



Cupid's Arrow



A Guide to Ancient & Modern Day Love Potions

By Avril Harper

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Warning: This book is for information and guidance only and is not intended as a guide to self-prescription for illness and ailments. Anyone suffering genuine problems should consult a medical advisor without delay. The reader should be aware that some herbs, despite having alleged healing benefits, are dangerous if taken to extreme or by anyone suffering specific ailments or allergies. Readers must consult a medical advisor or qualified herbalist before implementing any suggestion contained in this book.



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A Guide to Ancient and Modern Day Love Potions

Introduction	5
Weird and Wonderful	7
Animal Lotions and Potions	7
Like Makes Like	8
Plants	9
Foods and Culinary Delights	10
Aphrodisiac Almanac	11
Agrimony	
Alcohol	
Alfalfa	
Angelica	
Aniseed	
Asparagus	
Cardamom	
Caviar	
Celery	
Chickpeas	
Chili	
Chocolate	
Clove	
Coriander	
Damiana	
Fennel	
Fenugreek	
Fo-Ti	
Garlic	
Ginger	
Ginkgo	
Ginseng	
Gow Kee	
Honey	
Iris	
Jasmine	
Mandrake	
Musk	
Mustard	
Nutmeg	
Origano	



CUPID'S ARROW



Pepper
Potato
Rose
Rosemary
Royal Jelly
Saffron
Salep
Salt
Sarsparilla
Savory
Saw Palmetto
Sea Foods
Thyme
Valerian
Vanilla
Yohimbe



Introduction

Since life began man has searched for ways to increase his own pleasure of sex and to make himself irresistible to lovers. Over the centuries a wealth of lotions and potions has developed as the perfect solution to increasing libido, stimulating the sexual organs and increasing man's attraction to the opposite sex.

- "1. A drug or agent that arouses or increases sexual responses.*
- 2. Causing or increasing sexual desire."*

Academic Press Dictionary of Science and Technology.

'Aphrodisiac' - also called 'love potion' - describes anything that increases libido and stimulates the sexual organs, ranging from simple herbs and natural substances, to many other dubious techniques, some dangerous in the extreme. Yet aphrodisiacs have uses other than to make sex more enjoyable and in some parts of the world where marriages are arranged between parties who may never previously meet, parents often administer them in the hope of attracting love and romance to the relationship.

For example, in arranged marriages between Hindus, a bowl of honey is often placed beside the couple. Honey has an acclaimed place in Indian mythology, and a chain of bees forms the bowstring of Kama, the Indian God of Love.

The word 'honeymoon' itself derives from an ancient English tradition where newlyweds ate only honey and drank mead - made from honey - during the early weeks of the marriage.

Even today, Greek mothers-in-law feed honey to a new bride to ensure only sweet words pass her lips during marriage.

Aphrodisiacs also overcome low libido and impotence as highlighted here in an excerpt from Martin Gardner's *Fads & Fallacies in the Name of Science*: "Methods for overcoming impotence have likewise been the object of considerable quasi-scientific investigation.

An authority can be found for almost every folk belief about the sexually stimulating qualities of certain foods - in most cases, foods of an uncommon variety which are somehow associated with sex.



Eggs and caviar (fish eggs), for example; or foods, which suggest or resemble the sexual organs (asparagus, celery, onions, clams, oysters, and so forth). Hundreds of quack medicines and devices have been devoted to stimulating potency.

Named after Aphrodite, the Greek goddess of love, the earliest known 'erotic potions' were discovered in an Egyptian scroll some 4,000 years old.

In London, in the mid-eighteenth century, John Graham, O.W.L. (the initials stood for 'Oh, Wonderful Love!') made a fortune charging people for the privilege of sleeping on his 'celestial bed'. The bed had curious coils attached to it, soft music was played, incense burned, and colored lights bathed the sleeper."

Although, historically, aphrodisiacs are drugs like Spanish Fly and L.S.D., alcohol, animal glands, and countless foods, herbs and spices, recently the term has come to describe most things that are sexually stimulating, from books and movies, to pornographic magazines and erotic dancing, cosmetic surgery.

An immense number of things are believed to stimulate sexuality, as was shown in the *Dictionary of Aphrodisiacs*, published in the early 1960s which included over 250 pages of tightly-packed entries.

Even high-level research has been carried out into love potions including one study that was outlined in *Herbal Love Potions* by William H. Lee and Lynn Lee, which describes a study carried out in 1968 by U.S. Dr. W. Miller. The study involved a drug called Afrodex, formed from the base of an evergreen tree native to Cameroon in Africa, which has traditionally been used in anesthetics and love potions. Results of traditional use of the bark have been phenomenal, certainly not illusory.

The research involved a double blind test performed on a group of twenty-one men who for four weeks were given a placebo containing no active ingredients. The placebo tasted exactly like Afrodex, however, which was administered for four subsequent weeks. The same test was carried out on another group of men, in this case taking Afrodex for four weeks, followed by the placebo for another four weeks. Neither patients nor supervisors knew which man was undergoing whatever treatment.

Before the study, patients reported an average of three erections and three orgasms a week, then after four weeks of taking placebo drugs many reported better sexual activity, suggesting the mind is paying a powerful role, initially suggesting a placebo effect. However, during the period the same patients were on Afrodex their sexual activity increased some sixteen times higher than before the study!!



