

**JUNE 2021 ISSUE NO. 3**  
**EDGEHILLHERBFARM.BLOG**  
**NEWSLETTER**

*When Young Sow Wild Oats,  
But When Old Grow Sage*

- Henry James Byron



Photo caption: *Salvia clevelandii*, Cleveland Sage, in Karen England's garden, late May 2021.

By Karen England, the Edgehill Herb Farmer.

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In the last newsletter, ([that you can read here](#)) I said, while talking about a definite favorite herb of mine, Bay Laurel, "when I am asked what my favorite herb is, I always answer "Cleveland Sage", *Salvia clevelandii*, and I'm not lying. It truly is

my favorite herb . . .” and at that time I promised to write about sage in another newsletter, and this is that newsletter!

*'He that would live for aye,  
Must eat Sage in May.'*

– English proverb.

Cleveland sage is just one of dozens of possible *Salvia* varieties to be grown. I grow other salvias, some herbal and some decorative; *Salvia officinalis*, *Salvia elegans*, *Salvia chamaedryoides*, *Salvia leucantha*, and more... but none of those can compare in my opinion to Cleveland sage in growth habit, fragrance, flavor, or flower.

Early in my herbal education, around 1996, I was lamenting to a friend, author Lynn Alley, that I could not grow common sage. I complained to her (at length) that in

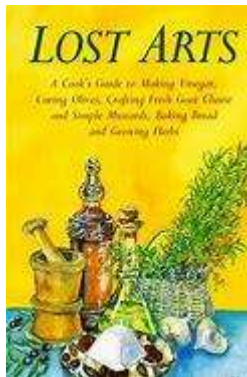


Photo caption: Lynn Alley's 1995 book (revised edition 2000), "Lost Arts," changed Karen's life with its recipe for Cleveland Sage Country Loaf, an herb bread recipe specifically calling for Cleveland sage.

coastal north San Diego County sage plants “always get a yukky fungal wilt and die.” I went

on to tell her how I inevitably end up having to buy plants and bunches of fresh sage at

Thanksgiving time just to use in my turkey stuffing because my common sage plants

always croak. Of course, to make her

understand fully just how sad this was for me, I then had to tell her (at length) how

Thanksgiving is my favorite day of the year,

how it is my all-time favorite meal to eat and

that stuffing with sage is my very favorite dish (next to grilled cheese sandwiches...) ever.

She looked at me a little dumfounded saying - and I quote-

*“Why don’t you just use our native Cleveland sage instead?”*



Bitmoji Karen caption: “Wait, what? Use Cleveland sage in my Thanksgiving stuffing? I can do that?” Oh yeah!

My brain exploded right in front of her! “*Wait, what? I can do that?*” Life as I knew it improved from that moment on, and Cleveland sage became “the herb that saved Thanksgiving.” Frankly, ever since then, I prefer it to common sage in just about everything.

**RECIPE FOR MY THANKSGIVING STUFFING:**



*This recipe has stood the test of time for me and I am confident it will for you as well. Despite its name, I do not stuff the bird but instead bake the stuffing in a casserole pan as a side dish.*

*First, make the bulk Turkey Sausage needed for the recipe, I mix the meat and seasonings the night before and refrigerate until needed (or buy bulk premade turkey sausage, such as breakfast or sweet Italian, and skip this part).*

### **Turkey Sausage –**

1 lb. ground turkey

1/3 cup dry sherry, I make a holiday sherry for sipping and gifting called *Merry Sherry* which is simply sherry infused with fresh rosemary and I use it in my sausage recipe. If you only have cream sherry, just use what you have...

1/4 cup finely chopped onion

1 tablespoon finely chopped fresh parsley

2 teaspoons finely rubbed dry sage (I use dry Cleveland)

1/2 teaspoon sea salt

1/2 teaspoon dried sweet pepper flakes

1/2 teaspoon chili powder

1/4 teaspoon each dried thyme, marjoram, and basil, crushed with a pestle in a mortar

1 clove garlic, minced

Mix all ingredients very well, keep refrigerated until needed.

