

Natural Insect Repellents

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Third Millennium Alliance

Salve

To make a salve you need:

- Oil. Coconut is best, olive is good, sunflower will work.
- Beeswax
- Lots of plants
- A jar to store it

There are several plants here that are good for this; lemon grass, lemon leaves, palo santo, lucema (this grows along the road from Camarones), rosemary, and cow chamomile (very abundant along the road). Lemon grass is the most notable of these, so be sure to include lots of this. The first thing you need to do is collect all the plants you need, and a couple handfuls is usually enough. The amount depends on how much salve you want to make. Cut the plants into smaller fragments a couple inches long, and make shavings with the palo santo, and put them in the pot. Add the oil, and use enough to just barely cover all the plant material. Simmer this mixture gently for about an hour, or until the plants are all crispy and shriveled. Strain out the plant material, and to make a stronger repellent repeat the process with fresh plants. After that, return the filtered oil back to the stove and melt in the beeswax. You don't need a lot, and the best way to add it is to do it little by little while testing the cooled consistency until it is as thick as you want it. To test it, just pour one drop onto some cool surface, wait for it to harden, and then rub the spot. Once the consistency is right, pour the oil into a jar with a lid and let it sit overnight to cool!

Spray

To make a spray rather than a salve, you need:

- The plants
- Alcohol, preferably cheap ethanol like vodka
- Water
- A spray bottle
- A jar with a tight lid

This is quite easy to make, and it is easier to make smaller amounts. Cut up the plants and put them in the jar, then add enough alcohol to cover them completely. Shake this vigorously and let it sit, the longer the better. A couple weeks will probably work, and a month would be better. Either way, try and shake it

every day. Once enough time has passed, filter out the plant material and dilute the alcohol with water to make the spray. I am not certain how much water to use, so experiment with it!

An alternative to alcohol would be to use steam distillation. However, I am still working out how to set up and use the still, so there will be more on that once I give it a try.