Some even suggest the most promising aphrodisiacs bear resemblance in shape to the human reproductive system, such as onions, celery, even sausages. Others say anything can make sex more pleasurable and longer lasting if the individual has faith, giving credence to placebo substances.

Some say love potions act by diminishing sexual inhibitions, as may be said for limited alcohol intake, and some herbs which are believed to work on areas of the brain which are associated with sexual desire and responsiveness.

Yet still the question is asked: Do aphrodisiacs really work? We think they do. Some of them. Some of the time. If you know what to look for. This book makes sure you do.

**When asked what she wore in bed to make her so irresistible to men, screen goddess Marilyn Monroe said "Chanel No. 5."
Yes, perfume has erotic qualities, too.**

Weird and Wonderful

Some truly amazing substances have been taken as love potions over the years, many very dangerous, and others unlikely to have any effect. In Victorian times, gentlemen who felt their sexual powers waning ate prairie oysters, being bulls' testicles, and rich in male sex hormones. Of many weird substances, experts say this is one that may indeed have worked.

Unlike another late 19th-century love potion, namely rat poison, which if taken in tiny, tiny doses would have irritated the sexual organs and created a pleasurable feeling. Too much, however, and the dose was fatal.

Like rat poison, but somewhat less dangerous, pepper mixed with gin is believed to contain irritating oils that pass through the urinary system, creating a burning sensation to the genitals that some find stimulating. Or extremely painful if, like rat poison, the dose is too high.

Animal Lotions and Potions

Many weird and wonderful animal preparations have been used over the centuries, including a mediaeval recipe involving black ants, which were dried and consumed mixed with olive oil. Lizards were used by early Arabs and Europeans who, having dried, pulverized and mixed the powder with sweet wine, professed it the finest of all love potions. Throughout Eastern Asia, snake blood was thought to benefit men whose



prowess was waning and, even today, some Asian restaurants serve snake blood as an alleged aphrodisiac.

The Perfumed Garden offered even more outrageous recipes to increase the pleasure and duration of sex, including bile of jackal which was rubbed over the penis and vulva, and asses' milk designed to be massaged into the penis.

Yet such claims are not restricted to ancient times. Even today in some Asian countries, gallstones are thought to be a potent aphrodisiac with an immense market value. As recently as March 1997, Mary Claire Stevens, a meat-packing plant food inspector in Minnesota, USA, was charged with felony theft accused of taking gallstones from the Long Prairies Packing Plant to sell on the international market!

Today's other alleged animal-derived aphrodisiacs include shark fins and reindeer antlers, rhino horns, Spanish fly, and Chan Su, the latter a traditional Chinese drug made from the skin of a toad. Despite the harsh cruelty of many such applications, not all involve danger or death to the animal. For example, reindeer antlers are gathered having been shed freely in the wilderness of Canada, Finland, Norway and Sweden, and imported to Japan where they are primarily used.

Sadly, in past times, antlers from live reindeers, causing their death, led to the Tibet Red Deer being certified as extinct by the World Conservation Union, although a tiny herd discovered recently in Tibet is now under close guard by conservationists.

The use of rhino horns (and tiger bones) for medical purposes was declared illegal by the State Council of the People's Republic of China in May 1993, although it appears minimal clandestine trade continues with prices suitably inflated. In Eastern Asia tiger bones, fat, liver and penis are among the most highly prized aphrodisiacs, and affordable only by the very rich or extremely desperate male! In Taiwan and South Korea a bowl of tiger penis soup will set you back about \$350 and will allegedly let you make love like a tiger, meaning the whole thing should be over in thirty seconds!

Like Makes Like

Under the so-called 'Doctrine of Similarities', some alleged aphrodisiacs resemble various parts of the human body, leading early man to think they have other human attributes, too. For example, mandrake and ginseng are man-shaped, while other substances resemble the penis (rhinoceros horn, celery, asparagus), or testicles, as may be said for onions, oysters and clams.



Hedgerow plant, 'Lord and Ladies', looking rather long and spindly, has another name, 'Cuckoo-Pint - *Cucu* for lively and *pintle* meaning penis - suggesting it has aphrodisiacal qualities, despite the plant being highly poisonous while flowering!

Dr. David Reuben explains this 'like makes like' proposition in *Everything You Always Wanted to Know about Sex* alleging: "The mind has such a dominant effect on sexual performance that often if a person thinks a remedy works, it does. Ginseng is typical. The most powerful form, according to the Chinese, is the variety in which the whole root is shaped like a little man."

Plants

Countless plants have been used in love potions since time immemorial.

Early gypsies made a love potion from the whole elecampagne plant mashed and added to a handful each of fennel and vervain leaves and a pinch of grated ginger.

The mixture is placed in a warm oven and left to dry and is later ground into powder. A pinch of the powder added to hot mulled wine guarantees total passion for those who drink it.

Periwinkle is another centuries-old favorite for love potions, having been used in the thirteenth century as an additive to food to bring lasting joy to married couples.

Venus, the planet associated with the Italian goddess of love and beauty, has its own set of herbs believed to stimulate feelings of love and desire, making them alleged love potions: coltsfoot, marshmallow, mint, plantain, thyme, vervain and yarrow. Teas made from any of these herbs, sipped before sex, are thought to be powerful sexual stimulants.

