A photograph of a tropical landscape. In the foreground, there are lush green plants, including a large clump of tall grass and a bush with bright red flowers. In the middle ground, there are more green bushes with small orange flowers. In the background, a palm tree stands on the left, and a rainbow arches across the sky over a body of water and distant hills.

# Traditional Healing in St. Vincent and the Grenadines

A catalog of Vincentian plant medicine and healing rituals  
recorded by Cate Richardson, Julia Lininger-White, and  
Chrisenia Harry

# Introduction

This book was written by two undergraduate students, Julia Lininger-White and Cate Richardson, for their month-long class “Land and Society in St. Vincent” sponsored by Middlebury College in Vermont, U.S. It was co-authored by Chrisenia Harry, their research assistant who was born and raised in Petit Bordel. Growing up among her grandparents, Chrisenia picked up a wealth of knowledge on local plants and remedies. We want to give particular thanks to Matilda and Alma of Chateaubelair, Cylita of Chateaubelair, Cecilia of Rose Bank, and Evadnie of Petit Bordel for sharing their knowledge of plants and rituals.

As St. Vincent’s communities become more developed, knowledge of local plants and remedies is not being passed down to the younger generations. The purpose of this book is to document the knowledge of local plants for medicinal purposes. As Vincentians increasingly rely on pharmacies, it is important to preserve St. Vincent’s cultural heritage of bush medicine.

In addition to plant remedies, this book also describes spiritual and religious remedies for sickness and bad luck. For many people of Caribbean descent, separating wellness and spirituality seems impossible. These spiritual remedies were collected from Vincentians of diverse religious backgrounds. Documenting these rituals in addition to plant medicine shows the rich tradition of protection and healing in Vincentian culture. Emerging from two centuries of British colonialism, Vincentian culture shows the remarkable forms of resilience that developed amidst slavery and later economic subjugation.

Healing rituals in Vincentian society evolved from African influence brought by enslaved Africans transported to St. Vincent through the transatlantic slave trade. Additionally, the local plants used by Vincentians today have been cultivated by Carib people who lived on the island, which they called Yurumei (the Ancestral Homeland), for centuries. Connecting to the land through plant knowledge provides empowerment and identity. People in the Garifuna and Vincentian diaspora continue to use bush teas and dried plants mailed from family members on the island.

# Methodology

We spent a month on the North Leeward side of the island, interviewing residents of Rose Bank, Petit Bordel and Chateaubelair. For this project we conducted roughly 30 interviews with primarily elder residents, who are the main knowledge-keepers of local plants. Questions involved the preparation, cultivation, and use of plants. In addition to interviews, we used participant observation by witnessing intergenerational conversations among family members regarding each plant and the different techniques they used. We also received assistance from interviewees with identifying and sampling the plants they mentioned. Unless otherwise stated, the photos used in this book are original photos we took. Often, the plants were described using local names. For clarity, we added the Latin names in italics next to the local names.

## Notes on using this book

A few notes before you begin this guidebook to the local healing techniques and remedies used on the North Leeward side of St. Vincent. Young leaves are leaves that have been on the tree or bush for less than a month. “Brackish” is a term used by Vincentians to describe a tea or drink with some sugar but not too sweet because they don’t add sugar to most medicinal teas they make when they are sick.

As confirmed by a nurse at the Chateaubelair hospital, local plant remedies do not negatively interact with medical treatment. The remedies described in this guidebook, are generally preventative and used in the early stages of an ailment. They are not meant to be used in place of clinical medication, but in combination with them.

All claims of the benefits of these remedies are observations from centuries of their use by Vincentian residents.

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# Colds:

## Instructions:

### Trumpet Bush Tea

1. Gather the dried Trumpet bush leaves only once they have fallen off the tree. Grows naturally, not planted at home.
2. Boil water, then turn off the stove.
3. Put Trumpet leaves in pot and let it steam for 10-15 minutes.
4. Drink one cup a day in the morning for around a week. Consuming for longer could cause blood pressure to drop too low.

*Dried Cecropia  
obtusifolia*



## Instructions:

### Tiki Thyme Tea

1. Cultivate and gather fresh Tiki Thyme leaves from your home garden or neighbor's garden.
2. Boil water, then turn off the stove.
3. Put a few Tiki Thyme leaves in and let it steam/steep for 10-15 minutes.
4. Drink one cup before bed to help fall asleep.

*Thymus vulgaris*





### Instructions:

## Shadom Vinny Tea

1. Gather fresh “Shadom Vinny” bush from surrounding areas. Grows naturally, it is not typically planted in home gardens but can be found in your yard. Only need the leaves.
2. Boil water, then turn off stove.
3. Put one “Shadom Vinny” bush in and let it steam/steep for 10-15 minutes.
4. Drink it until you feel better.

*Eryngium foetidum*



### Instructions:

## Corilla Tea

1. Gather Corilla vine from surrounding areas. It grows naturally, but can also be found running up a tree in your yard.
2. Don't use the root, but keep the leaves on the vine.
3. Boil water, then turn off stove.
4. Put a Corilla vine in and let it steam/steep for 10-15 minutes.
5. Drink until you feel better.

*Momordica Charantia*



### Note

If you let the vine boil with the water, it will act as a laxative. If you use this recipe, it will help clean your blood. You can tell that it's working if your pee starts to smell like Corilla.

