp calls spicknel, a powerfully aromatic plant in the parsley family, his favorite of them all. So too does Christine Bissell, a wild herb guide, who says spicknel is “quite unusual elsewhere but grows here, as it likes the damp conditions. You can find large expanses of it in wet river meadows. You have to be quick though, as the cows love it too. I use it fresh in herb butter. I think it tastes a bit like celeriac or dill.”

Bissell takes guests on a variety of hikes, but her favorite begins at a monastery in Klosterreichenbach, which is part of the Baiersbronn municipality. According to legend, a hunter named Petermännle used to play tricks on women and children collecting berries on the grounds of the monastery. It’s said he still haunts the area, so those picking bilberries must leave a few for him, to keep him sweet. The hike continues through the valley along the edge of the forest to the monastery spring. In the right season the land here is home to meadowsweet, a plant with a history as fascinating as its name is delightful.

“Meadowsweet once provided salicylic acid,” says Bissell, “before aspirins. It was also used to sweeten mead. This is one of my favorites, as it incorporates the different aspects of herbal use and has some nice symbolism. In the past, fragrant herbs were considered more effective than those which were unfragranced. These strong smelling herbs were more highly prized and were even considered to keep evils spirits at bay. Whatever you make of that, the wonderful honey fragrance of meadowsweet lifts my spirits, and I love to use the heads of sweet flowers to flavor fruit

juice. I take flavored apple juice for the guests to try when the meadowsweet is flowering.”

The rest of the hike, according to Bissell, winds through a glorious slice of the valley, with “lower hillsides grazed by cattle” and meadows that are “a paradise for wild herbs. The soil here is more friendly to herbs than the acidic conditions you usually find in the region and, in May and June particularly, there is a spectacular display of plants. Along the way, we talk about the edible ones like wild thyme, yarrow, cinquefoil, salad burnet, lady’s mantle, lady’s bedstraw—even ground ivy, nettles, and plantain have an interesting story. But other wildflowers like harebells, geraniums, even orchids provide a wonderful, colorful show in the valley. It’s also a haven for some fantastic moths, butterflies, and other insects.”

Should one of the wild herb walks of Baiersbronn somehow not suit, there are a number of gourmet hikes scheduled throughout the year, including the Nature and Enjoyment hike, which offers a three-hour guided tour followed by a five-course meal served in the forest; the Schnappstour, a guided hike to a distillery; and the similarly themed Hops and Malt beer tour. Every Friday, the six-hour Tasty Hiking tour begins at the Baiersbronn Information Center and includes a traditional Black Forest meal at the Sattelai hiking cottage. (In winter, the event moves to the Panoramastble.)

No matter what savory and succulent path through the Baiersbronn Black Forest you choose to follow, you will leave satisfied down to your spirit, says Anja Rothfuss, a wild herb guide who also works in the hiking center. “The mixture and balance of nature and culinary art is a special enjoyment. The finger food and drinks served during the hikes prove how deliciously native wild herbs can be prepared. At the same time, surrounded by the green landscape, you feel the power of nature, how it brings satisfaction and relaxation. The hikes are a holiday for soul and body. The fresh air, good food, and peaceful sounds of water, birds, and wind offer real regeneration.”





MICHELIN-STARRED MEALS IN BAIERSBRONN

Restaurant Bareiss

Headed by Claus-Peter Lumpp, Bareiss has been awarded three Michelin stars, the last coming in 2007, fifteen years after Lumpp took over as executive chef. The menu includes locally sourced venison during hunting season in Germany, which is from May to January. It's prepared roasted, braised, or poached and prepared with other seasonal ingredients from the Black Forest, like wild herbs. [bareiss.com/en/restaurants/restaurant-bareiss](https://www.bareiss.com/en/restaurants/restaurant-bareiss)

Restaurant Schwarzwaldstube

Schwarzwaldstube has held three Michelin stars for a quarter-century, thanks in large part to legendary German chef Harald Wohlfahrt, who crafted exquisite French fare influenced by his upbringing in the Black Forest. Wohlfahrt is gone, but his successor, Torsten Michel, continues the tradition of using ingredients sourced from the local wilds, such as hare (served with brussels-sprout leaves, black root, and trumpet mushrooms), berries, and herbs. [traube-tonbach.de/en/schwarzwaldstube-restaurant](https://www.traube-tonbach.de/en/schwarzwaldstube-restaurant)