For more than 2,000 years Chinese love potions have included the dried buds of the clove tree while early Native Americans, renowned for medicinal use of herbs and spices, made love potions from black walnut kernels and cotton plant seeds, usually adding the crushed powder to liquid and consuming it as a drink. Their descendants prefer hashish, the dried leaves and flowers of hemp, which is often dried for smoking or sprinkled on food.

Since ancient times spices have been used to hide signs of decayed foods and to make meals more appetizing. Given that many are also noted aphrodisiacs, perhaps it's true what they say about the way to a man's heart being through his stomach? Read on to find out.



Foods and Culinary Delights

Many foods are alleged aphrodisiacs and there is an undeniable link between certain foods and an ensuing night of passion! So say many writers on the subject, backed by romantic novelists, poets and others whose words are based on life experience.

Oysters are the most commonly alleged culinary aphrodisiac, being rich in zinc, and a mineral known to increase sperm count and testosterone levels in infertile males. But oysters are far too costly for the average person who may well discover equal benefits from serving eels, squid and octopus, these being the centuries-old choice in Mediterranean countries.

In folk medicine asparagus and artichokes have much the same effect at far less cost, as do beans, celery, parsnips and lentils. Chinese herbalists particularly recommend asparagus, being rich in steroidal glycosides that may affect hormone production and stimulate the sex drive.

The following introduction to common foods and herbs to add to your late evening meal will prove the validity of that statement.



Aphrodisiac Almanac

Agrimony

Agrimony is believed to benefit the entire system and to treat debility and low libido. It is a particular favorite of Native Americans who also use it for treating bowel complaints and simple diarrhea.

The plant has a long and fascinating history as a medicinal herb, of which John Parkinson says in *Theatre of Plants*, 1640: "made with wine, it is good against the sting and biting of serpents." More recently, and bearing far more relation to the plant's reputation as a potent love potion, Harold Ward says in *Herbal Manual* (1936): "Agrimony is an old remedy for debility, as it gives tone to the whole system."

Use: Make a tea by adding a pint of boiling water to one ounce of the dried herb and leave to stand for five minutes before straining and serving. A little honey or pure maple syrup can be added to improve the taste.

Alcohol

Even Shakespeare was moved by love potions and their effect on sexual activity, in particular alcohol which the Bard suggested may be a powerful aphrodisiac in moderation.

In excess 'brewers' droop' is more likely. In *Macbeth* the porter advises: "And drink, sir, is a great provoker of three things - nose painting, sleep and urine. Lechery, sir, it provokes and unprovokes; it provokes the desire, but it takes away the performance." In short, too much alcohol has the opposite effect, being more likely to send the individual into a deep sleep than energize his lovemaking skills.

In moderation, however, most experts suggest alcohol can induce feelings of well being and make the body eager for sex. Champagne is probably most effective, generating a feeling of warmth that bathes the entire body, including the erogenous zones. As David Reuben says in *'Everything You Always Wanted to Know about Sex'*: "Alcohol calms *all* fears, including the dozens of anxieties surrounding sex. Alcohol is a sexual lubricant in another way. It surrounds everything with a nice glow. So you don't do well - who cares? Who remembers?"



Although champagne is considered the best liquid love potion, most forms of alcohol reduce inhibition and lower barriers to lovemaking, except when consumed to excess. A bottle of wine with a meal, or a few glasses of gin before bed might be just as acceptable, and less expensive than champers!

Alfalfa

Alfalfa is one of the oldest healing and aphrodisiacal herbs, being used by the ancient Arabs who dubbed it 'Father of all foods'. Sixteenth-century herbalist Gerard prescribed it for upset stomachs and other digestive disorders and throughout the world it is used as a reliable treatment during convalescence. Organic salts contained in alfalfa are among the richest known and the leaves, the medicinal part, are used to treat numerous conditions, being a good overall tonic.

Ancient and modern athletes used alfalfa for increased energy and endurance, explaining why it offers the same benefits during the lovemaking process.

Use: Make a tea or juice by adding one teaspoonful of the dried leaves to a cupful of boiling water. Stir well and leave to stand for a couple of minutes before straining and drinking warm as tea or cold as a juice.

Angelica

The root is used to treat heart defects, hence the reason it may also be a powerful sexual stimulant for men and women, with seemingly greater effects on women. Long ago angelica was given to women who were frigid, again testifying to its long-standing quality as a powerful aphrodisiac. The plant is said to be named after the Archangel Raphael who appeared in a vision to a tenth-century monk, during which he revealed the plant as a cure for the plague.

Today the crushed root is added to liqueur to provide taste and increase passion and durability in lovemaking.

Use: Make a tea from one ounce of the seed or herb steeped in a pint of boiling water left to stand until cool. Take in wineglassful doses half an hour or so before lovemaking.

Aniseed

Aniseed - anise seed - was used by the early Egyptians for culinary and medicinal purposes while in ancient Rome it was made into tea to sweeten the breath and was also



considered a potent aphrodisiac. Soaked in milk the herb makes a tasty tea which helps induce sound sleep.