**Instructions:**

**Aloe Vera Beverage**

1. Cultivate and gather a Aloe Vera leaf from your home garden or neighbor's garden. Can also buy the plant in a grocery store.
2. Cut the Aloe leaf lengthwise with a knife.
3. Scrape the gel out of the Aloe leaf.
4. Combine the Aloe gel with coconut water or orange juice. Can also drink it by itself.
5. Drink it only once a week because it is hard to drink.

*Aloe Vera*



**Herbal Salve**

**Instructions:**

1. Combine one stem of Rosemary with the leaves on it, a cap full (around one teaspoon) of Florida water, and Isopropyl rubbing alcohol.
2. Once combined, shake it up.
3. Rub it on your skin after you bathe at night.
4. Also rub on top of head and pat it onto scalp.
5. Do this every night until you feel better.

**Note**

Florida water can be replaced with Kananga water, they both serve the same purpose. Also, only use this treatment at night because if you go out again you will get a fresh cold.



**Instructions:**

1. Gather a fresh Bluetop bush from surrounding areas. Grows naturally, it is not typically planted in home gardens but can be found in your yard.
2. If giving to a baby, only use leaves. For adults it does not matter if you add roots too. The roots make it stronger and more potent.
3. Boil water, then turn off stove.
4. Put one Bluetop bush in and let it steam/steep for 10-15 minutes.
5. Drink it every morning.

**Note**

This is a preventative tea. It can be drunk any time to build the immune system and prevent catching a cold.

*Stachytarpheta jamaicensis*



# Headaches:

## Head Lead Wrap

### Instructions:

1. Gather fresh leaves off of a Breadfruit or Dasheen tree (one or the other, not combined). Grows naturally, but can be found in some yards. Dasheen can also be planted in home gardens.
2. Boil a pot of water.
3. Add the Breadfruit or Dasheen leaves to another pot.
4. Add this pot into the pot with boiling water. Cover the pots.
5. Let steam for five to ten minutes, or until the bush gets soft.
6. Wrap the steamed leaves around your head, put a hat on or wrap your hair to keep the leaves in place.
7. Keep the leaves there for one day to relieve headache pains.

### Fun Fact

The hardened sap from breadfruit trees can be used as chewing gum. Mix it with sugar or toothpaste to make it taste better.

*Colocasia esculenta*



*Artocarpus altilis*



# Nausea:

## Kojo Root

### Instructions:

1. Gather Kojo Root from surrounding areas. It grows naturally, not often planted in home gardens. Only the root is necessary for this remedy.
2. Wash the root.
3. Sniff the root to relieve symptoms of nausea.
4. You can also chew on the root.

*Anamu,  
Petiveria alliacea*



## Ginger

### Instructions:

1. Cultivate and gather one Ginger root from your home garden or a neighbor's garden. Only need the root.
2. Scrape skin of the Ginger off.
3. Cut a little piece of Ginger and put it in your mouth.
4. Suck on it like it is a piece of candy until you want to spit it out.

*Zingiber officinale*



# Cleaning Out:

Cleaning out is a health practice observed across the Caribbean and in diaspora communities. In a survey of Caribbean immigrants in London, 73% of respondents agreed that it is important to have regular washouts. A clean out or washout, as some healers say, involves consuming special drinks and bush teas that have laxative or “detoxifying” effects. One particular beverage consumed for this purpose is Aloe Vera which is believed to cleanse and detox the body.

Cleaning out can also be done when a person is experiencing constipation. According to a paper from the University of the West Indies in St. Augustine, another plant used for cleaning out is the candlestick plant (*Senna alata*). A clinical study using people who complained of constipation for at least three days showed that a bush tea from candle stick plant produced significant relief after 24 hours.

The intention of cleaning out is to “flush out” toxins from the blood and digestive system. This can be done during a sickness (such as a stomach bug or itchy skin), after excessive alcohol or sugar consumption, or for general health maintenance. However, it is never practiced during a cold or flu.

Most people who observe the ritual of cleaning out take a few days every six months to allow their bodies to clean out while consuming the special drinks. People with chronic conditions, such as diabetes, also practice cleaning out to reduce the presence of toxins. Additionally, women who are trying to get pregnant also practice cleaning out, as it's believed to make it easier to become pregnant.

## Kojo Root Tea

### Instructions:

1. Gather Kojo Root leaves from surrounding areas. It grows naturally, not often planted in home gardens. Only the leaves are necessary for this remedy.
2. Boil water, then turn off stove.
3. Add Kojo Root leaves, Turmeric, Ginger, and Garlic and let it steam/steep for 10-15 minutes.
4. Drink this tea every six months to detoxify the body, cleanse the blood, and clean the digestive system. Also use it to ward off evil spirits.

## Noni Juice

### Instructions:

1. Gather Noni fruit from Noni trees in the surrounding areas. It grows naturally, not often planted in home gardens.
2. The Noni fruit must be ripe. You can tell that it's ripe when the skin turns translucent and feels thin.
3. Rinse the fruit before use.
4. Mash the Noni fruit with the back of a spoon or fork until it turns into a pulp.
5. Strain until you are left with a juice.
6. Add water.
7. Drink this juice every six months to detoxify the body, cleanse the blood, and clean the digestive system.

## Papaya Juice

### Instructions:

1. Cultivate and gather a Papaya from your home garden. You only need the Papaya leaves.
2. Dry the Papaya leaves.
3. Add the dried Papaya leaves to a pot of water.
4. Boil it.
5. Strain the Papaya leaves out of the water.
6. Drink this juice routinely every six months to wash out the system.