Schlossberg Restaurant

The recipient of two Michelin stars, Schlossberg, which opened in 1993, is overseen by Jörg Sackmann. His son Nico heads to the forest daily to pick the plants the chef uses in his dishes, including chamomile, stinging nettle, thyme, fennel, and yarrow. Wild-picked local berries turn up as a dessert with cheesecake, whole grain muesli, and whey gel. [hotel-sackmann.de/en/gastronomy/schlossberg](https://www.hotel-sackmann.de/en/gastronomy/schlossberg)

For more information about culinary hikes in Baiersbronn, visit [baiersbronn.de](https://www.baiersbronn.de).

Find Jill Gleeson's writing about adventure, love, loss, and healing at [gleesonreboots.com](https://www.gleesonreboots.com).





Fairytale
**ECO
HOUSES** *in Wales*

TEXT AND PHOTOGRAPHY BY JANNE EIKEBLAD

Eco Houses in Wales

Janne Eikeblad

Have you ever wanted to just quit your old life and move into the countryside and live like a hobbit or a friendly witch or a mythical forest creature? I went for a search for people who did just that, and at last my path led me to Wales. There I found everything I had been dreaming of and more.

I must have tumbled into fairyland even from the moment I crossed the border to Wales, where I encountered the most enchanting forest I had ever witnessed. Everything just kept getting more magical and astounding from there. With every passing day I became more and more impressed by its wonders, and it never stopped.

Wales seems to be small and often overlooked. Yet it is the setting for many of the best known myths: Sites throughout Wales are connected with King Arthur and his magician Merlin. Its flag depicts a red dragon, which has been the symbol of Wales for centuries. Even Tolkien was largely inspired by the culture, history, and landscape of Wales; he even based his elven language Sindarin on Welsh.

Wales is certainly no longer the green paradise it once was. The landscape is heavily altered by modern civilization like the rest of the world, but it feels like a place full of promise. The Welsh government is committed to reducing its ecological footprint to its fair share of the planet within a generation. Laws have been passed to encourage inhabitants to return to the countryside and live sustainably.

Although I visited an abundance of castles, old-growth forests, stone circles, beautiful mountains, and cozy cottages, those are tales for later occasions. The reason for my visit—and what really impressed and astounded me—were the people of Wales who have chosen to live in beautiful ecological dwellings, designed to help inhabitants minimize their impact on the environment and live in harmony with nature. After all, can we truly live an enchanting life without at the same time living sustainably?

Many of us hate our jobs and lives but do nothing about it. But here are people who, for any number of reasons, decided that they wanted out of the typical contemporary way of life and made real sacrifices to do so. They are proof that we can live in a way that is sympathetic with the rest of nature. For the first time in my life I felt at home. I had finally found my people.

LAMMAS ECOVILLAGE

Journeying through winding country roads, I made my way to Lammas ecovillage. The first thing I noticed were the grassy roofs and rustic structures spread across the landscape. At first glance it was like seeing a village from a bygone fairy tale. But this beautiful place might just as well have been a glimpse of the Wales of the future.

Lammas is a low-impact, low-emissions settlement that is completely off-grid. Most of its inhabitants' food, water, and energy needs are provided from its own land. The ecovillage

now consists of about fifteen residential smallholdings, created with the latest innovations in permaculture, environmental design, and green technology.

Each smallholding is different, but all reflect the ideals, dreams, and aspirations of the people living there. In Lammas each family has about seven acres to farm and meet their needs. They have to prove to the government that every year they get 75 percent of what they need off the land. Every plot has its own land-based business to run. Some grow fruits and nuts and other produce; others make woodcrafts, hold courses, keep bees, grow rare herbs, maintain tree nurseries, save seeds, or create sculptures, willow, and textile products.

Most of Lammas's inhabitants are from urban backgrounds and had no prior experience in growing food or building. "We're not exactly hippies," resident Jasmine Dale says. "Most people who live here don't relate to that term. We operate according to a conventional village model. And we love our mobile phones, the internet—some of us are really into our technology."