Use: Make a tea by adding one teaspoonful of the dried herb to a cupful of hot milk or boiling water and leave to stand for a few minutes before straining and drinking warm or cold as a juice. Take in wineglassful doses half an hour or so before lovemaking.

Asparagus

Asparagus, being commonly used as an everyday food, also has a long reputation as a powerful love potion. Asparagus wine is particularly stimulating, so too the fresh chopped variety added to salad or other main meals taken just before retiring.

Cardamom

The powdered seeds, boiled in milk, are used worldwide as a treatment for impotence and premature ejaculation, adding to the plant's reputation as a potent aphrodisiac.

Use: Take a teaspoonful of crushed seeds and grind to a powder. Add boiling milk and a teaspoonful of honey for a tasty pre-bedtime drink.

Warning: Oddly, over-use of the herb can lead to impotency, so be very, very careful indeed and consider this for irregular use only.

Caviar

Although costly, sturgeon eggs contain lots of vitamins and are believed to have aphrodisiac qualities, especially when taken with vodka. Easily available, but very costly, caviar might be considered if finances and the occasion warrants it! If nothing else, the fact you have invested so highly to please your loved one should attract a positive response!

Celery

An early proverb goes: "If women knew what celery did to men, they would go and get some from Paris to Rome." The plant was dedicated to Pluto, Roman god of sex, and is believed to have greater effect on men than women. In mediaeval times celery was placed under a woman's bed to increase her chances of bearing male children. American Indians have long used oil from the seed for internal and external use, alleging it to be one of the most potent of all love potions.



The main parts used in medicine are root and seeds, which have featured in folk medicine for thousands of years, even in pre-Biblical times.

Use: Add one teaspoonful of celery - seed or root - to each cupful of boiling water. Stir and leave to stand in a teapot for a few minutes. Strain and serve hot or cold half an hour or so before lovemaking.

Warning: The treatment is not suitable for anyone suffering from kidney disease and must be avoided during pregnancy since it is believed the plant may induce abortion.

Chickpeas

The Romans fed chickpeas to stallions to help them perform well. Today men take them to increase libido and stimulate the sexual organs! Ask your herbalist to recommend a suitable preparation and use sprinkled lightly on food.

Chili

Also known as 'Cayenne Pepper', chili contains inordinately high amounts of vitamin C and is a claimed aphrodisiac when crushed and taken in drinks or sprinkled over food.

Chocolate

"Better than sex" you'll hear some men and women say of chocolate, and certainly the evidence suggests some substance in chocolate may stimulate the pleasure centers of the brain and mimic the enjoyment of sex. So says Dr. George Armelagos, anthropologist at the University of Florida and author of *Consuming Passions*. However, he qualifies this somewhat, suggesting: "Almost any food has the properties of an aphrodisiac because the very act of eating causes an increase in the pulse rate and the blood pressure, raising body temperature and sometimes even producing sweating - changes that occur with orgasm." However, it may be your love enjoys chocolate for its own sake, and may warm to you for providing it.

Clove

Clove is the dried flower bud of *Jambosa Caryophyllus* and has wide applications in food and perfumes. It is considered a most powerful aphrodisiac helping reduce fatigue and giving the body energy and strength.



The plant was used in love potions as early as the 3rd century, B.C. in China and some parts of Asia. Much later, in Europe, the Danish mediaeval herbalist, H. Harpenstreng said of cloves, they: "maketh the man desire the woman." In 1642, the Swedish herbalist Anders Mansson Rydaholm wrote: "If a man loses his ability, he should stay sober and drink milke spiced with 5 grammes of cloves. This will fortify him and make him desire his wife."

Use: Take two or three drops or clove in a glass of honey water. Take first thing in the morning and last thing at night.

Coriander

The dried seed of coriander has a euphoric effect and as a love potion is traditionally administered in wine. Ask your herbalist to recommend a suitable preparation for you.

Use: The crushed seed can be added to wine or sprinkled lightly over food. Alternatively, make a tea by adding a teaspoonful of the crushed seed to a cupful of boiling water and leave until properly brewed. Strain and serve hot as tea or leave to cool as a juice.

Damiana

Of all alleged aphrodisiacal herbs, damiana is perhaps the most credible, having been used for centuries by American Indians as a tonic for waging war as well as promoting more active sex. Even today, Native Americans consider damiana a powerful treatment for impotence and low libido, especially resulting from psychological or emotional problems. In *Indian Herbalogy of North America*, Alma Hutchens says: "The use, or administration, should be taken with care, as the claims are justified by many who know of its influence. In this case, for those who ever will, please remember that when the system is run down, overworked, subject to nervous tensions, etc., damiana often stimulates beyond the limit of our safe and healthy resources, and encouragement beyond our natural energy levels may have ill effect on the heart."

Testifying to its powers as a potent aphrodisiac, Dr. W. H. Myers of Philadelphia wrote: "I have given it quite an extensive trial in my practice, and as a result I find that in cases of partial or other sexual debility, its success is universal. I pronounce it the most effective and only remedy that in my hands had a successful result in all cases." (Source: *Indian Herbalogy of North America*). More recently, in *Off-the-Shelf Natural Health: How to Use Herbs and Nutrients to Stay Well*, author Mark Mayell says damiana and yohimbe: "... are among



the few herbs that may truly deserve to be called aphrodisiacs, in that they increase sexual desire, enhance sexual pleasure and stimulate sexual performance.