# Constipation:

## Bluetop/head Tea

### Instructions:

1. Gather a fresh Bluetop bush from surrounding areas. Grows naturally, it is not typically planted in home gardens.
2. Only used for adults, so you can use the leaves and roots. The roots make it stronger and more potent.
3. Boil water, then turn off stove.
4. Put one Bluetop bush in and let it steam/steep for 10-15 minutes.
5. Drink once or until it acts as a laxative.

## Joint Bush/ Donkey Wattle Tea

### Instructions:

1. Gather Donkey Wattle leaves from surrounding areas. Grows naturally, it is not typically planted in home gardens. Only need the leaves.
2. Boil water, turn the stove off.
3. Put the boiled water into a cup and add two to three Donkey Wattle leaves.
4. Let steep for 10-15 minutes and then drink the tea.
5. Drink two to three times a day until it acts as a laxative.

*Piper sp.*





### **Instructions:**

### **Corilla Tea**

1. Gather Corilla vine from surrounding areas. It grows naturally, but can also be found running up a tree in your yard.
2. Don't use the root, but keep the leaves on the vine.
3. Put the Corilla vine into a pot, add water.
4. Bring the water to a boiling point, let it boil for two to three minutes then turn the heat off.
5. Drink two to three times a day until it acts as a laxative.

### **Instructions:**

### **Ginger Tea**

1. Cultivate and gather one Ginger root from your home garden or a neighbor's garden. Only need the root.
2. Smash the root to release the juices.
3. Add Ginger root to a pot of water, set on stove to boil.
4. Let boil for five to seven minutes. If you let it boil for too long, it will burn your mouth like you are drinking pepper.
5. Strain the roots out of the tea.
6. Drink a cup a day whenever you have bad gas.

# Asthma:

## Calabash Juice

### Instructions:

1. Gather a Calabash from surrounding areas. Grows naturally, but can be planted in home gardens.
2. Cut the Calabash in half with a hacksaw. Don't crack the calabash shell because you can turn it into a bowl after.
3. Scrape the "meat" or "guts" out of the Calabash.
4. Mash this into a pulp with a spoon or fork in a bowl.
5. Strain the pulp to obtain only the Calabash juice.
6. Combine the Calabash juice with cinnamon and nutmeg to create a herbal syrup.
7. Drink a teaspoon twice a day to lessen chest issues.

*Lagenaria siceraria*



## Ganja Root Tea

### Instructions:

1. Cultivate and gather Ganja Root from your home garden. Only need the root, not the leaves.
2. Add Ganja Root to water, set on stove to boil.
3. Let boil for two or three minutes.
4. Strain the roots out of the tea.
5. Drink once a day.

*Cannabis*



### **Instructions:**

## **Kojo Root**

1. Gather Kojo Root from surrounding areas. It grows naturally, not often planted in home gardens. Only need the root.
2. Wash the root.
3. Sniff the root to open up your sinuses.

### **Fun Fact**

Used instead of an inhaler.

### **Instructions:**

## **Wild Onion Tea**

1. Cultivate and gather wild onions from from surrounding areas. It grows naturally, not often planted in home gardens.
2. Slice up the wild onions.
3. Sprinkle sugar onto the wild onions.
4. Let this sit for the juice of the wild onions to seep.
5. Drink this liquid twice a day.

### **Fun Fact**

If you vomit up this liquid, it is called “bringing up the root of the asthma.”

# High Blood Pressure:

## Breadfruit leaf Tea

### Instructions:

1. Gather young Breadfruit leaves from surrounding areas. Grows naturally, not often planted at home but can be found in some yards.
2. Boil water, turn the stove off.
3. Put the boiled water into a cup and add two to three Breadfruit leaves.
4. Let steep for 10-15 minutes and then drink the tea.
5. Drink only once a day in the morning, or else your blood pressure will get too low.

## Garlic Tea

### Instructions:

1. Buy Garlic from the store.
2. Poke holes into the Garlic. Can also slice the Garlic up into small pieces.
3. Put the Garlic into a cup with water.
4. Put into the fridge.
5. Drink once a day in the morning, or else your blood pressure will get too low.

### Instructions:

## Soursop Tea

1. Gather Soursop leaves from surrounding areas. It grows naturally, not often planted at home but can be found in some yards.
2. Let the leaves dry.
3. Boil water.
4. Put the boiled water into a cup and add two to three Soursop leaves.
5. Let steep for 10-15 minutes.
6. Drink the tea once a day in the morning, or else your blood pressure will get too low.

*Annona muricata*



### Instructions:

## Calabash Tea

1. Gather Calabash leaves from a Calabash tree in the surrounding areas. Grows naturally, but can be found in home gardens.
2. Boil water, turn off stove.
3. Put Calabash leaves in and let it steam/steep for 10-15 minutes.
4. Strain it.
5. Drink regularly during the week to maintain a steady pressure.

# Diabetes:

## Moringa leaf seasoning

### Instructions:

1. Gather Moringa leaves from surrounding areas. Grows naturally, but can be planted in home gardens.
2. Dry the leaves.
3. Rub leaves between your hands to grind them up.
4. Add two to three tablespoons in the morning to your breakfast or juice to reduce blood sugar levels.

## Moringa leaf Tea

### Instructions:

1. Gather fresh Moringa leaves from surrounding areas. Grows naturally, but can be planted in home gardens.
2. Boil water, turn off stove.
3. Put fresh Moringa leaves in and let it steam/steep for 10-15 minutes.
4. Strain it.
5. Drink only a few cups a day or your blood sugar levels will get very low.
6. Make sure you don't add sugar to get the full effect.