### **Sage Sausage and Crouton Stuffing -**

1 quart (I use 1 loaf of bread) diced white bread, toasted (spread the bread cubes in a large baking pan that can be used to cook the stuffing later and toast for 30 minutes in a 350-degree f. oven, turning occasionally until browned. Be careful to not burn the diced bread cubes.)

1 - 2 tablespoons unsalted butter

1 ½ cups each diced onion and celery

1 egg, lightly beaten

Handful fresh sage, chopped ( I used Cleveland)

Sea salt and freshly ground black pepper, to taste

½ cup chicken or turkey stock

(optional; add diced brown mushrooms. Note: For vegetarians, substitute diced portobello mushrooms for the ground turkey in the sausage recipe and for vegans use vegan bread, vegetable stock and omit the egg. Bake as a side dish.)

In a large pan, over medium-high heat, sauté the sausage meat in the butter until brown and the sherry has evaporated. If needed, add more butter and add the celery and onions (and mushrooms is using) and sauté all 'til soft. Sprinkle in the chopped sage and sauté one minute more to release the flavors and add all to the toasted bread cubes in the casserole pan. Let cool slightly and vigorously toss in the beaten egg (you do not want scrambled eggs ...) and add some of the stock moisten.

Bake all in a 350-degree f. oven for 45 minutes to an hour. Add more stock midway through cooking time if looking dry.

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Sometime after that life altering conversation with Lynn but still decades ago, I called the Cleveland National Forest Service Botanist, a man whose name I have forgotten, I am not even sure who gave me his number, maybe Lynn did. He answered my call and I inquired about the GRAS (GRAS stands for “generally regarded as safe” [to eat]) status of Cleveland sage as an edible plant. I was told that the local Kumeyaay Indians did indeed eat Cleveland sage but there was no GRAS status associated with the plant at that time. This may have changed since, I do not know, but I can assure you Cleveland sage is not only edible, it is delicious.

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The following summary of Cleveland Sage, *Salvia clevelandii*, and its traditional use is from the University of San Diego:

*“The Cleveland sage is a popular, perennial sage plant that is native to northern Baja and southern California. This evergreen shrub reaches 3-5 feet in height. The leaves are aromatic . . .*

*The Kumeyaay (Tribe) use the seeds of the Cleveland sage to season wheat. Leaves are burned for ceremonial smudges. The seeds are also toasted and ground up to produce a pinole. Pinole is an edible mush made from ground seeds. Leaves are also used to treat a cough or chest cold or to resolve issues with poison oak. Leaves can also be burned inside a residence for the sake of fumigation.”*

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In November 2003, Los Angeles Times staff writer, Emily Green, wrote a great article entitled [‘Under Sage’s Spell’](#) all about her “new obsession” - Cleveland sage. It is full of helpful growing information for those having trouble growing this particular sage and well worth reading.



*“Sage was the Herb of the Year™ in 2001”*



“The Cleveland National Forest, one of 18 National Forests in Region 5, is the southern-most National Forest in California. It is divided into the Descanso, Palomar and Trabuco Ranger Districts which are located in San Diego, Riverside, and Orange counties. The Cleveland National Forest is approximately 465,000 acres in size and extends from Orange/Riverside County to the

north to within 5 miles of the Mexico border on the south.”

- [Cleveland National Forest Service Office](#)

According to Wikipedia: “The Cleveland National Forest was created on July 1, 1908, with the consolidation of Trabuco Canyon National Reserve and San Jacinto National Reserve by President Theodore Roosevelt and named after former president Grover Cleveland.”

Many persons surmising how *Salvia clevelandii* got its name, conjecture something akin to this from Dr. Peter J. Bryant. Dr. Bryant is with the School of Biological Sciences, University of California, Irvine, and has compiled an online *Natural History of Orange County, California and Nearby Places* that states, “*Clevelandii* is a name in honor of someone named Cleveland, possibly Grover Cleveland, 1837-1908, the former president of the United States. Or, as John Johnson suggests, the name is from the fact that the plant is found in the chaparral of the Cleveland National forest, which itself commemorates the name of President Grover Cleveland.”