Damiana grows in desert areas around the Mexican Gulf and in some parts of South America. The medicinal part, the sun-dried leaves, can be powdered and added to milk or wine and taken as a supposedly powerful love potion which has the effect of slight irritation on the urinary tract, thereby stimulating the sexual organs. The plant may also contain some alkaloids that increase sensitivity of male and female sexual organs. Some herbalists believe damiana can also increase sperm count and strengthen the male sex organs.

Use: Make a tea by adding one or two 400 mg capsules to a cupful of boiling water and take about one hour before sex.

Fennel

A teaspoonful of crushed fennel each day keeps the body healthy and helps increase energy and sexual prowess. Roman soldiers chewed fennel on long marches when they were unable to stop for food, considering it one of the finest foods for increasing strength and endurance, hence adding to its credibility as a long-standing powerful love potion.

Use: Add one teaspoonful of dried seeds to each cupful of boiling water and leave to stand in a teapot until properly brewed. Strain and leave to cool.

Take as tea or juice about half an hour before making love.

Fenugreek

According to the 'Doctrine of Similarities', because the pod resembles a goat's antlers which are themselves an alleged aphrodisiac, the plant may be a remedy for impotence. Various saponins contained in fenugreek are believed to help the production of some sex hormones.

Use: Add one teaspoonful of seed to a cupful of boiling water and leave to stand until fully brewed. Strain and take warm as tea or cold as juice about half an hour before retiring.

Warning: Not to be taken during pregnancy.



Fo-Ti

This is one of the most widely used medicinal herbs in China where it is credited as a powerful rejuvenating tonic that also benefits the sexual system and boosts low libido. The plant is believed to have been named after an elderly Chinese man who, childless and impotent, was prescribed the weed some time in his fifties. Legend has it he lived to be 130, up to which time he fathered many children.

Use: The herb is sold dried as powder, tablets or capsules, or as concentrated drops, tinctures and extracts. Drops are the easiest to take and should not exceed 2 dropperfuls per day.

Garlic

Garlic has a long history as a potent aphrodisiac, and was written of by ancient Greek philosopher, Pliny, who mixed garlic with wine professing it a powerful sexual stimulant. The plant belongs to the same genus as another noted aphrodisiac, famed for its 'like makes like' resemblance to the human testicles, namely the onion. Garlic was used as an aphrodisiac by the early Egyptians, as well as the ancient Greeks and Romans. As late as 1961, the Swedish chemist Bergmark suggests onion is perfectly suited to men and women because it contains compounds related to sex hormones.

Use: Treatment is taken in drinks and food and is sometimes applied externally to the penis. David Berman, a professor of the USC Medical School, suggests a few cloves of garlic, crushed and mixed with lard, can bring renewed vigor when rubbed over the unwilling male sexual organ.

Ginger

Early herbalist Jerome Cardan wrote of ginger "It helps a lustful nature" and for countless centuries ginger has been used in love potions, mainly for its spicy stimulating effects. Like pepper and mustard, taken to excess, ginger can irritate the sexual organs, creating a tingling sensation that some people enjoy and others find painful.

Throughout time, ginger has been used as a powerful aphrodisiac, being known to ancient writers Pliny and Avicenna, who believed it increased energy and endurance, for athletes, and couples making love. Herbalist Ellingwood summed up the role of ginger saying: "This agent is mentioned in but few therapeutic works, although it occupies an important place, and should not be neglected. It is a profound and immediate stimulant, an active diaphoretic, an anodyne in gastric and intestinal pain, and a sedative to an irritated and



overwrought system when there is extreme exhaustion.” Many species of ginger exist, according to habitat. The root is the main part used in medicine to treat minor and longer-lasting ailments. The plant is also thought to have aphrodisiacal qualities even for the elderly.

The Perfumed Garden favors the use of ginger externally and as an addition to food and drink. One recipe uses a mixture of powdered ginger and oil of lilac which are rubbed into the abdomen and scrotum of the unwilling male. An alternative is to rub a tiny amount of the lotion over the penis before coitus. It's said the warm tingling feeling benefits the female more than the male, as long as the treatment is subtle!

Use: Indian herbology recommends a mixture of ginger juice and honey as a twice daily treatment for impotence and low libido.

Make a tea by adding the crushed root, amount according to taste, to a cupful of boiling water. Leave to brew and strain before serving hot as tea or leaving to cool as juice.

Juice from the crushed root can be added to bathwater or used to massage the body just before lovemaking.

Warning: In excess ginger can irritate the skin and digestive tract.

Ginkgo

Ginkgo is an ancient tree and traditional Chinese medicinal herb that has only recently come to prominence throughout the world. Medicinally, it is believed to strengthen and rejuvenate the body and promote strenuous lovemaking. A clinical study reported in the *Journal of Urology* in 1989 suggested the herb can relieve impotence caused by insufficient blood flow to the penis. Treating sixty patients suffering from erectile dysfunction over a period of twelve to eighteen months it was shown the plant was effective in about fifty per cent of cases and that some patients later regained full potency.

Use: The herb can be purchased from health food shops and herbalists in capsules, drops and tinctures. Tea can be made up to the maximum prescribed intake or the herb can be taken in tablet or capsule form as purchased.