*Moringa oleifera*





## Soursop Tea

### Instructions:

1. Gather Soursop leaves from surrounding areas. It grows naturally, not often planted in gardens.
2. For a large batch, need 20-30 leaves. For a cup, only need two to three leaves.
3. Boil water, turn off stove.
4. Put Soursop leaves in and let it steam/steep for 10-15 minutes.
5. Strain it.
6. Refrigerate.
7. If in a big batch consume once or twice a day over the next two to three days.

## Preparations of Okra

- Gather from your home garden and consume raw.
- Add it to almost any dish you make, especially to stewed dishes.
- Cut the okra up and soak in water overnight. Then drink the water the next morning.

*Abelmoschus esculentus*



# Boils:

## Tick Leaf Wrap

### Instructions:

1. Gather Tick Leaf leaves, commonly known as “tree of life,” from surrounding areas. It grows naturally, not often planted in gardens.
2. Put the leaf on a skewer.
3. Turn on stove.
4. Rotate the skewered leaf over the fire until leaf loosens up.
5. Squeeze the leaf to loosen it up.
6. Put some shortening on the leaf.
7. Quickly, wrap the leaf on the boil. Secure it in place with a piece of cloth.
8. Keep the leaf on the boil for two to three days to bring the puss up to the surface.
9. The boil pops itself.
10. Clean with blue soap and warm water.

### Fun Fact

This process is known as “ripening the boil.” On St. Vincent, boils often occur during mango season because of how much sugar Vincentians are consuming at this time. These boils are called “mango boils.”

*Coleus amboinicus*



# Skin Problems:

## Arthritis

### Leaf Slapping - called "Sapping"

#### Instructions:

1. Gather Donkey Wattle (also called Joint Bush or Range Plant) from surrounding areas. It grows naturally, but can also be planted in home gardens. Only use the leaves for this treatment.
2. Boil water.
3. Put Range plant leaves in and let it steam/steep for 10-15 minutes.
4. Remove the leaves from the pot.
5. Press the leaves between your palms to release the juice, then apply to tender joints.
6. Apply by slapping the leaves onto your joints. This is especially helpful for knee pain.

## Salves and Essential Oils for Arthritis

- Combine Nutmeg, soft candle grease and Isopropyl rubbing alcohol to create a salve. Rub the salve on affected joints.
- Combine Nutmeg, Florida Water cologne, Kananga water cologne, Coconut oil, Olive oil, soft candle grease, and conpher cake (use little pieces of the cake) in a bottle. Shake the bottle up then rub on stiff joints.
- Rub lemon grass (fever grass) essential oil on joints to reduce inflammation.
- Rub Canadian healing oil on joints to reduce inflammation.

## “Mudblood”

### **Note**

Mudblood is a condition describes in our interviews with Vincentians that refers to getting small itchy bumps all over the skin when one's blood needs cleaning out.

### **Young Soursop Beverage:**

#### **Instructions:**

1. Gather a young Soursop, which is smaller and green, from surrounding areas. It grows naturally, but can be found in home gardens.
2. Wash and cut the young Soursop up.
3. Add it to a bottle of water.
4. Put in the fridge and let steep for five to ten minutes.
5. Can drink whenever you want for a “cooling effect” or until you stop itching.

*Annona  
muricata*



## Bug Bites

### Aloe Vera Gel

#### Instructions:

1. Cultivate and gather a Aloe leaf from your homegarden or from a neighbor's garden. Can also buy the leaves.
2. Cut one leaf and open lengthwise with a knife.
3. Rub the slimy inner flesh from the Aloe leaf on a bug bite to relieve itching.
4. Use whenever you have bug bites.

*Gliricidia  
sepium*



### Glory Seed/Guinea Seed Insect Repellent

#### Instructions:

1. Gather Glory seed from surrounding areas. Grows naturally, but can be planted in home gardens. Only need the leaves.
2. Rub the leaves between your hands to release the juice of the leaf.
3. Rub this mixture on your skin to repel flies and mosquitos.

## Burns

### Aloe Vera Gel

#### Instructions:

1. Cultivate and gather a Aloe leaf from your home garden or from a neighbor's garden. Can also buy the leaves.
2. Scrape the slimy inner flesh from the Aloe leaf and put it on the burn.
3. Repeat this for a few days until the burn has cooled down.

