



## Henderson County Master Gardeners Weekly News Article

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### A Rosy Cup of Tea

by Lydia Holley

Have you ever had rose hip tea? Well, now is the time to indulge!

Roses are a shrub that can give beauty throughout the entire year, with blooms in summer and beautiful hips in winter. Not all roses make hips, but those that do, usually do so profusely.

What is a rose hip? It is the fruit of the rose. Hips come in different sizes, from extremely large to quite small, and in various colors, all depending upon the rose from which they come. The hips hold the seeds that, when planted, can produce another rose. The new rose will most likely not be exactly like the rose from which the seed was procured, as it may have been pollinated with another rose. So, if you grow a rose from a seed, it could be a rose that is unique, even if it resembles its parent in some way.

Studies have shown that rose hip tea is very high in Vitamin C. For the highest concentration of Vitamin C, use your rose hips immediately after picking. Rose hip tea may also slow blood clotting, increase iron absorption, and increase complications in certain disorders. Please consult your doctor if you are on any medications, have a medical condition, or have any questions before using rose hip tea.

So, how do you make rose hip tea? It is very simple, but there are some steps you definitely do not want to skip. The first step is to brave the cold and gather a few rose hips. You want hips that are ripe, not green, but not so old that they have begun to shrivel. Be certain you know the source of your rose hips. You want to make certain the roses have been grown organically, with no pesticides or systemics applied.

Remove any sepals that should remain on the hips, and wash off any dirt. Cut the hips open by slicing them in half. Inside, you will find an abundance of tiny seeds. These are the seeds that can produce a new rose should you decide to plant them. (Seeds will need a stratification period before planting.)

Remove the seeds. The seeds have miniature hairs on the outside, which could cause digestive distress. Should you choose to skip this step, make certain you strain your tea well before drinking.

Boil the prepared hips in some water. Make certain the pan is not aluminum, as aluminum reacts with Vitamin C. Let the hips seep, then remove the hips or strain. Pour into a cup. Add sugar, honey, or your favorite sweetener. You can also add flavoring if you would like. Try adding cinnamon, mint, vanilla, orange, ginger, lemon or lime to your tea, depending upon your personal taste.



Finally, enjoy. You just may find that there is nothing better in winter than curling up with a great gardening book and drinking a hot cup of rose hip tea.

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