Resident Hoppi Wimbush told me: "We wanted to show that it is very possible to transition from a mainstream lifestyle to this, that there is an alternative that is attractive and very affordable. For a modest amount of money, you can buy a piece of land and create a whole new sustainable lifestyle for yourself. We should not have to be confined to cities. We can live in balance and make everything more productive and beautiful and at the same time play a role in mainstream conventional society and all that comes with it."

Lammas shows how beautiful an ecovillage can be. The dwellings, workshops, and barns have been designed and built by the residents themselves. It seems like a setting out of *Lord of the Rings* or some other idyllic historical fantasy.

I met Tao Paul Wimbush, the founder of Lammas, who told me: "Living in an ecovillage means to live truly sustainably, so that your lifestyle can be maintained over generations. Instead of being a consumer, you are actually adding to and enhancing the resources. As an intrinsic part of the ecosystem, the approach is one of stewardship rather than exploitation for short-term gain. It's all about remembering and re-creating our relationship with the land."

Lammas is becoming a shining beacon of what is possible. Originally the land was degraded and not even supporting one family, but now there is true abundance and its productivity far outweighs that of conventional agriculture. "There is so much at stake," Wimbush said, "and I don't think governments are going to provide the solutions we need. The reality is that we already know what we need to do, and communities like Lammas are proving that it can be done. If we don't link how we earn a living with care and loving respect for nature, we are doomed. We don't have a choice ... I genuinely believe that in years to come this will become a common way of living, and I would recommend it to anyone."





“At the end of the day it is about freedom,” Wimbrush continued. “Even if society came down crashing, we would be all right. It is not that we are turning our back on mainstream culture, it is all about creating the future that you want. We have all the wonders of the modern world. We get to watch *Game of Thrones* on a winter’s evening and have pizza. But we also have the open fire under the stars and play live music.”





THE LOST HOBBIT HOUSE

In a forested valley in the Welsh countryside, I found my way to the family of Simon Dale, who lived in the £3,000 hobbit house that took the internet by storm in 2008 and inspired millions. The family left more than ten years ago, and apparently nobody has been there since. Nobody knows exactly what happened to it. Some people say it burned down, some that it had returned to the Earth from whence it was made.

But after quite an effort to find the general area and a walk through a magical woodland of mossy crooked oak trees, I came upon it, barely visible in the landscape, quite overgrown and covered in foxgloves. I was amazed: The house was still there! The phrase “In a hole in the ground there lived a hobbit” had never seemed more fitting. And I never felt more lost in a fairy tale. The house was not in the state of disrepair I had feared. I approached and knocked on the wooden door several times, then discovered it was open. I could not help myself and peeked inside. It simply blew my mind! Who could believe these perfectly cozy and inviting interiors were hiding underneath all that soil, as if humans made burrows, and as if it had been

frozen in time? I suddenly felt like Goldilocks and the three bears when I realized someone must be living here. I quickly and respectfully left this place of beauty and tranquillity to continue my adventures.

TIR YSBRYDOL (BRITHDIR MAWR)

My journey led me further north, where I was able to visit a remarkable community called Tir Ysbrydol, in the foothills of a lonely mountain. Secluded in the forest away from roads, the people here truly live the wild and green life in small circular huts with turf roofs that all but disappear into the thick vegetation. Even more special is that these peaceful people live not only off-grid but completely without electricity, technology, or any modern conveniences. They cook on wood-burning stoves and get their water from the river. They told me that they don't live off the land but with the land. They are mostly vegetarian and forage as much as possible from what nature gives them.

I was honored to meet the woman who started it all, Emma Orbach, the closest thing to a hedge witch or a Celtic wise woman of old I have ever encountered. An Oxford graduate,

she became increasingly uneasy with electricity and the modern life. More than twenty years ago she bought a farm but quickly moved into a self-made roundhouse in her own forest. “I love peace, I love to sit and listen to the wind and just be in nature.”

Orbach lives alone in her hut and has a flock of chickens, some goats, and two horses walking around freely. If traveling to the outside world, her gorgeous horse will carry her away in a vardo. She grows her own vegetables and prefers them as fresh as possible. “My life has felt like swimming upstream,” she says. “I want everything in life smaller, simpler, quieter. I had to create a parallel reality where I can be happy.”

Her evenings are spent in the glow of her stove, cooking dinner and playing music on her Celtic harp. “We who live here appreciate the moon and the stars and the night, and feel a strong connection to the rest of the galaxy.” She thinks that all the electrical lighting disrupts the bodily functions and that darkness is important and really beautiful.