### Mashed Papaya

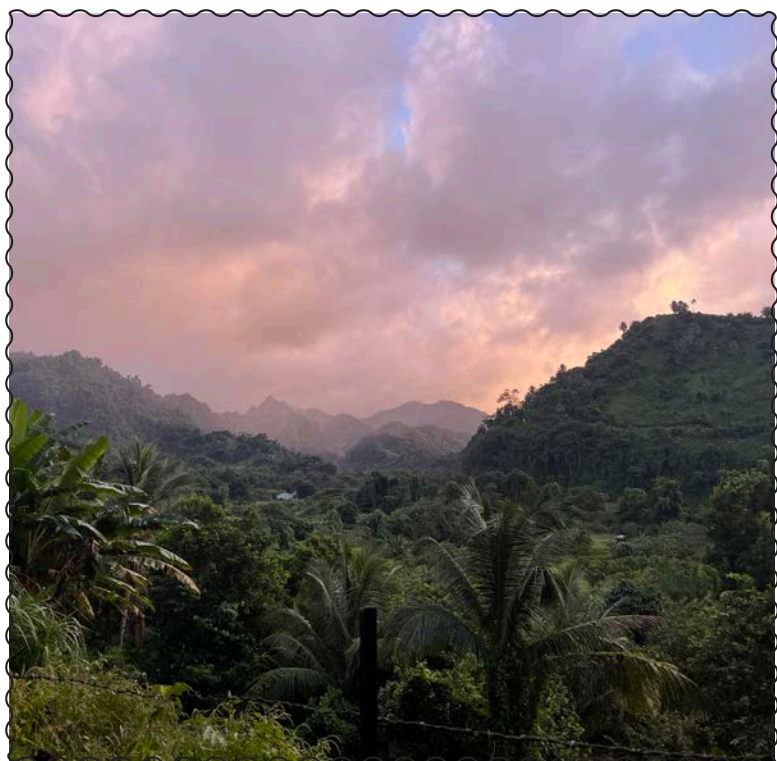
#### Instructions:

1. Cultivate and gather a Papaya from your home garden or your neighbor's garden. Can also buy it.
2. Mash the "meat" or "guts" of the Papaya into a pulp with a spoon or fork.
3. Rub this mixture on your skin for a few days until the burn has cooled down.



*Carica papaya*





# Spiritual Protection in St. Vincent

In Vincentian culture, spirituality is a method of healing and protection. Both physical or mental illnesses have a spiritual dimension, and can be interpreted as a spiritual possession. Someone with a spiritual possession can be described as “touched.” In our interviews, one mother in Chateaubelair interpreted her 12 year old son’s epileptic seizures as a spiritual possession. In Vincentian culture, a spiritual possession by a demon or evil spirit can be caused by jealousy, which is called the “evil eye.” In the case of the boy with epilepsy, his mother believed that his good performance in school had caused jealousy among his peers.

In addition to his epileptic seizures, the boy also had behavioral problems, such as hitting his mother. The boy would also jump out of windows during the day and run down the street. After running down the street, he would “come to,” and not know where he was or how he got there. When someone is afflicted by a possession they seek help from a spiritual healer, which is called “walking out.” The specific treatment that a person receives from the spiritual healer must remain secret and is not shared with anyone, even after the afflicted person recovers. These treatments can also involve bush teas, which are blessed and then given to the possessed person, and bathing with various bushes. To help him, the boy’s mother sought help from a spiritual healer and gathered community members to pray for him. After some time, the boy recovered and his seizures improved with help from his seizure medication.

Vincentians practice a mixture of daily rituals to avoid spiritual possession and bad luck. Among these, many people use perfumes that are believed to have protective properties such as Florida Water, Kananga Water, and Spirit Eater. These perfumes are used in Black spiritual communities across North America and the Caribbean.<sup>1</sup> Florida Water was introduced in the U.S. in 1808, where enslaved African-Americans used the cologne while serving their masters. They would use Florida Water to scent the bed linens, sprinkle in bathwater, mop the floors and shave men’s faces.

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1. <https://www.allure.com/story/history-of-florida-water>

Over time, Florida Water became a staple of the magical and spiritual practices of enslaved people.<sup>2</sup> Many protective rituals are based on folklore that directs women on how to protect themselves and their children. For example, one of these practices is for menstruating women to avoid walking in cemeteries so that they do not touch the sand where people are buried. Another folk illness is called loving-maldrew, which occurs when a baby is “over-loved” by someone who is not his or her mother. This causes symptoms like having white spots around the neck and one the creases of the arms. The cure for loving maldrew includes bathing the baby with a mixture of sweetbroom leaves (*Scoparia dulcis*), red dragon leaves (*Cordyline fruticosa*), young mango leaves (species unknown), and tiki-thyme (*Plectranthus amboinicus*) leaves. Although these two practices are fading in popularity with younger generations, there are a number of Vincentian traditions that are still practiced by mothers to protect their babies, such as putting black beaded bracelets on a baby’s wrists. The following section will describe these practices.



Sunset in  
Cumberland

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2. <https://orchardstreetreadingsociety.substack.com/p/the-history-of-florida-water>

# Pregnancy:

## Ginger Tea for cramps

### Instructions:

1. Cultivate and gather one Ginger root from your home garden or a neighbor's garden. Only need the root.
2. Smash the root to release the juices.
3. Add Ginger root to a pot of water, set on stove to boil.
4. Let boil for five to seven minutes. If you let it boil for too long, it will burn your mouth like you are drinking pepper.
5. Strain the roots out of the tea.
6. Drink when cramps are bad.

## Soursop Tea for nausea

### Instructions:

1. Gather Soursop leaves from surrounding areas. It grows naturally, not often planted at home but can be found in some yards.
2. Let the leaves dry.
3. Boil water.
4. Put the boiled water into a cup and add two to three Soursop leaves.
5. Let steep for 10-15 minutes.
6. Drink the tea when you are feeling nauseous.

*Annona muricata*



# During Birth

## Stinking Weed Beverage

### Instructions:

1. Gather Stinking Weed bush from surrounding areas. It grows naturally, not often found in homegardens.
2. Chop off the root.
3. Wash the root.
4. Add Stinking Weed root to lukewarm water.
5. Give to mother immediately to drink.
6. Drink as long as the pain persists.