Ginseng

Ginseng is one of the most widely accepted of all love potions, mainly because of its likeness to the human body. Formed like a little man, experts suggest the plant was



assumed to have mortal attributes, much the same as mandrake that also resembles the human torso.

The plant grows in China and other tropical and temperate regions. A close relative, American ginseng, grows in the eastern United States. The plant has been attributed with fantastic healing and restorative qualities, including helping to improve sexual performance even in later life.

As a potent aphrodisiac ginseng was mentioned in the ancient medical book of India, *The Atherva Veda* which states: “seed that is poured into the female that forsooth is the way to bring forth a son the strength of the horse, the mule, the goat and the ram, moreover, the strength of the bull (ginseng) bestows on him This herb will make thee so full of lusty strength that thou shalt, when thou art excited, exhale heat as a thing on fire.”

More recently, clinical trials in rats fed ginseng showed an improvement in duration of mating and suggested animals receiving the treatment performed more frequently.

In humans, there is marked evidence to suggest ginseng increases energy and reduces fatigue. Recent studies showed soldiers given ginseng ran faster for longer, while night-shift workers also worked longer without suffering tiredness.

Native Americans use the local variety as a treatment for nausea and vomiting, and as a potent love potion. They recommended it to early settlers who abandoned their man-made drugs in favor of plant medicines, and adopted ginseng as a powerful stimulant and aphrodisiac.

Another eminent source, Dr. Raymond Bernard, ABMA, Ph.D., says: “The term ‘aphrodisiac’ should not be misunderstood, and we must differentiate between aphrodisiacal drugs which produce their effects by irritation of the sexual centers and herbs like ginseng which regenerate and rebuild the vitality but do not act by mere stimulation or irritation.” Modern-day Chinese herbalists say ginseng gives off organic radioactive rays resembling the gartwitch rays of onions that stimulate vital processes in living cells.

Modern experts agree, as does David Reuben, acclaimed author of *Everything you Always Wanted to Know about Sex* who, when considering love potions says: “There is however one Chinese remedy that may have something in it. In Chinese it is known as *goo-lai-sam* - we call it ginseng. Prepared according to a strict recipe, it has many users who vouch for its effectiveness.”



Use: Ginseng comes in a variety of forms, from whole root to extracts and dried as powder or granules. Special teas can be purchased from health food suppliers and herbalists.

To make your own tea, take 3 oz of ginseng powder, add 1 oz of honey and 60 drops of wintergreen. Blend and add one teaspoonful of the mixture to a cupful of boiling water and take just before coitus.

Gow Kee

Also known as Chu Chi and Box Thorn, this is a well-known Chinese herbal medicine for low libido and to increase male endurance during intercourse.

Use: Take 25 grammes of Gow Kee and 25 grammes of finely chopped ginger boiled in 500 ml of water until the volume of water reduces to one third. Strain and leave to cool and take in wineglassful doses before intercourse.

Honey

Honey has always been considered a powerful aphrodisiac. Veteran romantic Barbara Cartland thought honey one of the finest foods, helping to benefit most human functions, including libido. In *The Magic Of Honey* Dame Barbara says: "In honey there is contained, I am convinced, the elixir of life. This is the reason why honey is so stimulating to sex, and it is also responsible for its fantastic healing properties."

As Cartland says, attitude, not biological age, determines whether people remain sexually active throughout their adult lives. The greatest enemy is worry, she claims, alleging: "There is nothing more ageing than worry, nothing which destroys youth quicker than what is called nerves." Honey, according to the great lady, is the finest of all nerve foods.

Iris

Crushed to a powder, the rhizome is often added to alcohol, notably wine, to produce a potent aphrodisiac for men and women.

Use: Take one litre of dry white wine and add a handful of crushed iris rhizomes. Leave to infuse and filter. Add six fresh almonds that have been ground to powder. Re-bottle and take in wineglassful doses before retiring for the night.



Jasmine

Some Hindus consider this a particularly powerful aphrodisiac, taking the crushed petals mixed with liqueur. The seeds are in fact poisonous and should be treated with caution. However, the oil is particularly stimulating especially used to massage the erogenous zones!

Mandrake

The plant has a long history as a powerful aphrodisiac, having been used by the Assyro-Babylonians and the ancient Egyptians. Like ginseng, the plant resembles the human form and is often attributed with human qualities, making it an acceptable panacea for all problems pertaining to sex. In fact, the plant is toxic, being heavy in belladonna alkaloids and other powerful drugs which can have dire consequences if taken to excess. Throughout the centuries the plant has been used either fresh as a tea or juice or dried and worn as a charm. For potions the fruit can be used as well as the root. Although its aphrodisiacal qualities are ill defined, evidence suggests the root may lower inhibition surrounding the sexual act, given that it has allegedly been used as a truth drug during interrogations of prisoners of war.

Musk

Musk comes from the gland of a small deer native to South-eastern Asia and is a widely accepted folk remedy for many ailments, including epilepsy, whooping cough, typhoid fever and pneumonia. It is also a noted aphrodisiac being normally used crushed and sprinkled over food. However, too much can cause light-headedness and can even be detrimental to lovemaking.

However, the perfume by the same name is more accessible and less costly and can lead to an atmosphere conducive to sex.