“I think the Earth can teach us just about anything,” she says. “I have always felt at peace with nature. I love trees, and I believe in the power of the green light, which we all need in our life.” She dedicates her life to help people come back to balance and harmony with how they exist on this planet. “Living simply with what nature offers us freely, we can have a lot of happiness and peace,” she says. “My job is to dream the beautiful future. It’s a really different future. We are given this life on this wondrous planet to be happy, not to have a mortgage or pay the rent.”

Orbach believes a different life awaits us all. “The way of life that is being presented for people is not always what we really want,” she says. “We need to return to some kind of sanity. My advice is to follow your heart, follow your beautiful dreams, follow what makes you feel joyful and alive. It is possible to live simple and happy on the Earth. Anybody can do it that wants to, you just have to find the courage. We should all be able to build our own dens and shelters, homes that will just become compost if we leave.”

I got to stay in one of the community’s roundhouse huts. It felt so warm, comforting, and grounding to sleep in it, and the best thing was how silent and peaceful it all was. In the morning I woke up refreshed, looking straight at a rooster and some chickens outside the rounded window. Sometimes when modern life feels too pressing, many of us might think we could all be better off living off the goat’s milk, nuts, and fruits of a forest like Orbach’s, and bathing in the icy waters of the stream running past our hut, sitting around the campfire and awakening to birdsong.





CAE MABON

My journey led me northward. At the foot of the beautiful Snowdonia Mountains and close to a beautiful lake, a stunning place was hidden among huge old-growth trees. Cae Mabon eco-retreat village is set in a forest next to a rushing river: a multitude of diverse and beautiful earthy structures, with a glimpse of mountaintops in the distance.

Two days before midsummer I made my way through the Greenman portal and toward the dwellings for the first time. It was the closest thing to paradise I've ever seen. The man behind it all, Eric Maddern, looked suspiciously like the Greenman guardian I just passed: He's a true bard, visionary, and storyteller, weaving magic with his words, and this very place is his magic manifest.

The project has required a great deal of persistence. Incredibly enough, he founded the place without having any money or a job. But what he did have was a vision, and that gave him the passion and energy to make it happen. He was concerned about the state of the planet and wanted a place to use his storytelling and musical talents to share his message, touching and moving people through songs and stories.

Cae Mabon is now run by the small community living there and has been evolving since 1989. It is the fruit of many people's creative contributions. The group is striving for a degree of self-sufficiency and aims to be off-grid and run on renewable energy.

"I see Cae Mabon as a sacred place where you can open up to a spirituality that is rooted in the earth and of the elements," Maddern says. "If there is a particular focus, it would be the ancient Celtic. The first thing we did was to create a reconstructed



Eco Houses in Wales

Janne Eikeblad



roundhouse like the ones people used to live in for over 3,000 years. It is the perfect place for connecting with those parts of ourselves that is thousands of years old, and feeling that rootedness with nature and our ancestors.”

Maddern believes that the community can bring the values of the past into the future. “Cae Mabon is also about where we are heading, about our future,” he says. “Living by exemplifying values which we need to survive as a species. Live simply so all may simply live. Encouraging creative activity of all kinds, as this is a place of healing and inspiration. We aim to value the best of the past, to celebrate the fullness of life now and to help create positive creative and organic futures.”

Those values inform the built environment of Cae Mabon directly. “We endeavor to make our dwellings harmonize with each other, with the trees and the curves of the surrounding hills,” Maddern says. “We like to include aesthetically pleasing details in surprising places. As Winston Churchill said, ‘We shape the buildings we live in, and in turn the buildings shape us.’ All the dwellings here are small, homely, and circular. There are not many sharp corners.”

This approach to design, Maddern believes, resonates with people who are coming to recognize their alienation from nature. “More and more people want to live in this natural,

organic, down to earth and creative way,” he says. “Many don’t want to live in big cities, addicted to consumerism, because they realize that this kind of culture does not really make you happy. This place is the true antidote to consumerism, a life of low carbon footprint. It is healing the crippling disconnection within Western culture between body, soul, spirit, and place.”

