

Mycology Appreciation Night

Turkey Tail (*Trametes versicolor*)

Description: Turkey tail's scientific name, *Trametes versicolor*, translates to "one who is thin" and "of several colors." In China, it goes by the name Yun Zhi, which means "cloud fungus;" the Japanese call it Kowaratake, or "mushroom by the riverbank." Every name for turkey tail refers to the same mushroom: A bracket fungus that grows in clusters of fan-like, stemless conks sporting numerous concentric rings of different colors, which can include brown, cream, white, red, orange, blue and black. Similar to reishi, turkey tail mushrooms are polypores, which means they have no gills. Instead, a network of tubes on the underside serves as the delivery system for spores when the mushrooms reproduce.



- Turkey Tail offers the highest amount of immune supporting beta-glucans of any mushroom that has been studied. It stimulates and balances the body's immune response and also offers anti viral and anti bacterial benefits.
- Other noted medicinal benefit of Turkey Tail include: modulating inflammation, improving cholesterol levels, as well as improving liver and gut health. Turkey Tail has been shown to improve symptoms of chronic fatigue as well as increase exercise endurance.

Turkey tail has a milder flavor than other medicinal mushrooms, which makes it a good candidate for tea.

To brew a batch from fresh or dried mushrooms:

1. Measure out 5 cups of water for every 1 cup of turkey tail.
2. Place the water in a large saucepan, and bring it to sub boiling temps (80 degrees C is best)
3. Reduce the heat to a simmer before adding the mushrooms.
4. Simmer for at least an hour (several hours is preferable).
5. Remove the tea from the heat, and cool completely.
6. Strain out the mushrooms, and store the tea in a jar in the fridge.

Another option is to place dried turkey tail and water in a slow cooker or Instant Pot and cook on low for 6 to 8 hours before cooling and straining.

Preparing turkey tail this way basically results in a homemade water extract that contains beneficial mushroom polysaccharides. Enjoy a cup every day hot or cold, with or without natural sweetener. Adding other ingredients, such as turmeric, may boost the anti-inflammatory and immunomodulatory effects.

Turkey tail tea also makes a great broth for soups and stews, particularly dishes that can benefit from a boost of umami flavor.



Lion's Mane (*Hericium erinaceus*)

Description: Lion's mane mushrooms are distinctive-looking mushrooms that grow from the wood of dead and decaying hardwood trees. They are usually large, white to yellowish depending on age, and are often found growing many feet above the ground on scarred tree trunks and branches. They are white, bulbous mushrooms with shaggy, icicle-like teeth or spines. Each mushroom may range in size from a few inches up to a foot in diameter.

- Lion's Mane mushroom is both edible and medicinal. It's mild and almost seafood like flavor combines well in a variety of savory recipes and can also be enjoyed on it's own.
- As a medicinal, working with Lion's Mane can improve the function of the immune and nervous systems. It's also a potent anti-inflammatory aid, anti-microbial and supports tissue repair (particularly in digestive and nervous system tissues).
- This mushroom has been well researched as a nootropic (improves cognitive function) in relationship to conditions such as Alzheimer's Disease and Parkinson's Disease. Lion's Mane is also well suited to supporting people through conditions of high stress or recovering from burnout. The medicinal compounds in Lion's Mane (ex. *Hericium*) have been shown to cross the blood brain barrier and encourage growth and repair in nerve cells. This is a quality so rare, it is considered medicinal in itself.
- The nervous system benefits of Lion's Mane have been shown to benefit a range of conditions including anxiety, insomnia, and long covid. Like most medicinal mushrooms, it is high in beta-glucans and offers a high degree of immune system support as well, contributing to it's anti-tumor benefits.
- **Suggested Use:** Enjoy in food as a edible mushroom, well cooked. A medicinal extract can be prepared in water, tincture, powder or encapsulation. Medicinal doses will vary, depending on source and form. A standard suggestion is 3-5g daily, with higher doses suggested for more advanced and complicated conditions.

Reishi (*Ganoderma lucidum*)

Description: This polypore mushroom has a fruiting body which grows out from a long, narrow stalk into a fan or disk shape and has a shiny top. This varnished looking texture gave rise to part of the latin, as lucidus means "shiny" or "brilliant". The texture is cork-like when fresh and more rubbery wood-like when dried. The fruiting top color includes a variety of colors from dark brown to a warm red to orange and is often in a gradient from the center to the edge.

- Reishi's taste is bitter, and it's best prepared in a water extract, as a tea or medicinal broth. Prepared extracts such as tinctures, powders or encapsulated supplements are a common way to receive the benefits of this medicinal. It acts as a calming, restorative adaptogen (aids in the body's adaptation to stress, immune system balancer). An important medicinal for supporting people with long covid.
- Regular use can lead one into deeper states of knowledge or wisdom. Not sedative, but peaceful, calms the nervous system. Aids one in feeling *known to oneself*. Allows for process of permanent realignment with a deeper part of yourself. A gentle psychedelic.
- Most important remedy for serious depletion of nerve or liver function. Direct action on the liver via oxygenation of blood (making it a good preventative aid for altitude sickness). Moving, cleansing and restorative effect. Has been found to be an important remedy in cases of hepatitis C.
- Regular use can support people who are experiencing a range of health issues such as chronic headaches or migraine, insomnia, burnout, hormonal dysregulation, cancer or side effects related to cancer treatment, seasonal allergies, anxiety and PTSD, the blood oxygenating effects also support respiratory and cardiovascular health. Reishi, like other medicinal mushrooms, supports healing of the stories of why we are ill, rather than the symptoms. It is a remedy of interconnection.
- **Suggested Use:** 16-32oz prepared tea daily. Long decoction of Reishi (2- 4 hours, on the stove or in a slow cooker). Approx. ¼ cup reishi per 32oz water. Recommended to prepare a large batch and reheat as needed, or freeze in ice cube trays and add to herbal iced coffee.
- **Combinations:**
 - Reishi with roasted Dandelion root for a liver-supportive herbal coffee.
 - Reishi with spices such as cinnamon, ginger, fennel and cardamom for a warming, anti-inflammatory, digestive tonic.
 - Reishi with Rosemary as a preventative aid for headaches stemming from deficient circulation to the head (a component of many migraine patterns). This combo is also potent aid in releasing held trauma.