Mustard

Mustard has been used throughout the centuries, mixed with honey, as a powerful aphrodisiac, likely to irritate and cause a burning sensation in the urinary organs that some people find stimulating.

Use: Mustard, added to bathwater creates a warm stimulating atmosphere which is conducive to sex especially where partners bathe together.



The herb can be added to most meals and some drinks. It is particularly stimulating added to red wine and other heady forms of alcohol.

Nutmeg

Nutmeg is believed to benefit men more than women and is frequently served grated and sprinkled over food and drink. Some say nutmeg is the only 'legal hallucinogenic' but used to excess it can have serious side effects.

According to the Indian herbalist H. K. Bakhru, nutmeg mixed with honey and a half-boiled egg will prolong the duration of the sexual act if taken half an hour or so before lovemaking.

Use: Sprinkle nutmeg over hot mulled red wine for a particularly powerful kick.

Origano

Taken as tea the herb has a tantalising bite and is a believed aphrodisiac being available in health food shops and from herbalists. A variety of alternatives are available including powdered, capsules and tablets.

Pepper

In moderation pepper has been used as a stimulant for the sexual organs due to its slightly burning qualities. Any more and excruciating pain can occur instead.

The plant's reputation as an aphrodisiac dates from ancient times, when it was used by Egyptians, Greeks and Romans. According to *The Perfumed Garden*, you should: "Masticate a little pepper or cardamom-grains of the large species; put a certain quantity of it upon the head of your member and then go to work. This will produce for you, as well as for the woman, a matchless enjoyment."

The same source even suggests the penis can be increased in size by the application of powdered pepper mixed with honey and dried ginger rubbed vigorously up and down the length of the penis, but avoiding internal application.

Use: Take a glass of milk with six crushed peppers and four ground almonds just before retiring for the night.



Potato

A seemingly unlikely love potion, Shakespeare suggests potatoes may have some aphrodisiacal benefits in *Merry Wives of Windsor* and, more recently, an Englishman suggested Ireland's prodigious reproduction rate must be due to nationals' above average consumption of potatoes!

In reality, potato peels can sometimes reach a considerable level of alkaloid content which can induce physiological benefits and may lie behind the current fad of serving deep fried potato peelings to prospective lovers. Cheap to buy, easy to make! Try it!

Rose

Rose petals are used extensively in aromatherapy to help reduce inhibitions surrounding the lovemaking process. Throughout the ages the plant has been considered to benefit all patients suffering from anxiety and nerves.

According to Danial Ryman in *Aromatherapy: The Encyclopedia of Plants and Oils and How They Help You*: "Rose essential oil is good for people with a very nervous disposition. It seems to work on the nervous system, calming the patient and is better received by women than men. Massage an oil into the solar plexus; apply a diluted oil after a bath and drink rose petal infusions."

Use: Apply rose oil to the bath before lovemaking or use it to massage the erogenous zones to calm nerves and increase excitement.

A tea can be made from a handful of freshly crushed rose petals added to a cupful of boiling water and left to stand until properly brewed. Strain and take warm as tea or leave to cool as juice. Drink in wineglassful doses half an hour or so before lovemaking.

Rosemary

The herb is taken in folk medicine for many ailments focusing on nerve centres and poor blood circulation. Although in olden days it was taken as an aid to better memory, texts show it was also considered a powerful love potion. One writer, Mme. De Sevigne said of rosemary water: "I use it every day to become inebriated, I always have some handy."

Use: Add a handful of crushed leaves to a bottle of dry white wine and leave to infuse for one week. Take in wineglassful doses just before lovemaking.



Royal Jelly

Royal Jelly is made by worker bees and fed to queen bees only, keeping them strong and fertile. The substance is packed with vitamin B, and other essential substances which help fortify and stimulate the sexual glands.

Evidence suggests Royal Jelly may also help increase libido in later years. Buy from chemists, herbalists and beauty counters. Although quite expensive, royal jelly is empowered with vital elements known to promote beauty, energy and youth, allegedly making it an aphrodisiac for people of all ages.

Saffron

Taken to excess, saffron creates uncontrollable giggling, meaning it may also help lower inhibition and reduce frigidity.

The plant is believed to make the erogenous zones more sensitive and to have a hormone-like effect. The bitter taste of picrocrocini according to *Merck's Index*: "exerts sex-determining influences."

Use: Saffron is the key ingredient in many love potions and erotic dishes. The powdered herb can be used in teas and juices or sprinkled lightly over food. Ask your herbalist to prescribe something suitable for you.

Salep

This is the name given to the parboiled dried root of several species of the orchid family. The similarity between the roots and testicles gives rise to the plant's reputation as a powerful aphrodisiac. In fact, the name derives from the Arab 'khusa ath-tha'lab' meaning fox testicles.

Use: A classical preparation is to boil milk with salep and cinnamon, cloves and ginger and to drink while warm.

Salt

Salt taken from the mines of Sindh was considered a powerful aphrodisiac and heart tonic and it may be common table salt remains one of the finest additives for food designed to increase romantic fervour.



Sarsparilla

This is the collective name for various species growing in Mexico, Jamaica, Honduras and Ecuador. The plants are large climbing or trailing vines, having thick underground stems which are collected and dried in the sun and used for medicinal and culinary purposes. Enquire about supplies from local herbalists.