I slept in my favorite building, a white cob cottage with Gothic windows and a green roof, right at the center of this fairy-tale village. Getting to live for a while in this cob cottage gave me the feeling that absolutely everything was right and good in my life, and I was filled with a peace and serenity, as if the rest of the world was full of beauty and magic as well. I spent the days walking around barefoot and exploring, and in the evening fairy lights shone from the little dwellings, lighting the way to a wood-fired bathtub beside the river. This refreshing and romantic night in the tub and splashing around in the icy cold river were the highlights of my time in Wales. The morning after, I left this magical place and started my long journey home.



Follow Janne Eikeblad on Instagram @voiceofnature.





My Personal Fairy

THE STORY BEHIND THE IMAGES OF MAGAELA ACCESSORIES

BY CAROLYN TURGEON

We'd been fans of Magaela Accessories for a while—the nature-inspired flower crowns, the beaded floral decorations that drape over a bare arm, the floral barrettes and combs and belts and jewelry, even the dog collars, all delicate and feminine and fairy-esque, pictured on lovely young models (or canines) in sunlit fields.

One day last year, we saw a new image, and this one floored us: It was of a gorgeous, ebullient older woman with long, silky white hair, her face serene, smiling slightly, as she sat calmly in a field of wheat. She was dressed in white, wearing a pink and white flower crown that tangled down in her own white locks. She held a stalk of wheat and seemed relaxed and at peace. It's an astonishing image: The lady is undeniably beautiful and undeniably old, a combination we're not often presented with. There's been no attempt to conceal her wrinkles, no bright light to make them disappear. She doesn't even seem to be wearing makeup. The caption? "I love her every wrinkle, her beautiful silver hair and endless smile. She is my personal fairy."

We shared the photo on our own Instagram feed, and it became one of our most liked images of 2018. The response was enthusiastic and emotional. @lunawolf85 commented "When I saw this lovely picture, tears of love came out of me, love everything." @faerneth said: "Beautiful. this made my world stop for a minute. wow. a true faerie" And many people echoed the thoughts of @julielovejoy: "It's about time!!! The idea that faeries are always beautiful nubile young things is a myth."

In *The Faerie Handbook*, we included a photo of eighty-year-old Sharron Roads, whose ethereal fairy portraits taken by her daughter Marsha

Steckling had provoked a similar response when we shared them online. People want to see these elder figures in all their radiant beauty and want to live in a world that fully embraces their magic and wisdom. What could be more fairy than that? As Grace Nuth wrote in the book:

In Faerie, there are no rules about cutting your hair once you reach a certain age. Ancient wisewomen fairies wear their hair snow-white and pooling around their feet in luxurious piles. Each wrinkle on a woman's face is revered as the sign of a memory, just as the beads and baubles collected on trolls' tails tell stories of where they have been and what they've learned.

We love these wisewomen fairies and wanted to know more. Some day, we hope to become them ourselves.

The creator behind Magaela Accessories is thirty-one-year-old Michaela Durisova, who comes from Dubnica nad Váhom, a small town in Slovakia, and now lives in a village in Austria near the Slovak border. "This photo [at left] was taken in a field near our village," she says. "My mother wanted to cut her hair, so I told her that I have to take a picture of her long hair first, wearing our floral accessories. So we found a few pieces of clothes for her and went off to the field with the sunset. There were bugs everywhere, and our dog wanted to be on the pictures also, as always, so it was quite funny." Everyone loved the pictures, of course. "They got very popular on social media. After that, my mum decided to keep her hair long."



Durisova started her business five years ago, and now, in part thanks to her mother's otherworldly modeling, it's taken off, freeing her to spend more time on photography while the team at her floral workshop busily conjures up enchanted accessories. And she loves the forest: It's an "enormous library full of energy," she says. She's especially taken with the architecture of the forest, the rocks and trees and their shapes, the hills, the different colors and scents. "Its individual images are stuck in me, and I try to transfer them to my creations," she says. It's like dipping leaves in paint and then pressing them on a paper. They can't be fully pressed, but there are obvious abstract and sensory traces."

We asked for more of the story of the fairy in her photos, whose name is Vlasta. "My mum was forty-one when I was born," Durisova says. "She worked as a hairdresser, and I grew up in her hairdressing salon since it was in our house. When I was ten, she did not have enough clients to make a living, so she started working wherever she could. She worked in a factory helping make components or in the supermarket Tesco as a cashier. When my mum was younger she was interested in theater and art, but she didn't carry on with that because she had to feed her five hungry children."

