



Smoke Cleansing Herbs & Plants

White sage and Palo Santo are not the only smoke cleansing herbs available. White sage is held sacred by the indigenous natives of Turtle Island and is utilized in their smudging rituals. Over the years, it has become so commercialized that the demand is no longer sustainable for the plant. While we sometimes cleanse with it, we are sensitive to cultural appropriation and practice plant sustainability by only sourcing from native growers/suppliers and of course, by gratefully accepting gifts from our native friends.

Palo Santo (translation Holy Wood), native to Peru and other South American countries is also quickly falling prey to these same issues. In an effort to assist in plant sustainability, we have gathered alternative smoke cleansing herbs utilized by many cultures around the world.

We encourage you to research what your own ancestors burned during their smoke cleansing rituals or if you live somewhere different than where you were born, you might research what the people there utilized in their rituals. For instance, here in the Appalachia, a blend of mountain mint, cedar, mugwort, and rosemary were often bundled and burned.

The following items can be burned in their powder, loose herb or resin form on charcoal discs. There are many videos online if you want to learn how to use a charcoal disc. Leaves, small branches and flowers with their stems can also be formed into bundles by wrapping the leaves in cotton twine and left to dry (for around 6 weeks depending on humidity levels). To learn how to make a smoke cleansing bundle, search "how to make a smoke cleansing bundle" in your favourite internet browser.

Resins and powders can also be burned in a candle oil diffuser. In the top part, put 1/4 - 1/2 tsp of a mild oil like olive or grapeseed oil. Stir in the powder or place the resin, and light the candle or plug it in. Monitor the oil level and add more as needed. Resins and powders will last days this way so it is more economical and a lot less smoky.

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- Cinnamon
 - Frankincense resin
 - Myrrh resin
 - Copal resin
 - Bay leaves
 - Rosemary leaves
 - Guava leaves
 - Lavender flowers and/or leaves
 - Roses
 - Tobacco leaves (in it's natural loose form – not a cigarette)
 - Cedar leaves
 - Pine needles
 - Pine resin
 - Lemongrass leaves
 - Mugwort

I'm sure there are plenty of other herbs and plants which can be utilized to smoke cleanse. This is just a short list. The most important thing while smoke cleansing, is not the herb or plant material but the prayer and intention behind it.

Note: Both charcoal discs and sticks produce a lot of smoke so you may want to have adequate ventilation. Also most pets and some children are sensitive to the smoke and it can be damaging to their senses. Please be sure to use organic herbs/plants as you don't want to inhale the smoke from herbs or plants that have been treated with chemicals and pesticides.