

Digging Deep with Cynthia Brian Gourds, Ghouls, and Glorious Garlic

By Cynthia Brian

"Garlick maketh a man wynke, drynke, and stynke." –
Thomas Nash, 16th Century Poet



Peppercorns, sage, shallots, and garlic make a zesty, spicy herbal broth.

Photo Cynthia Brian

Allium sativum, also known as garlic has been revered in medicine, myth, and magic throughout time. Sanskrit records registered the medicinal properties of garlic 5,000 years ago. The Greeks and Babylonians used it for healing purposes, and the Chinese have prescribed garlic treatments for over 3,000 years. The Egyptians reverently buried their Pharaohs with consecrated cloves ensuring sweet dreams, and fed the slaves garlic to increase strength and endurance while building the pyramids. Roman soldiers believed that garlic bestowed bravery and courage. Hippocrates recommended garlic as a medical remedy for infections, digestive disorders, wounds, and even leprosy. In 1858, Louis Pasteur noted garlic's antibacterial qualities. Considered an aphrodisiac, it may be one reason that Tibetan monks weren't allowed to consume garlic before entering a monastery!

Legend has it that garlic repels vampires and wards off the evil eye. Popularized by Bram Stoker's "Dracula," garlic not only is effective against the blood-sucking princes of the night, but also fends off the undead, including witches, warlocks, and werewolves. The Salerno Regimen of Health of the 12th century stated, "Garlic hath powers to save from death, though it makes unsavory breath." Ah yes, we all know the aroma of garlic breath, most certainly not a temptress of amour!

As All Hallowed Eve approaches, we may not be inclined to rub down our chimneys, keyholes, and clothing, or wear allium necklaces as protective gear, but since this month is the perfect time to plant the vigorous vampire repellent, let's dig in.

... continued on page D14

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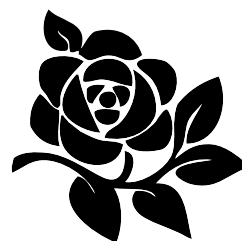
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