

## The Easiest Skin Balm to make at home

This recipe is designed to be 'Lockdown friendly' and the only things you need are a **pot of coconut oil** - ideally organic and virgin – but just use what you have available (you can find coconut oil in all supermarkets, in the oil section), **olive oil** and some **flowers, herbs and spices** from your cupboard, garden, local hedgerow or park, (but do take care to avoid contamination from pesticides, herbicides and dog poo).



In this recipe we will be using coconut oil and heat to extract the aromatic and medicinal components of dried spices, flowers and/or plants. It is important that the plants you collect are dried before attempting this recipe, as introducing water into the balm will reduce its shelf life and can create mould over time.

### Fragrant components.

You can pick any of the options below to make your skin balm, or any other you may find, following the principles and proportions in this recipe.

**Option 1: Cinnamon and clove balm.** You can find cinnamon sticks and clove buds in the spices section of any supermarket. The essential oils from these spices have antibacterial properties and have a very pleasant and warming scent, which makes this balm a great way to restore suppleness to our skin after so much handwashing, whilst providing an antiseptic effect.



**Option 2: Daisy and nettle balm.** Daisies on lawns and nettles in hedgerows are easy to come by this time of year. Daisies have long been recognised to reduce bruising and nettles are a wonderful anti-inflammatory herb to use in muscle and joint rubs.

Remember to dry them before making the balm. You can do this in the airing cupboard, a warm, dry dark space or use a dehydrator if you happen to have one. It's important not to dry them too quickly or they will lose their constituents.



**Option 3:** You could use so many other herbs available in spring and combine them with essential oils if you can get hold of these. For instance:

- **Peppermint leaves** – with **peppermint or lavender essential oil** to reduce inflammation and encourage micro-circulatory improvement. Nice for feet at bedtime too!
- **Lemon balm leaves** - with **tea tree essential oil** for antimicrobial actions. Good for shingles, herpes and wounds.
- **Thyme leaves** – with some **eucalyptus essential oil** could make a nice chest rub to ease breathing and congestion. Or put a little around your nostrils to reduce pollen inhalation with hay fever.

### Let's start!

Choose your aromatic ingredients. You will need at least 6 cinnamon sticks broken into pieces and 20 cloves for option 1, or for option 2 about 30 daisies and 20 nettle leaves (wear gloves!) – or more but this is a rough idea.

- 200g coconut oil
- 3 teaspoons olive oil
- Fragrant components: dried herbs / flowers / spices
- clean metal/glass bowl/jug and a pan with water to make a bain-marie
- clean spoons / spatula
- 40 drops – 2 ml of essential oil, or less, or none – as required
- clean jars with lids

1. Put 200g coconut oil into the metal/glass bowl/jug that can sit over a pan of simmering water to make a bain-marie.
2. Very slowly warm this and add the spices or dried leaves and flowers. Ensure they are fully submerged to increase their surface area.
3. Allow them to gently macerate/infuse into the oil for a couple of hours – checking the pan doesn't dry of water.



Slowly infusing - oil turning greeny-yellow.



4. Remove from heat.
5. Use a sieve to filter the majority of the plant matter from the warm oil.
6. Repeat with finer filter: a paper coffee filter or a fine cloth.
7. Add 3 spoonful of olive oil and mix using a spoon or spatula.

Finished mix ready to be poured into jars.

8. If you are using other essential oils, add a maximum of 40 drops total to your melted infused oil, mix and then pour into a jar(s) immediately. (20 drops = 1 ml and we can add 2 ml to this mixture)

As we have a large proportion of coconut oil you may need to cool this in the fridge and remember it will melt very quickly (it will be liquid from 22 C)



Enjoy!

*Michele x*