



TREE OF  
KNOWLEDGE  
COVEN

SEPTEMBER 5TH, 2020

HERBAL WORKSHOP

*Sage*





## ALL THE SAGES

There are over 900 species of Sage worldwide! Of these, many are decorative and a few are edible, giving food a savory and somewhat citrusy flavor. Some are sweeter and used for teas, such as the Pineapple Sage (which is great for drawing butterflies to your garden). Of all the sages, Garden Sage is the most common.

## SACRED WHITE SAGE

According to many Native American Nations, in the beginning of time, The Creator gave the Native tribes 4 gifts: sage, sweetgrass, cedar, and tobacco. These are used to cleanse areas, people, and items through a ritual called Smudging. You may have heard this term before, but the Smudging ritual is more complex and more meaningful than than burning herbs and wafting the smoke. This is a practice that has become a trend lately for Pagans and Mundane folk alike. You can even buy “Smudging Kits” at Target and Five Below! However, to the Native people who have honored this practice for centuries (and were even legally banned from performing this ritual 4 decades ago) to see it become commercialized and appropriated by the descendants of the colonizers who stole the land White Sage is grown on, outlawed their sacred ceremonies, killed their relatives, and continue to ignore the suffering that Native folks are still struggling with today is just a salt in the wound. Countless Native folks have asked for people to stop using White sage and imitating their practice of smudging, and the majority of Euro-descendant Pagans have happily complied with this simple request. When a practice or ritual is for only people of that heritage, spiritual path, or tradition, it is called a “closed practice.”

Unfortunately, White Sage (which is only native to Southwest United States and Northwest Mexico) is now endangered due to overharvesting and illegal harvesting from private or sacred land. This is unfortunate for the plant, but heartbreaking for Native people in that area that use White Sage for their practices. If you want to help alleviate the problem, you can warn people of the harm caused by buying white sage and email retail companies that sell white sage asking that they discontinue the sale of sacred and endangered plants.

If you use herbs to purify your space, don't worry, You are still welcome to practice “*smoke cleansing*”, but should avoid misnaming the practice as Smudging (as you are not performing that Native Ceremony). We know that words have power, so it shouldn't be hard to respect the wishes of the Native folks that have spoken out on this matter. If you like cleansing with sage, that's fine! Garden sage is very common, safe, and historically what our ancestors in Europe would have used (as its native to many areas in Europe). You can burn the loose leaves over coals, make an herb bundle, or make an incense mix with other herbs. Some good plants for smoke cleansing include rosemary or lavender to purify, dried citrus peels to raise vibrations, mugwort for divination, or bay leaves for prosperity,

If you are sensitive to smoke or have pets, you may prefer to use a cleansing spray. You can pour sage tea in a spray bottle for a quick fix, or make a shelf stable spray with essential oils, distilled water, and alcohol. Rosewater is also a nice addition!

## HERBS FOR SMOKE CLEANSING

LEMONGRASS  
ROSEMARY  
LAVENDER  
GARDEN SAGE  
MUGWORT  
BAY LEAVES  
CINNAMON STICKS  
PINE NEEDLES

