

HERB OF THE WEEK

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This week we celebrate St Georges Day on 23rd April and this is traditional time for making Dandelion wine. The first flood of Dandelion (*Taraxacum officinale*) flowers are beginning to flow and this remarkable plant will have one or two major waves of flowering before the end of the growing season. A mighty foil to fight any dragon!



Ask any herbalist what are their top 10 herbs and I guarantee Dandelion will be in the list. It is native, abundant and easy to harvest. Everyone knows what it looks like with its classic teeth of a lion leaves (Dent de lion is where it gets its common name from) and children delight in telling what the time is by the number of 'o'clock' blows it takes to disperse all the magical seed heads. The leaves are also known as 'wee the bed' as they are one of the most effective diuretic herbs we have. However, unlike the diuretic drugs which force fluid from all cells and not just the area of oedema thus depleting salts (particularly potassium) from all tissues, thus requiring a potassium supplement, Dandelion helps elimination of excess fluid by stimulating kidney function from which it is a restorative and is one of the highest containing potassium plants there is. How clever is that! Everything you need in a complete package. Harvest the roots to make a liver cleansing dandelion coffee.