Durisova goes on to talk about her mother's hair: Imagine this modern-day Rapunzel checking out your groceries at the local supermarket! "I remember how she always had short hair and different hairdos; she even dyed her hair red. As a hairdresser, she always had to wear the latest hairstyles. Six or seven years

ago, my mum decided to let her hair grow. She used to say that she couldn't defeat it. Maybe it's strange for some people, but she washes her hair only once in two weeks. She braids her hair and after, she does a bun with her braids. She has a special postiche, which she uses to cover her bun in order to give it a nice look. The only hair product she uses is her special oil, which she applies to the hair ends to keep them healthy and moisturized."

Vlasta and her husband recently celebrated their fifty-year anniversary. For it, Durisova did a photo shoot of her parents on one of the highest peaks of the High Tatras, Lomnický štít. How did her parents help her view the world, we asked. "I was always a scaredy-cat," Durisova says. "My father kept reminding me of all the bad things that could happen until I started to be afraid of everything. Then my mother came, grabbed my hand, and helped me start all over again. She's been my guardian all my life. I always admired how strong and fearless she was. She taught me to be fearless too but cautious, strong but sensitive, to enjoy little things. She is not particular about material things but rather about the atmosphere and quality time with the family. For her, good coffee and company are the best ingredients of a good life. She takes life as it comes and tries to enjoy every day to the fullest."



Find Michaela Durisova on Instagram @magaela_accessories.



THE SECRET TO Wild Plants

by The Wondersmith

Sometimes when you've been doing something for a while, it can be easy to forget where you started. Every now and then, someone comes to me who is excited about working with wild plants but unsure where to begin. My advice: Get to know them first.

I think about the wild plants and fungi I know as a sort of community: There are those that are loud and energetic and greet you as you walk through the door, and there are shy wallflowers that I'm still just barely getting to know after many years spent around them. Each plant that I've worked with deserves a relationship and a conversation. And funnily enough, that's often how my knowledge of them progresses.

It starts with a crush. I start noticing a particular plant more and more, start seeing articles about it or recipes pop up, start thinking about it a lot. I get distracted on hikes or drives and feel called to spend more time around it. I begin with research: Where does this plant grow? What parts are edible? Are there any safety considerations or specific ways it should be processed? Any poisonous look-alikes to be aware of? How do indigenous people use it? What about herbalists?

Then I harvest a bunch and get to know it. Time to develop a more personal relationship: I might brew up an infusion with just that plant and pay attention to the flavors, the smells, the overall feeling, the way it sits in my body. It's always good to start low and slow when introducing a new plant to your body. Just like any other food, there is the possibility of allergy or intolerance. I might then start thinking about flavors: What if I paired this with something acidic? Something sweet? Something salty? (Some of my most successful experiments have come from unexpected combinations, such as candied chanterelle mushrooms or pickled walnuts.) I often make a variety of infusions: vinegar, oil, syrup, and tea, and taste-test each individually before adding them to dishes.

Once I understand the depth of flavor of the plant, I start to compare it with more common food items. This gives me a basis to start brainstorming recipes and researching options. For example, curly dock seed flour is similar to buckwheat, so I might look up buckwheat recipes to adapt. It's at this point that the infatuation really begins. I start thinking about all the wide possibilities for that particular plant. I do a lot of open-ended experimenting in the kitchen, knowing that some tests will be great and others awful. As I become more and more acquainted with each plant, we become comfortable friends, something I can reach for when I'm looking for a particular flavor profile or texture.

And so begins a beautiful intimacy with the wild plants around my home. I understand rose hips as deeply as I understand tomatoes; I know fir tips like I know basil. It's

through curiosity-driven explorations that I've come to develop the knowledge I hold. And just like human friends, I know that I will always have something new to learn from each plant as I continue to explore and converse.

So if you are new to foraging or simply want a way to engage a little bit more deeply, I encourage you to proceed with wonder and curiosity leading the way. Let yourself become infatuated with the plants that you feel drawn to. Explore the depth and beauty they offer. Get to know each one. Then and only then will blending and seasoning with them come as naturally as it does with salt and pepper, as you can see in this wild-flavored picnic pie:

GREEN MAN PICNIC PIE

Many old, nature-based religions saw nature as a representation of the sacred. They believed that all things had a spirit and were part of a greater whole. Shamans and healers would take spiritual journeys into other realms to bring back healing information, given to them by the plants themselves or personifications of them. The Green Man was a symbol of this synchronicity—a communion with the spirit of the wild. He's both frightening and comforting, just like the true wild: a place of both gentleness and danger. He represents the sacred significance of plants.

