



Hazel tree

Corylus cornuta/Beaked hazel

The beaked hazel, a tree native to Quebec belonging to the hazel family, is one of the few trees to have kept its magical reputation. Its branches are still used as a weather forecasting tool. Since they curve according to the atmospheric pressure, they are used to predict rain or nice weather. When sunny periods are on their way, the tree draws its branches in toward itself. When rain is on the horizon, it does the opposite, to give the water better access to its trunk.

A little history...

L'Isle-aux-Coudres owes its name to the hazel tree (coudrier in French). On September 6, 1535, Jacques Cartier anchored his three ships (the Grande-Hermine, Petite-Hermine and Émérillon) and explored the island, which he named Isle-aux-Coudres for its abundance of hazelnuts (coudres).

The Iroquois would cook hazelnuts (and other nuts) with semolina or in corn soup, or reduce them to powder to add to pudding or bread. They also boiled the nuts in water to harvest the oil, which would rise to the top and be skimmed off the surface. This oil was consumed with bread, potatoes, pumpkin, squash, corn and a variety of other foods.

BODY CARE PRODUCTS – LE 1603

WHEN USED EXTERNALLY, hazelnut oil helps soothe skin conditions while hydrating and nourishing dry skin.

EXFOLIATING AND MOISTURIZING SOAP: The finely ground shells and nuts help gently exfoliate while moisturizing the skin of the face and body.

Uses and benefits:

Hazel trees grow in North Africa, Europe and Asia Minor. The fruit contains an edible seed inside its shell. It is harvested in August and gloves must be used to protect the hands from the irritating hairs on the outer husk. A healthy tree can yield up to 4 kg of fruit.

The leaves, fruit (hazelnuts), bark and catkins are the beneficial parts of the tree. The main active ingredients are flavonoids and tannins. However, these parts are also rich in copper, fibre and fatty acids. Hazelnuts also contain zinc, which helps heal wounds and boost the immune system. They contain several vitamins, notably vitamin E, which prevents cell aging. Finally, they are also rich in beneficial fatty acids and vitamin B5.

Hazelnuts are our only oleaginous (oil-producing) fruit. They can be prepared in a variety of ways, from toasting in butter to pureeing, and are used in breads and a number of desserts, including the famous hazelnut nougat. Indigenous people harvested wild hazelnuts from August until October and stored them until they were completely ripe. To remove their prickly outer husk, they would bury the nuts in damp earth for a few days, or put them in bags and strike them with a piece of wood.

Bark: When used internally, hazel bark is an antipyretic (prevents or brings down fever). When used externally, it has healing properties, especially on skin ulcers and atonic wounds. It is prepared in a decoction, using 25 grams of bark per litre of water.

Leaves: Macerated for several hours (25 grams per litre of water) and taken at a dose of two cups per day, the leaves are a venous tonic and an effective vasoconstrictor. The decoction is helpful in treating varicose veins and circulatory issues. When used externally, the leaves are healing and are especially effective at soothing dermatosis.

Hazelnuts: Can be eaten raw (unshelled) with the first two meals of the day. Although not medicinal, the "milk" derived from hazelnuts gently stimulates the intestines, helping to improve their function.