

Cleansing Herbs

Cedar

origin: multiple

For creation and dedication of sacred spaces.

Use with juniper for recaning.

Copal

origin: Mesoamerica

For purifying the energy of places and objects.

Frankincense & Myrrh

origin: middle east

For protection and purifications esp. places.

Holy Basil

origin: India

Also called "Tulsi." For cleansing mind, body, and spirit. Can be burned or made into tea.

Palo Santo

origin: Mexico, Mesoamerica, South America

For protection, purification of energy, and infusing blessings.

Sage (esp. White Sage)

origin: Southwest US

Most commonly used cleansing herb. For cleansing places, people, and objects.

Sweet Grass

origin: North America and Eurasia

For attracting benevolent spirits and energies.

Thyme

origin: Greece & Middle East

For cleansing and purifying.

Suggested Readings

Clearing Spaces

by Khi Armand

Cunningham's Encyclopedia of
Magical Herbs

by Scott Cunningham

Herb Magic for Beginners

by Ellen Dugan

Incense Crafting & Use of Magical
Scents

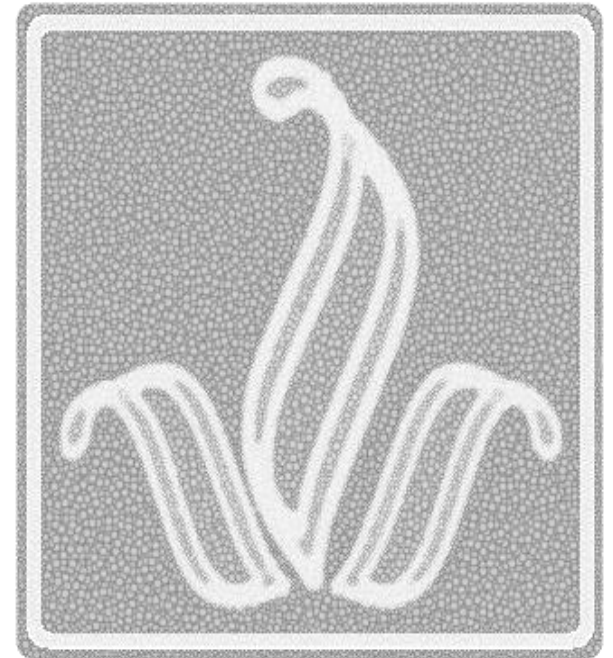
by Carl F. Neal

Incense, Oils & Brews

by Scott Cunningham

Sacred Smoke

by Harvest McCampbell



THE BASICS OF

~

SMOKE

CLEANSING

~



ALWAYS PRACTICE FIRE
SAFETY FOR YOU, YOUR
FAMILY, AND PETS

NUTZ Lewis & Lailani

Other Herbs and Incenses

Other herbs and incenses can be added or mixed with purifying herbs to infuse their own properties into the cleansing smoke. Ask for the Nutz herb info printout for more on the herbs we carry.

Tools

Herbs: each plant has its own properties and histories. Research each to find which fits your needs and preferences.

Loose: loose herbs, powders, and resins should be burned on a coal in a proper dish. Their use is more involved and therefore best for larger ritual cleansings.

Bundles: Most common form in which to find cleansing herbs, esp. sage. Burn one end and hold over a heat resistant dish.

Sticks and Cones: ideal for cleansing in a pinch and on a budget. However, depending on personal beliefs, it may be considered less effective. Use at your own discretion.

Shells: Often used as the dish for bundled incense to bring in the element of water to the cleansing where the herbs represent the earth, burning for fire, and smoke for air.

Feathers, Fans, and Wafting Wands: Used to fan the smoke where it needs to go.

Prayers and Chants: can be used to invoke positive energies and help guide intent.

Visualizations: Another way to help guide intent. Often the image of white light filling the person, place, or object are used, but any soothing or cleansing imagery may be used if it feels right.

How to Cleanse

1. Clean the room, home, and/or area to be cleansed. Negative energy thrives in messes.

If inside: dust shelves, fold laundry, vacuum/sweep/mop floors.

If outside: use proper protection when picking up litter and dispose of properly.

2. Clean yourself with a bath or shower. Use appropriate herbal soaps if possible.
3. Open all doors and windows to give negative energy a place to go.

4. Light your incense.

For a room or area with a single entrance, begin at the farthest point in the room from the door and work from top to bottom and back to front and/or clockwise to draw in positive energy and/or counterclockwise to banish negative energy. Pay special attention to windows and doorways, especially those that see heavy traffic.

For an open area, use the clockwise and/or counterclockwise method.

For a house or multiroom apartment, begin in the farthest room or point from the front door and cleanse room by room, moving towards the front.

For a home with multiple entrances, consider the door with the heaviest traffic the "front" door.

For objects, pass them through the smoke while reciting your prayers and/or visualizing your intent.

For a person work either top to bottom, or bottom to top, visualizing positive energy coming in through your starting point (i.e. head) and negative energy being pushed out of the end point (i.e. feet).

5. Put out your incense by smothering it or letting it burn out.

Any remaining herbs and incense may be used again at a later date. But, if you insist on disposing of the remains of your herbs, return it to the earth in a respectful and eco-friendly manner.

Smoke Cleansing Traditions

Smoke cleansing is a practice which has been used all over the world. Anyone can smoke cleanse in private or in shared ritual, and there are different traditions for doing so around the world.

Smudging is a practice of cleansing in Native American traditions which involves in-depth ritual, though its name has become synonymous with smoke cleansing with white sage.

Recaning is a Norse or Heathen method of smoke cleansing which uses mostly woody plants such as cedar, pine, and juniper.

In Christian churches you will often see priests cleansing with incense smoke from a **Thurible** (a kind of censer) using Frankincense and Myrrh resins. We carry hanging censers and the appropriate resins to fit your religious practices and beliefs.

Fumigating is a tradition found in Mexico, South America, and even parts of Africa. This kind of smoke cleansing is especially used in the banishing of negative energies, using certain herbs and scents to force harmful energies out and away. However, some herbs in this practice can be harmful, so it is best to contact a professional, such as Lailani. Ask for her card and any classes she might have coming up at the register!