## Cinnamon Tea

### Instructions:

1. Gather Cinnamon bark from surrounding areas. Although it grows naturally and is not often planted, it can be found in some yards.
2. Add Cinnamon bark to water, set on stove to boil.
3. Let boil for 10-12 minutes. Boil it longer to make it stronger.
4. Drink to help push out the baby.
5. Cut the umbilical cord with scissors, then apply arrowroot starch to navel (belly button) to stop the bleeding.

# After birth

## Stinking Weed Tea

### Instructions:

1. Gather Stinking Weed bush from surrounding areas. It grows naturally, not often found in homegardens.
2. Chop off the root.
3. Wash the root.
4. Add Stinking Weed root to pot with water, boil it.
5. Let boil for five minutes.
6. Drink after giving birth to flush out the body to get rid of clots of blood that build up in the woman during pregnancy.

## “Shake your tummy”

### Instructions:

1. Boil water, turn the stove off.
2. Put boiling water into a pail.
3. Squat over pail without underwear on to steam genitals to see if anything comes out.
4. Band your upper abdomen with a piece of cloth to push the afterbirth out.
5. Take a salt water bath after to help the healing process.



# For newborn baby:

## Kojo Root Bath

### Instructions:

1. Gather Kojo Root leaves from surrounding areas. It grows naturally, not often planted in home gardens. Only need the leaves.
2. Add Kojo Root leaves to pot with water, boil it.
3. Boil it for five minutes, then turn it off.
4. Add boiling water with leaves still in it to bathtub.
5. Let cool until lukewarm.
6. Give baby three teaspoons of the bathwater before you put them in the bathtub.
7. Place baby inside bathtub.
8. Use the Kojo Root leaves to “slap” them. Slap the joints, feet, chest, and back. Do not slap the baby’s head if it is a newborn, just pour the water over their head.

## Bluetop/head tea

### Instructions:

1. Gather a fresh Bluetop bush from surrounding areas. Grows naturally, it is not typically planted in home gardens but can be found in your yard.
2. For adult women use leaves and the roots. The roots make it stronger and more potent.
3. Boil water, then turn off stove.
4. Put one Bluetop bush in and let it steam/steep for 10-15 minutes.
5. Drink it every morning to accumulate a lot of breast milk.

# Babies:

## Cold/Fever

- Rosemary salve: Combine one stem of rosemary to coconut oil. Rub this mixture over their body to cool them down and moisturize them.

### Pumpkin Blossom bath

#### Instructions:

1. Harvest Pumpkin Blossom leaves. Do not tell anyone you are going to harvest the pumpkin blossom leaves or the remedy will not work.
2. When harvesting the blossoms, throw the first leaf behind your back and don't look back.
3. Mix the Pumpkin Blossom leaves with Rosemary and Red Lavender extract in a bath.
4. Before bathing the baby, have the baby drink some of the bath water.
5. After bathing, don't fully dry off the baby and smoke a pipe over the baby.
6. Immediately throw the baby's bathwater into the river. Don't stop to do anything or talk to anyone, go straight to the river.



*Pumpkin blossom  
(species unknown)*

## Red Fence tea:

### Instructions:

1. Gather Red Fence leaves from surrounding areas. It grows naturally, often found in yards.
2. Can either dry the leaves or keep them fresh.
3. Boil water, turn the stove off and put the leaves in the pot to steep.
4. Refrigerate until cold.
5. Drink once a day for a week.

*Red tip photinia*



## For a baby who won't drink breast milk

### Bluetop/head Tea

### Instructions:

1. Gather Bluetop bush from surrounding areas, such as in the mountain. It grows naturally, not often planted in gardens.
2. Just the leaves, not the root.
3. Boil water, turn the stove off.
4. Put the leaves in the pot to steam.
5. Let cool until lukewarm.
6. Add this to formula in the babies bottle. You can also just give it to them plain without adding formula.

# Colic

## **Bluetop, Tiki Thyme or Lemongrass tea**

(They are all made the same way and have the same effects.)

### **Instructions:**

1. Gather either Bluetop, Tiki Thyme or Lemongrass leaves from surrounding areas. They grow naturally, but can be found in gardens. Only need the leaves, not the root.
2. Boil water, turn the stove off.
3. Put one type of the leaves in the pot to steam/steep for 10-15 minutes.
4. Strain it.
5. Let cool until lukewarm.
6. Give a teaspoon to the baby plain without adding formula up to three times a day when they are experiencing symptoms of colic.

# Jaundice:

## **Love-vine tea**

### **Instructions**

1. Gather the Love-vine from surrounding areas. It grows naturally, not often planted in gardens. Need the vine.
2. Boil water.
3. Once the water is boiled, turn the stove off and then drop the fresh vines in.
4. Let it cool until lukewarm, takes around ten minutes.  
Strain the tea.
5. Put it in the baby's bottle. Don't mix anything in it, but can add a little bit of sugar.
6. Give it to the baby three times a day. Once in the morning, afternoon, and evening.



*Cassytha filiformis (Love-vine)*

## Protecting against evil spirits

- Put a mirror over or around baby's head when they sleep. When the evil spirit sees itself in the mirror, it will scare itself away.
- Put crosses on the baby's forehead, wrists, palms and the bottom of their feet using red lavender or the Spirit of Turpentine.
- Open the bible to the Psalms, specifically Psalms 23, and put it next to the baby while they sleep. Especially when the baby is sleeping by themselves.
- Put indigo dye with rosemary in a bag and pin it to the baby's clothes or tie it to a string around the baby's stomach.
- Add a few drops of the indigo dye or red lavender to a baby's bath. While bathing the baby, stretch their joints and massage them.
- Put a black beaded bracelet around one of their wrists or stomach.
- Hang rosemary anywhere in the baby's room.
- If a spirit is bothering your baby, throw yeast in front of the porch, front door, and back door.

