

# DR. CHRISTOPHER'S Herbal Legacy Newsletter

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## Holiday Plants - David Christopher MH

The senses are truly enhanced during the holidays with our wonderful plants. Just think of a white and grey landscape in winter and your sight is drawn to the brilliant color of evergreens. The Holly, Ivy, Mistletoe, Yews and of course pine trees and other evergreens. For millenniums these special plants have given hope for ensuing spring, renewed life and even sparked thoughts of eternal life. The physical manifestations of these "everlasting" plants help Christians remember gospel principles. Living through winter is associated with living beyond this mortal life. The white flower of the Holly reminds of purity. The red berries of the Yew represent the atoning blood and the prickly Holly leaves reminds us of the thorny crown.



The Poinsettia contains the main colors of Christmas. As legend is passed down, a young peasant girl wanted to give the Christ child a gift but had no money, so she gathered a bouquet of weeds from the road side and when presented, it transformed into the beautiful Poinsettia plant. The Mistletoe is an evergreen because of the Oak and other trees. Mistletoe is dependent on these trees for its life; it is a parasite. The tradition of kissing under the Mistletoe started as a Norse custom. I can just imagine an irrepressible Viking invoking his will under this parasite to get that first kiss.

The senses of smell and taste are exhilarated during the Holiday season with Allspice, Cinnamon, Cloves, Peppermint, Rosemary and Thyme. Then think of the wonderful fruits kiwi, oranges, pomegranates, apples, dates, figs, currants, cranberries, blueberries, huckleberries, gooseberries, loganberries, boysenberries and so many more.

What memories are invoked when I smell and then crack open pine nuts. Let's not forget, chestnuts, pecans, hazelnuts, macadamias, walnuts and Brazil nuts. Isn't it strange that we use these wonderful foods so infrequently?

All of the aforementioned plants except Poinsettias have medicinal uses. For example, pine needles are high in Vitamin C and the pitch is anti-bacterial. The Mistletoe is used for cancer

and the Yew has had worldwide acceptance for curing breast cancer. Cinnamon helps control diabetes, Cloves are a good pain killer and diminish bad breath, Peppermint is a digestive aid, Rosemary will help you remember those on your Christmas list and Thyme will help stop the colds you will likely get from kissing strangers under the Mistletoe.

If plants are not an intricate part of your holiday traditions may I suggest starting some new traditions this year, I guarantee they will be cherished for generations to come.

We wish you and yours the happiest of Holiday Seasons.

**David Christopher** is a Master Herbalist and the director of *The School of Natural Healing*. He also co-hosts the popular radio show "A Healthier You" and is a popular international teacher and lecturer.