

Keeping the Home Fire Safe: Teachable moments - Spring Foraging

Elder Betty McKenna

Spring Plants – *The renewal of Mother Earth's energies and revitalization is medicine through the foods and plants. Spring is a time of commitment to the letting go of winter energy and casting the weighted feelings of winter thought back to Mother Earth by fasting. We fast to prepare space in our physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual bodies to encircle our body spaces with the birth of new beginnings, starting with our rooted ones.* – Elder Betty McKenna



Prairie Cactus

Prairie cactus is full of nutrients and in early spring they can be picked by cutting them carefully. The prairie cactus can be steamed or roasted.



Pine Tips

The Pine tips are one of those rooted ones that strengthen our immune system during the season's growth. They are bright green new shoots on the pine tree. Pine tips can be used for teas, steamed with vegetables, used in salads greens.



Cattail

The first early shoots of the cattail is a good colon cleanser also good for reduction of mucus production, and it can be eaten raw or cooked.



The Dandelions

The dandelion is also a versatile medicine and food that can be used as a green for salad or steaming as well. Also, the using the yellow leaves as a addition to a soup.



Red Willow

Red willow is a medicine used as a pain reliever by scraping the bark and boiling the red part as a tea or cut pieces to chew for pain relief. The inner white bark is used for smoking in the medicine pipe as well.