# If they strain a vein in their thigh

This occurs when babies are learning how to walk. The veins will look purple or blue and are raised on the skin.

## Ratchet Cactus Salve

### Instructions:

1. Bake Ratchet Cactus on the stove until it is soft, takes around five minutes.
2. Let it cool, but not for too long because you want it warm. Make it as hot as you can handle.
3. Put the Ratchet Cactus in a cloth.
4. Tie the cloth from the leg all the way up and around the stomach of the baby. This will help support the leg healing back into the right position.



*Opuntia basilaris P.*

# Bladder Infections:

## Stinging Nettle Tea

### Instructions:

1. Gather Stinging Nettle leaves from surrounding areas. They grow naturally, but can be found in gardens. **CAUTION!** Do not touch Stinging Nettle because it will sting you and make you itchy. Grab the leaves either with tongs or wear gloves. Only need the leaves, not the root.
2. Boil water, turn the stove off.
3. Put Stinging Nettle leaves in the pot to steam/steep for 10-15 minutes.
4. Strain it.
5. Drink it warm a few times a day until you feel the pain going away when you urinate.

*Urtica dioica*



## Mint Tea

### Instructions:

1. Cultivate and gather one Mint stalk from your home garden or a neighbor's garden.
2. For a single serving, use all the leaves from one stalk.
3. Boil water, turn the stove off.
4. Put Mint leaves in the pot to steam/steep for 10-15 minutes.
5. Leave the Mint leaves in the tea.
6. Drink it warm a few times a day until you feel the pain going away when you urinate.
7. Adding sugar is optional.

*Plectranthus amboinicus*



## Garlic Tea

### Instructions:

1. Buy Garlic from the store.
2. Poke holes into the Garlic. Can also slice up the Garlic.
3. Put the Garlic into a cup with water.
4. Put into the fridge.
5. Drink a few times a day until you feel the pain going away when you urinate.



## Aloe Vera/Ratchet Beverage

### Instructions:

1. Cultivate and gather a Aloe Vera leaf or Ratchet leaf from your home garden or neighbor's garden. Can also buy the leaves in a grocery store.
2. Scrape the gel out of the Aloe or Ratchet leaf.
3. Combine the Aloe or Ratchet gel with coconut water or orange juice. Can also drink it by itself.
4. Drink it only once a week because it is hard to drink.

*Aloe vera*



# Periods:

## To reduce flow

- Sitting in sea water tends to stop your period for a day or two. It is a temporary fix.

### Corilla Tea

#### Instructions:

1. Gather Corilla vine from surrounding areas. It grows naturally, but can also be found running up a tree in your yard.
2. Don't use the root, but keep the leaves on the vine.
3. Put the Corilla vine into a pot, add water.
4. Bring the water to a boiling point, let it boil for two to three minutes then turn the heat off.
5. Drink two to three times a day after your period finishes to flush out the rest of the period.

### Mint steam

#### Instructions:

1. Cultivate and gather Mint stalks from your home garden or a neighbor's garden.
2. Boil water, turn the stove off.
3. Put boiling water into a pail.
4. Add Mint stalks to the pail.
5. Squat over pail without underwear on to steam genitals and reduce period blood flow.

# To reduce period cramps

- Take a cold shower.
- Put hot cloth on stomach until cramp pain subsides.

## Mint Tea

### Instructions

1. Cultivate and gather one Mint stalk from your home garden or a neighbor's garden.
2. For a single serving, use all the leaves from one stalk.
3. Boil water, turn the stove off.
4. Put Mint leaves in the pot to steam/steep for 10-15 minutes.
5. Leave the Mint leaves in the tea.
6. Drink it warm a few times a day while on your period to relieve cramp pain.

## Ginger Tea

### Instructions:

1. Cultivate and gather one Ginger root from your home garden or a neighbor's garden. Only the root is needed for this tea.
2. Smash the root to release the juices.
3. Add Ginger root to a pot of water, set on stove to boil.
4. Let boil for five to seven minutes. If you let it boil for too long, it will burn your mouth like you are drinking pepper.
5. Strain the roots out of the tea.
6. Drink when cramps are bad.

## Glory Seed/Guinea Seed/ Range plant Tea

### Instructions:

1. Gather Glory Seed leaves from surrounding areas. Grows naturally, but can be planted in home gardens. Only need the leaves.
2. Boil water, turn the stove off.  
Put Glory Seed leaves in the pot to steam/steep for 10-15 minutes.
3. Strain it.
4. Drink it warm a few times a day while on your period to relieve cramp pain.



# Fertility for men:

## Dry Moringa leaves as seasoning

### **Instructions:**

1. Gather Moringa leaves from surrounding areas. Grows naturally, but can be planted in home gardens.
2. Dry the leaves.
3. Rub leaves between your hands to grind them up.
4. Add two to three tablespoons in the morning to your breakfast or juice.
5. Drink consistently to promote fertility, but not too much or it will make your blood sugar levels too low.

## Ginger Tea

### **Instructions:**

1. Cultivate and gather one Ginger root from your home garden or a neighbor's garden. Only need the root.
2. Smash the root to release the juices.
3. Add Ginger root to a pot of water, set on stove to boil.
4. Let boil for five to seven minutes. If you let it boil for too long, it will burn your mouth like you are drinking pepper.
5. Strain the roots out of the tea.
6. Drink consistently to promote fertility.

