

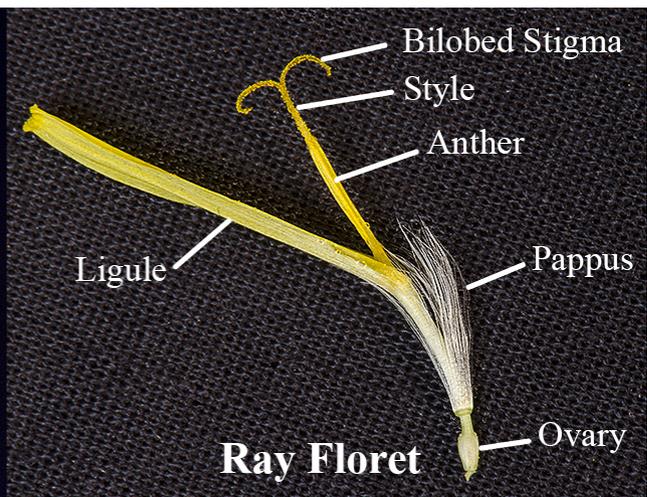
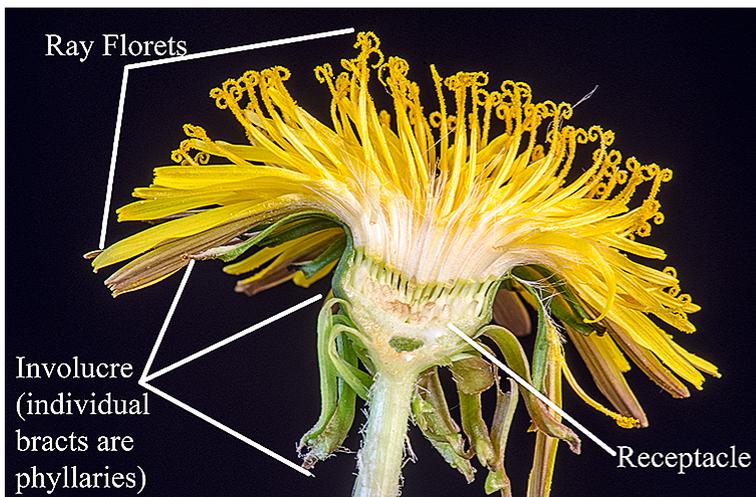
Summer Is Here!

Let's Make Dandelion Jelly!



Here is how to get started:

- Find a field of clean dandelions well away from the dust of any roads.
- Bring along a gallon zip lock bag.
- Collect only the petals (ray florets) while in the field (this eliminates the cleaning step back at home).
- Grasp the flower stem just below the head of the flower.
- Pull the yellow petals from the receptacle, leaving the bracts.
- Collect 4 well-packed cups of petals.





Dandelion Jelly Recipe

Adapted from Beverly Gray
(The Boreal Herbal, 2011)



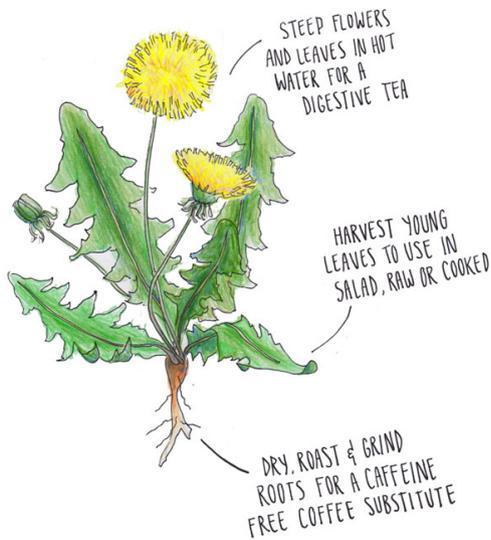
Dandelion jelly has a light, honey-like taste and is a great on its own, or added to sauces or vinaigrettes. It has a beautiful amber color!