Caption: Portrait of President Grover Cleveland as found on Wikimedia Commons.

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## Darina Allen's Irish Whiskey Punch Cure-All

(Read the whole cure-all story here <https://edgehillherbfarm.blog/>)

*Darina Allen was my cooking teacher in Ireland at the Ballymaloe Cookery School in County Cork. I think of her often but never more than when I need this cure-all. If you only grow sage, common or Cleveland, for this recipe or its non-alcoholic counterpart and for no other reason, you will thank me.*

*When I make this drink for myself these days, I swap out the cloves in the original recipe for fresh Cleveland Sage blossoms and leaves and Calendula petals and I exchange the granulated sugar for honey and/or Irish Mist, which is an Irish honey liqueur. Otherwise, mine is exactly like my teacher's.*

Makes one drink.

2.5 fluid ounces of Irish whiskey

2 teaspoons white sugar (I use honey)

4 - 6 cloves (Instead of cloves, I use a small handful of Cleveland sage leaves [and blossoms, if available] and calendula petals.)

2 slices fresh lemon

7 fluid oz boiling water

#### DIRECTIONS:

1. Put the whiskey, sugar/honey, cloves or sage and lemon slices into a strong glass or mug.
2. Pour on the boiling water and stir until the sugar has dissolved.
3. Sip contentedly by a blazing fire.

Recipe Source: Festive Food of Ireland, The by Darina Allen, Kyle Cathie Limited, 1992

Note: If you do not want the alcohol, but still want to cure what ails you, then brew yourself a brisk cup of Cleveland sage tea, using fresh or dried sage, strain and sweeten with honey and add fresh lemon juice before sipping as directed above by a fire in winter or chill the brew, and sip it iced in warmer weather 'til you feel better.



Caption: This mug was a gift from my grandmother some 50 years ago and is my vessel of choice for drinking Cleveland sage cure-all. Why this mug? Because when I do not feel well and I drink this curative punch or the tea version from it, I know - "I'll be back on my feet in no time!" But you probably don't have a footed mug so use any heatproof robust glass or ceramic mug that you like.

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Here are two of my favorite sage recipes found online:

1. From Nigella Lawson [One Pan Sage and Onion Chicken and Sausage | Nigella's Recipes | Nigella Lawson](#)
  2. From Jamie Oliver's Food Tube - Gennaro's Chicken Bites with Bacon & Sage  
<https://youtu.be/0iTXnXPB93Y>
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***DID YOU KNOW:*** [Sage Is This Year's Most Popular Shade of Green: Here's How to Decorate with It | Better Homes & Gardens \(bhg.com\)](#)

Google searches can run amok when dealing with herbs because so many herbs are also a color. Mint, violet, lavender, sage, etc., just to name a few. There are many violet-colored cocktails, for example, named violet this or that for the color solely with no violet flavor in them. This happenstance, for the herb interested, can be confusing. That said, according to Better Homes and Gardens, “Over the past year, our homes became a place of sanctuary amid the stress and anxiety of a global pandemic, so it's no wonder that many of us are gravitating toward decorating choices that help us feel calm and grounded. Color is an especially powerful tool in creating a soothing environment, and sage green has recently become a must-have hue for those seeking a serene, restful home.





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According to [Google trend data](#), search interest in sage green reached a record high this year, with the color currently beating out emerald and mint as the most-searched shade of green. "Sage is a lighter, more muted shade of green, so it creates a calming effect in just about any space in the home," says Sue Wadden, director of color marketing at [Sherwin-Williams](#). "It also has such strong ties to the greenery and nature that surrounds our home, so it

really helps bring the outdoors in and make a space feel more grounded."

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*QUESTION OF THE MONTH:* "What is your favorite meal and why?"

- Tell us about your favorite meal in an email to Karen, [karen.England@edgehillherbfarm.blog](mailto:karen.England@edgehillherbfarm.blog), and look for future newsletters to be about the herbs and foods you like best!
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*UNTIL NEXT THYME: In The Next Issue -*

- All about the herbal Rose!
- There is an Edgehill Herb Farm Podcast coming soon!
- We are making soap again! Look for new products in the EHF store.