## Stinging Nettle Tea

### Instructions:

1. Gather Stinging Nettle leaves from surrounding areas. They grow naturally, but can be found in gardens. **CAUTION!** Do not touch stinging nettle because it will sting you and make you itchy. Grab the leaves either with tongs or wear gloves. Only need the leaves, not the root.
2. Boil water, turn the stove off.
3. Put Stinging Nettle leaves in the pot to steam/steep for 10-15 minutes.
4. Strain it.
5. Drink consistently to promote fertility.



Owia Salt  
Ponds on the  
Windward  
side of St.  
Vincent

# Self-Care:

## Body Odor

- Rub lime juice on armpits.
- Rub Aloe gel on your armpits.
- Rub a penny in your armpits and throw it in the ocean for body odor to go away.
- Coconut oil, Rosemary and Florida water are used as cologne.

## Sleep

### Soursop Tea

#### Instructions:

1. Gather Soursop leaves from surrounding areas. It grows naturally, but can be found in home gardens.
2. For a cup, only need two to three leaves.
3. Boil water, turn off stove.
4. Put Soursop leaves in and let it steam/steep for 10-15 minutes.
5. Strain it.
6. Consume at night before going to bed to help insomnia.

### Tiki Thyme Tea

#### Instructions:

1. Cultivate and gather fresh Tiki Thyme leaves from your home garden or neighbor's garden. It grows naturally.
2. Boil water, then turn off the stove.
3. Put a few Tiki Thyme leaves in and let it steam/steep for 10-15 minutes.
4. Drink one cup before bed to help fall asleep.



# Dream Interpretation

For some Vincentians, the cure for various ailments appear in their dreams. People who use dream interpretation for healing say that they have dreams where others tell them the remedy for an ailment. When these instructions come from a relative who has passed away, they are thought to be especially significant because dead relatives are thought to be able to protect the living.

Dreams can also provide instructions that must be passed on to other people. One woman who we interviewed described that she had a dream to put three drops of red lavender in a cup with water and drink it. She then gave the liquid to her son, who was struggling with a lung infection. In addition to other remedies, treatment that comes from dreams is an important part of Vincent spirituality in healing.





# Shower

## Soap

- Combine ashes and water and use as a soap.
- Dried corn husks are used as a scrub brush.

## Hair

- Combine Aloe Vera and Ratchet gel and rub in hair as shampoo.
- Mix Aloe Vera and Ratchet gel and leave it in hair for 10-20 minutes as a hydrating mask. Use maximum once a week.
- Combine Aloe Vera, one egg and mayonnaise and leave in hair for five to ten minutes to strengthen and deeply condition your hair. Use maximum once a week.

## Hibiscus and Aloe hair treatment

### Instructions:

1. Cultivate and gather Aloe leaves from your homegarden or from a neighbor's garden. Can also buy the leaves. Hibiscus petals can be found anywhere, on the side of the street or in a neighbors yard.
2. Mash around ten hibiscus petals in one cup of Aloe gel until you get a smooth paste.
3. Apply this paste to your hair and scalp.
4. Leave the paste in for 45 minutes.
5. Rinse with lukewarm water.
6. Use this mask maximum once a week.

# Teeth

- Grind charcoals up and add to toothpaste to wash teeth. This is especially useful for smokers to help remove tar off teeth.
- Combine ashes with toothpaste to whiten teeth.
- Put Nutmeg or Clove oil on your tooth to numb and loosen a toothache. Reapply every two to three hours for relief.

# Skincare

- Combine Saffron and Coffee grounds and rub on skin as an exfoliant. Leave on skin for five to ten minutes, then wash it off.
- Aloe or Ratchet gel and rub on skin to help get rid of acne scars.

## **Aloe and Coconut water beverage for pimples**

### **Instructions:**

1. Harvest Aloe leaves from your homegarden or from a neighbor's garden. Can also buy the plant in a grocery store.
2. Open the Aloe leaf lengthwise with a knife.
3. Mix the slimy inner flesh from the Aloe leaf with coconut water or orange juice to make it easier to drink.
4. Drink once a day for less than a week.

# Miscellaneous:

## Internal bruises

- Buy Canadian healing oil in a grocery store. Rub it on an internal bruise.



## Stiff Neck

### Corilla Vine Wrap

#### Instructions:

1. Gather Corilla vine from surrounding areas. It grows naturally, but can also be found running up a tree in your yard.
2. Wrap the vine around your neck.
3. Keep in place with a scarf.
4. Keep it there for a day or two.

# Heartburn

## Ginger Tea

### Instructions:

1. Cultivate and gather one Ginger root from your home garden or a neighbor's garden. Only need the root.
2. Smash the root to release the juices.
3. Add Ginger root to a pot of water, set on stove to boil.
4. Let boil for five to seven minutes. If you let it boil for too long, it will burn your mouth like you are drinking pepper.
5. Strain the roots out of the tea.
6. Drink three times a day.

# Sprained ankle

## Turmeric Powder

### Instructions

1. Grind up some Turmeric into a powder and mix it with distilled white vinegar. Rub this on your ankle.
2. Wrap young banana leaves around your ankle.
3. Keep on for at least a week.
4. Bathe foot in blue soap and salt water after.

# Notes

*Add your own recipes and treatments here!*

# Notes



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