



## Raspberry Leaf

Despite its prickly and assertive appearance, raspberry is a friendly plant, producing luscious berries and leaves that are an herbal mainstay.

Raspberry is a member of the Rosaceae (rose) family and the *Rubus* (blackberry) genus — along with boysenberry, dewberry, thimbleberry, loganberry, and, well, about 300 other berries! It's also known as hindberry, European raspberry, red raspberry, and, in Spanish, *hoja de frambueso*.

Though the fruit has been harvested since prehistoric times, cultivation of raspberry began in earnest in the Middle Ages. The plant has gone through hybridization (mostly between *R. idaeus* and *R. strigosus*) to create many varieties, and it's now grown in most of the temperate regions of the world. Frontier's certified organic raspberry leaf comes from Bulgaria; our other raspberry comes from Poland. Both are *Rubus idaeus*.

A hardy plant, the raspberry tolerates drought and can withstand temperatures of 40 below zero. The deciduous shrub grows in dense thickets up to about six feet tall, all the while spreading underground.

When growing in the wild, the berry bushes are often called brambles. Whether wild or cultivated, if you've ever harvested raspberries or raspberry leaves you'll appreciate that the word *Rubus* is derived from the Latin for thorny shrub. Some canes are more prickly than others, though; older, purplish/brown stems are smoother than new stems. There are even some new, thornless varieties.

The serrated leaves — which appear opposite one another — are medium green with tiny hairs on the underside, giving them a silver-gray appearance (and often causing them to cling together).

Five-petaled, white flowers are arranged in racemes (flowering about equidistant along the stalks). These are followed by red, hollow fruits called aggregates.



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# herb savvy

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Recipes for ...

» Hearty Raspberry Tea Blend

» Raspberry Hair Rinse

... and more!



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# Q&A

## What's an astringent?

An astringent is something that helps contract or shrink tissues. In body care products, astringents help control surface oils and lower the pH of the skin. That's why you'll find them in toners, where they serve to tighten pores and remove excess oil. (Astringent herbs are especially good for oily and blemished skin.) Raspberry is an astringent herb; so are yarrow and rosemary.

## What's the difference between herbal tea, black tea and green tea?

Herbal tea is made from the leaves (and sometimes roots, fruits, seeds and flowers) of any number of plants. Raspberry leaf, for example, comes from the *Rubus idaeus* plant. Chamomile is from *Matricaria recutita*, peppermint from *Mentha piperita*, and so on. Herbal teas are usually caffeine free. They can be made using fresh or dried plant parts, and they're enjoyed individually or in combination with other herbs -- or with black or green teas.

Black tea and green tea are both made from the *Camellia sinensis* plant (or "tea bush"). The difference between them is a matter of processing. To make black tea, the plant leaves are wilted in the sun, then rolled (to break open their cell structure). As the air reaches the leaf tissue, oxidation begins, changing the leaves from green to red to black. The leaves are fully dried after oxidation. The process results in an array of possible flavors: malty, floral, biscuity, smoky, brisk, fragrant and full-bodied. A cup of black tea has more caffeine than green or white teas, but less than a cup of coffee.

To make green tea, the leaves are harvested and then steamed or pan fired rather than oxidized. The leaves are then rolled and dried. This process retains antioxidant compounds in the tea and results in a fresh, grassy flavor.

By the way, green and black aren't the only teas from the *Camellia sinensis* plant. There are also white (delicate and least processed), oolong (processed like black tea but oxidized for only about half as long), and flavored teas, for example.



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Widely enjoyed in teas, raspberry leaf is also useful in body care.

## Raspberry Leaf Tea

Raspberry leaf is the perfect tea herb. The flavor is similar to black teas, astringent and green with a slightly bitter finish. It's delicious on its own, it pairs well with black tea, and it adds oomph to more delicate green and herbal teas. Like other herbal teas, it's caffeine-free, too.



## Hearty Raspberry Tea Blend

Use this basic recipe as a guide, substituting green or herbal tea leaves for black, if you prefer.

½ cup raspberry leaves

½ cup hibiscus flowers

½ cup black tea leaves

Combine all ingredients and store in a glass jar. Use about a teaspoon per cup of tea for brewing (either per cup or in a teapot).

## Lemony Apple Cooler

Combining herbal teas with other beverages — like lemonade or fruit juice — can create new favorites. In this refreshing drink, apple juice complements the raspberry-lemony-flavored tea.

2 tablespoons raspberry leaves

2 cups boiling water

1 tablespoon lemongrass leaves

2 cups apple (or other favorite) juice or sparkling juice

1 teaspoon peppermint leaves

Pour boiling water over herbs. Steep five minutes, or until desired strength (or make a sun tea by steeping herbs in water in the sun). Strain and sweeten, if desired. Cool to room temperature, then add juice. Garnish with lemon slices. Refrigerate leftover beverage.

## Raspberry Leaf Body Care

Raspberry's astringency is useful in skin toners and creams, hair rinses, mouthwashes, poultices and creams.

## Raspberry Hair Rinse

This collection of herbs is especially nice for dark hair. Use it after shampooing, to soften and add shine.

2 tablespoons raspberry leaf

1 tablespoon sage leaf

1 tablespoon rosemary leaf

Combine leaves. Make a strong tea (infusion) using the herbal mixture and one cup of water. Allow to steep until water reaches room temp, then strain.



Learn more about raspberry leaf, herbal teas and true teas, and other related topics at [www.frontiercoop.com](http://www.frontiercoop.com)