- 4 (1 L) cups of dandelion petals
- 2½ cups sugar
- 1 package Sure-Jell Pectin (for use in less or no sugar needed recipes)
- 2 Tbsp lemon juice
- 4 (1 L) cups water



1. Add the petals to the water and simmer for 5 minutes.
2. Set aside to steep until the infusion reaches room temperature.
3. Strain to remove the petals. I line a cone-shaped colander with cheesecloth and strain once through the cheese cloth, and then a second time through a coffee filter.
4. This should provide you with 3 cups (750 ml) of dandelion-petal infusion. Add a little more water if needed.
5. In a large saucepan, combine the dandelion-petal infusion, lemon juice and pectin. First put the pectin in a small bowl and add ¼ cup of the above sugar and stir. Stir this mix into the liquids. Stir until the pectin is dissolved.
6. On high heat bring to a full rolling boil for 1 minute.
7. Next, add the sugar, stirring until it dissolves, bring the mixture back to a full rolling boil that can't be stirred down. Boil hard for at least 1 minute.
8. The jelly is ready when it coats the back of a spoon and has a syrup-like consistency.
9. You can check by placing a teaspoon of jelly on a plate; let it cool; the surface should wrinkle when pushed with your finger.
10. If it is still runny, put the mixture back on the heat and continue boiling and testing, until the jelly sets.
11. Skim off any foam on top of the jelly.
12. Pour into sterilized jars. Before you start the jelly, sterilize the jars, lids and rings in boiling water for 10 - 15 minutes.
13. Pour into jars, leaving ¼ inch of headspace. Wipe jar rims and threads.
14. If canning, lightly secure the lids and rings and place on elevated rack in canner. Add water to the canner until it covers the jars by 1 to 2 inches.
15. Cover canner, and bring water to a gentle boil. Process in boiling water for 10 minutes.
16. Remove jars from canner, and once cool tighten the jar rings.
17. Makes about 5 cups (1¼ L).

Other Uses of Dandelions



Dandelion Song

(Linda Allen, Kristin and Jennifer Allen-Zito)



Well, flowers come in green and pink and red,
And they sleep all day in their little flowerbeds,
But the little dandelion grows wild and free
With her uncles and her cousins and the whole family

Dandy, dandy, dandy, dandy dandelion,
There's something pretty dandy 'bout you.
Dandy, dandy, dandy, dandy dandelion,
I wish that there were more of you.

First I make a wish, Then I blow real hard,
And the little dandelions blow all over the yard,
And I wait and I hope for my wish to come true.
Guess there's only so much a dandelion can do.

Benefits of the Common Dandelion (*Taraxacum officinale*)

■ Dandelions are one of the first flowers to bloom at the start of spring. They provide an early source of nectar and pollen for bees and other insects to feed on after the long, cold winter.

■ Dandelion flowers are edible. They can be eaten raw or cooked, baked into muffins, or used to make dandelion wine.

■ Buds and leaves can be eaten raw in salads, or cooked. The leaves are a source of vitamins A, B, C, and D, as well as iron, potassium, and zinc.

■ Dandelion root can be roasted and ground to make a non-caffeinated coffee substitute, or the roots can be dried and boiled to make tea.



The common dandelion is a perennial flowering plant that is often considered a weed, especially when it grows on lawns. Dandelion plants have long and narrow lobed leaves, and round yellow flowers. The flower heads turn into balls of seeds, each seed having a whitish tuft that allows it to be carried on the wind.

Taraxacum officinale is native to Eurasia, but is now naturalized throughout the temperate regions in the Americas, Europe, and Asia.

■ Environmental benefits

■ Culinary uses

■ Dandelion leaves have a slightly bitter taste and are used to stimulate appetite and digestion.

■ The long and thick taproot breaks up compacted soil, allowing other plants to establish root systems. Taproots also bring up nutrients from deeper in the soil, which are released in the root zone when the dandelion plant dies.