The imagery of the Green Man is strangely familiar to most of us. This symbol of a man with leaves branching out of his face has appeared in ancient cultures and in religions all over the world and is called by many names. His origins are a mystery, as we do not know how far back and to what cultures he can be traced. Since he's appeared in such a vast array of cultures, many believe he is an archetype of our relationship with nature, of both reliance and union with the natural world. He is a symbol of the underlying life force that runs through all of us.

The Green Man is typically associated with the renewed cycle of growth that comes with spring. He represents both new growth and decay, as he can be seen as either emerging from or being reclaimed by nature. He reminds us of our part in the natural world—that we are part of nature's cycles, not distant from them. Spring is the perfect time to celebrate the lessons he teaches us through a beautiful vegetarian feast of a vegetable-packed picnic pie.

The secret to a successful picnic pie is to precook all the fillings; if there's too many raw ingredients they will release moisture as they cook, causing a soggy bottom and potential leakage. There are a lot of steps to this pie but most are fairly simple—just roasting or sautéing vegetables. Have fun with the decorations and be creative!

So if you are new to foraging or simply want a way to engage a little bit more deeply, I encourage you to proceed with wonder and curiosity leading the way.

GREEN MAN PICNIC PIE

Filling:

3 cloves garlic
2 medium red onions
2 large zucchinis
¼ cup olive oil
4 purple potatoes
3 cups peas
6 cups baby spinach or young nettles
2 cups ricotta cheese
2 tablespoons chopped fresh mint
¼ cup chopped fresh basil
1 lemon
Salt and pepper
2 green olives

Pastry:

4½ cups all-purpose flour
½ cups powdered dried nettle or spinach
1 teaspoon salt
½ teaspoon baking powder
1¼ cup unsalted butter
¾ cup ice-cold water
1 beaten egg, to glaze
3 tablespoons milk

DIRECTIONS

Begin the pastry: Sift the flour, spinach or nettle powder, salt, and baking powder into a large mixing bowl. Cut in the butter and rub until the mixture looks like fine crumbs. Stir in enough cold water to make a firm but not stiff dough. Divide the dough into two equal parts. Lightly knead each half until smooth, then form into a ball and wrap in plastic wrap and chill for 20 minutes.

Meanwhile, prepare your vegetables: Preheat the oven to 400°F. Slice the onions thinly, peel and slice the garlic into thin slices, slice the zucchinis lengthwise, and peel the potatoes and slice them into half-inch slices.

Place the potato slices on a baking tray and drizzle with olive oil and season with salt and pepper. Add the zucchini slices, also drizzled with olive oil and seasoned with salt and pepper. It's best to keep the vegetables separate. Cook until everything is tender, about 20 minutes.

Meanwhile, heat a large pan over medium-high heat. Cook the onions for about 10 minutes, or until caramelized. Add the garlic and sauté until cooked, then remove from heat.

Cook the peas in a small pan over medium heat until they are soft. Roughly mash with a fork and mix in the mint.

Bring a pot of water to boil and dump in the spinach or nettles, then immediately strain it out. Let it cool, then squeeze it dry and chop it up.

Add the ricotta to the spinach and mix well. Grate in lemon zest from one lemon and mix in well. Add the chopped basil and salt and pepper to taste.

After chilling, roll the dough out on a lightly floured table to just over a quarter-inch thick. Press into the cake pan, pushing out any wrinkles or air bubbles. Make sure there are no tears or holes; you can press more dough into any areas that look thin or broken.

Preheat your oven to 350°F with a baking sheet inside. Fill

the pie by first placing a layer of purple potato slices, then half of the ricotta-nettle mixture. Top with the zucchini slices, then the pea puree. Add the red onions. Spread the rest of the ricotta mixture and top with more potato slices. Place two slices on the top of the layer where the cheeks will be, and a smaller slice for the chin. Cut a long triangle out of another piece for the nose. This gives some depth to the decorations in the next step. Make sure to pack the fillings in there well, removing any pockets of air.

