Dandelion

Taraxacum officinate
Family: Compositae; includes daisy, Echinacea, and marigold

Properties:

- Diuretic
- Hepatic (strengthens liver function)
- Bitter
- Digestive
- Anti-spasmodic
- Laxative
- Tonic

Medicinal Uses:

- Milk from the dandelion will dissolve warts (apply 2-3 times a day for 2-3 months)
- Milk can also fade aging spots (liver spots)
- #1 digestive aid (use in capsule form before meals)
- Bitter tonic good for liver, kidneys, spleen and pancreas
- Blood purifier (root has strongest action)
- Liver stimulant and decongestant
- Bladder and kidney problems
- Breaks down cholesterol and fat
- Gall and Kidney stone prevention and aid (root)
- Bladder infection, won't kill bacteria but helps wash microbes out a urinary tract
- Use for high blood pressure and heart disease
- Increase milk supply in nursing mothers
- Bloating and discomfort of PMS
- Jaundice
- Hepatitis
- Chronic skin problems (by cleansing the liver and kidneys)
- High in trace minerals, iron, calcium, potassium and other nutrients including electrolytes

*roots have the strongest medicinal properties

Methods of Use:

- In the kitchen – this is one herb that must be taken internally to utilize it's properties)

- Decoction of roots or infusion of flowers and leaves
- Powdered sprinkles and in capsules
- Tincture
- Vinegar

In the Kitchen:

Mix with other greens in salad, steam with olive oil and lemon, mix in pesto and smoothies, make an herbal sprinkle or infuse vinegar with the leaf, flower and root. The root can be chopped, roasted and used as a brewed beverage or thrown into soups and stir fries.

In the Garden:

Don't spray the lawn with weed killer and there is your fresh supply, ready to go. Leaves are the best in early spring when they are young but they can be harvested anytime. Pick flowers as they bloom. Roots are harvested in mid summer for the highest medicinal properties, just dig them up, wash them, chop and dehydrate.

Caution:

Some people are allergic to dandelion so patch test before using.