Savory

Nicknamed 'the herb of happiness', savory is believed to be more beneficial to men than women. The plant is available from herbalists and from many herbal suppliers specialising in food additives, and can be made into tea or juice or sprinkled lightly over food. Ask your herbalist to recommend a suitable preparation.

Saw Palmetto

The herb is a particular favourite of Native Americans who use it as a sedative, diuretic, expectorant, tonic and nutritive. Like many aboriginal tribes they also believe it cures impotency as well as being a powerful aphrodisiac. Herbalists still prescribe the herb for 'honeymoon cystitis', the result of excessive sexual activity among newlyweds and in Germany saw palmetto goes into many proprietary drugs for problems of the prostate.

Use: Make a tea or juice from the crushed berries with hot or cold water added to taste. Strain and take hot or cold half an hour or so before lovemaking.

The herb is also sold as tablets, concentrated drops, extracts and tinctures and can be purchased from health food suppliers and herbalists.

Sea Foods

Many 'poor man's' alternatives to oysters are claimed aphrodisiacs, including eels, squid and octopus. Try dinner at a seafood restaurant to bring passion to the evening's events!

Thyme

Thyme is a common folk remedy for nerves which helps induce relaxation and lower resistance to sex. The whole plant has been used as an aphrodisiac, even by the ancients, including Culpeper who wrote: "It is under the dominion of Venus and under the sign of Aries and therefore chiefly appropriate to the head".



Like fellow early herbalists, Culpeper administered the plant as a cure for shyness and inhibitions.

Use: Add a handful of crushed seeds to a cupful of boiling water. Leave to cool and take as a soothing drink before retiring for the night.

Valerian

Valerian is used extensively as a sedative and may reduce inhibitions pertaining to sex. However a German herbal book from the 14th century suggests it may have more powerful effects, translated: "Take valerian in the mouth and kiss anybody you want. In that way you will win love."

More recently Earl Mindell, author of several books on alternative medicines, describes the plant as "The valium of the nineteenth century."

Valerian may indeed help reduce shyness and anxiety surrounding sex, being an effective tranquilliser which was used extensively during the Blitz in England during World War II and being prescribed today as a sedative, as well as to reduce muscle spasms and help relieve melancholy.

Use: Add a handful each of valerian and ginger juice to bathwater, especially for couples who bathe together or take ready to use preparations available from herbalists and other suppliers.

Make a tea from one teaspoonful of the dried root added to a cupful of boiling water. Leave to stand until properly brewed and take hot as tea or leave to cool as a juice. Tea made from valerian is particularly tasty and stimulating and can be administered half an hour or so before making love.

Vanilla

Vanilla is the cured fruit of the orchid 'Vanilla Planifolia' and derives from the Spanish word 'vainila', a diminutive of 'vaina' meaning vagina or pod. Vanilla is a long-standing love potion, being mentioned in ancient texts and being recommended in the *Swedish Pharmacopoeia* of 1849.

Use: Add vanilla essence to the bath to produce a stimulating effect, especially when partners bathe together.



The dried herb can be added to a cupful of boiling water and left to stand until properly brewed, then taken as tea or left to cool as juice.

Yohimbe

For centuries the bark has been used to treat impotency among African tribesmen. The drug yohimbine, from the same source, is a common ingredient in many proprietary medicines for impotency in the United States. However, self-administration is not recommended, the herb being highly toxic especially to the liver.

In *Off-the-Shelf Natural Health* the author talks of yohimbe as "... arguably the most potent herb with true powers of aphrodisia", relating how for centuries some African aboriginals have drunk tea made from bark shavings to treat impotence and to stimulate sexual desire and increase duration for the male.

Research into yohimbine shows it does indeed affect the male sexual organs, through an alkaloid called yohimbine. In the United States, yohimbine remains the only medicine approved by the Federal Drug Association for the treatment of some types of male impotence. Various tests have proved, almost conclusively, that one in three impotent men benefits from taking yohimbine hydrochloride, sometimes achieving powerful, long-lasting erections.

However, there are side effects to yohimbine of which Dr. Julian Davidson of Stanford University says: "Yohimbine does help men get an erection, but they don't know what to do with it because they feel so lousy", reportedly due to nausea, tension, irritability, panic attacks, even hallucinations, headache and high blood pressure. Consequently, even the adventurous few should avoid using yohimbine, even in small doses, if they suffer from high blood pressure; heart, kidney or liver disease, or if they are psychologically disturbed. Although yohimbine also works on the female erogenous zones, it must be avoided at all costs during pregnancy.

In fact, the FDA classifies it as an unsafe herb, as does Michael Murray the author of *'Male Sexual Vitality'* who says: "I think there is some validity to this classification. I have used yohimbine in my practise and have found that, because of side-effects, it is very difficult to work with." Despite this, some people report positive effects from taking the herb in very small doses, but only under strict medical guidance.

Use: The herb is sometimes hard to find except from herbalists with extensive selections and actual experience of the herb. However, most recommend a maximum 500 mg capsule of the powdered herb taken in tea or with hot milk. A mild tea can be made by



boiling an ounce of bark in two cups of water which is left to stand for three minutes, then simmered for another 15 minutes before being taken as a tea before retiring.

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