Decorate the pie: Roll a thin layer of the remaining dough out and cover the top. You should see some lumps where the nose, chin, and cheeks are. Place the green olives for the eyes, then cut out some thin crescent-shaped pieces of dough to place around them to look like eyelids. Glue in place using a little bit of the milk brushed on. Sculpt a nose out of some more of the dough and place on the pie, poking small air holes inside the nostrils. Again, use milk to attach it. Sculpt lips out of small tapered snakes of dough and attach them as well. Cut leaf shapes out of the remaining dough, rolled fairly thin, and impress veins on them with the back of a butter knife. Glue in place. Make sure none of the leaves are overlapping the pan's edge, otherwise it will be difficult to remove the pan without breaking them off. Once you're happy with your decorations, beat the egg with a tiny bit of water until smooth and brush the top of the pie with the mixture, reserving some for later.

Bake your pie at 350°F on the preheated baking sheet for 30 minutes, then cover the top with tinfoil and cook for another 30 to 40 minutes.

Remove the cooked pie from the oven and leave to cool and firm up for 20 minutes before carefully removing the cooking mold and placing the pie on a cookie sheet. Brush the sides with beaten eggs to glaze, then return it to the oven to bake for another four to five minutes until golden and shiny. Remove and leave to cool, then transfer to a serving plate.

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.

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FROM OUR READERS

*This month we asked our readers:
How do you get lost in the forest?*



Illustrations © Guinevere von Sneeden

After thirty years of teaching middle school, I retired and took a huge, brave leap to a home in Sequoia National Monument and Forest. Surrounded by mountains studded with pine, cedar, and redwoods that echo the sounds of the river, I find myself found by becoming lost in the beauty of living things all around me. —*Gayle Unzueta*



From the very first footsteps into the forest I am lost in her beauty. I'm hypnotized by moss-covered tree stumps, new growth on old branches, and places where my feet sink into the mud that I thought were solid. And don't get me started on all the amazing fungi ...

—*cmjmosaic*



I spend most of my time in the woods in the morning hours. The landscape has just woken up (I'm a photographer), and I'm fresh for a "journey." I follow the thoughts of John Muir in that I do not hike. I saunter, letting nature call to me, invite me to capture its essence in a photograph.

—*alunwyldphotography*

Walking the paths, crossing streams, enjoying the smell of the trees, sunlight streaming through in places, climbing boulders, gentle breezes rustling the trees, scurrying squirrels, darting dragonflies, cawing crows, the occasional deer, and standing by a lake or pond at the edge of the woods. I love being there with no one else around other than my daughter. The quiet of no other human voices or footfalls. —*niki_lawson*

I love indulging the senses in a way you can't anywhere else: listening to birdsong, watching the dappled light play among the branches, smelling fresh earth and tree sap, feeling the cool air on my skin. Just finding peace.

—*Stephanie Yarton*

Just beyond one of the largest oak trees in my nearby forest lies a low grass plain that is always filled with songbirds, woodpeckers, and deer. On my birthday (coincidentally Beltane), I like to bring local sweet flowers and a handful of Jonathan apples for the fauna.

—*solardropper*



I love the concept of *shin rin yoku*, or forest bathing. Walking alone or with my dog, I explore, each step trying to use all my senses, taking turns to focus on each one and what it is experiencing. I think about how much older some of the trees are, what types of messages they are sending to each other underground via their mycelium network, alerting each other to my presence. Eventually, I receive their message as well—we are all one, together, in Gaia, Mother Earth. Just breathe deeply and you will remember.

—*su_sanmc*

Be still. Be quiet. Be patient. Wait. And wait some more. Then suddenly, all that was hidden in plain sight unfolds and blossoms until the magic overwhelms you. —*belindafarage*

I like to bring our dog, Loki. We explore together and take turns leading and finding new things. There is a small meadow in the woods at the ridge by our home, and my fiancé and I spend hours up there watching hawks and looking for little geodes or persimmons. —*othersidecreations*

I sit among the tall pines or gather the earth's medicine, enjoying the soundscapes that my ancestors knew so well. —*Shannon Lezovich*

I love for the forest spirits to guide me. No plan, no thoughts, just my intuition and wherever the forest takes me. It's always an adventure! —*a_fairy_foxy_girl*

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