



Potpourri and Its Making Process

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Consumer acceptance of naturally dried decorative materials is fairly good. Left-over floriculture produce can be turned into value-added eco-friendly products like Potpourri. Experiments were conducted to evaluate the ability of dried-petals of roses to obtain and retain diverse colour shades for production of potpourri. Dip-dyeing method was employed for tinting of dried rose-petals for potpourri-production. Results have shown that potpourri tinted with edible-dyes and mixed with essential-oils could be commercially produced on a large scale for greater consumer acceptability. Present study confirmed that tinting of dried rose-petals with edible-dyes can enhance the value of potpourri by providing a hue of colours and it helps farmers in earning more returns. Potpourri is a 100 per cent natural product and can be effectively used to combat the detrimental effects of synthetic-fragrances or artificial air-freshners.

Keywords: Potpourri, Rose petals, Tinting, Value addition.

Introduction

Potpourri, a delicate blend of dried flowers, herbs, and spices, has been a staple in home decor and fragrance for centuries. This ancient art form has evolved over time, incorporating various ingredients and techniques. In this article, we'll explore potpourri's rich history, benefits, and the craftsmanship involved in creating these fragrant blends. Potpourri can be defined as a floral product with a combination of dried flowers, leaves, petals, seeds, stems, roots and other plant materials with spices or other fragrance materials and it is used to scent the air. It acts as a natural air/room freshner and can be placed in living room in our houses and buildings, cupboards, drawers, vehicles etc or can be given as gifts. Dry decorative materials are globally accepted as naturals since they are eco-friendly, long lasting and generally inexpensive. It is a major segment of dried flower industry. Thus tinting of rose petals with edible dyes was attempted which can enhance the aesthetic value of potpourri by providing a great variety of colours and it helps farmers in earning more returns from their produce. Dried flowers and its value-added products have great demand in global markets. Traditionally, there are two types of potpourri, "wet" and dry. The method outlined below is the dried method.

Preparation

Most potpourris contain flowers that smell good and are pretty to look at. For this activity, collect as many dried flowers, leaves, berries, etc. Flowers used in potpourri do not have to be as fresh as they do for pressed or dried flowers, so you can use the imperfect blossoms you have left over from other activities.

Materials needed

1. Plant materials

2. Shallow corrugated-cardboard cartons/trays like the flat corrugated trays
3. Sealed containers for storage
4. Essential oils and fixatives (oils and fixatives such as Orris root are available from hobby/craft stores or herb shops).
5. Cannot find orris root powder, leave it out, or substitute 1/2 the amount of cinnamon. The effect will not be the same, but will be pleasant nevertheless.



Making the Potpourri

Potpourris are very easy to make, and because they do not require a high level of manual dexterity, many people can participate meaningfully. Begin by pulling apart large blossoms or sprays of flowers, or plucking smaller blossoms off their stems. Peony blossoms make a great base for potpourri because they are large stems, blossoms, easy to handle, and they are readily available. Pull the blossoms apart and spread the petals thinly in a shallow cardboard box. The cardboard boxes can be stacked criss-cross on each other to save use of counter space. Peony petals feel wonderful to stir, and they cannot really be damaged, so have participants stir the petals every day. On the other hand, rose petals, the "traditional" basis of potpourri, may be difficult to find, pick, and handle. Of course, feel free to include them if you have a ready supply, because they smell and feel wonderful. Lots of wildflowers and lawn flowers are easy to find in large quantities and wonderful in potpourri. Sweet clover, (ordinary white clover blossoms can be saved from your lawn clippings), birdsfoot trefoil, wild sweetpea, red clover, wild yarrow, wild strawberries, and even goldenrod, are a few of the successful potpourri ingredients. Blue and purple flowers are very attractive in potpourri, but chickory is a disappointing addition.

Pansies and Johnny jump-ups dry beautifully if you place them carefully, face-down in a cardboard six-pack box. Let them dry completely before handling. Include aromatic foliage as well. Any type of mint wild or domestic spearmint leaves, lemon balm, even wild catnip, are all welcomed additions to potpourris, wonderful for participants to handle and stir as the leaves dry. Yarrow leaves, juniper or balsam fir sprigs try different greens. Ferns taken from wilted floral arrangements and pulled into small pieces are good in potpourris.



The trick is to collect and create your potpourri throughout the growing season. Continue to dry blossoms and leaves in shallow layers (stirred daily) in the stacked-up boxes. After a batch is dry, pour it into a large plastic bag or other airtight container and store it carefully out of direct light. By fall, you will have a wondrous assortment ready for participants to make their own potpourri.

Not enough flower petals?

Add some colorful pine shavings (from a pet store) tinted with unsweetened powdered drink mix. Strawberry makes red; fruit punch makes rose; lime makes bright green. (Don't try grape, it turns items gray.) Take an envelope of drink mix and place it in a jar with about 1/2 cup of water. Stir to dissolve. Pour in a couple of big handfuls of pine shavings. Push shavings into the liquid and let stand for a few minutes, overnight, or for a week. Pour out the liquid, spread the shavings in a cardboard six-pack box and let them dry. The shavings make a very pretty addition to your potpourri mix. Of course, you CAN use food coloring in water, but the drink mix may be less expensive.

Recipes

After you have assembled your ingredients (see recipes below), you simply layer the materials in a wide container, beginning with the largest ingredient, e.g., the flowers, leaves, berries, twigs, etc. Shift a small amount of the fixative (usually in the form of a spice such as orris root, cinnamon, or cloves) over the first layer of flowers. Add a drop or two of essential oil, and continue with the layers. Seal the container, and allow to set in a cool, dry place for about 6 weeks. We can also make their own individual potpourri in babyfood jars, plastic bowls, margarine tubs, small disposable plastic containers or cups, covered with a lid or plastic wrap (taped to make sure it stays sealed.) Zip-lock bags can also be used for individual potpourris. Participants can select ingredients from an array on a table, add drop or two of oil, seal the container, and each person can have a special, unique potpourri. Make sure that participants can maneuver the potpourri ingredients into their own container, using hands, scoops, or plastic cups; assistance from a staff person may reduce frustration. Putting the containers on a non-skid surface (non-slip shelf lining is inexpensive and readily available) may also help.

1. Garden mix: 8 cups flower petals (examples: rose, statice, delphinium, larkspur, peony, lavender, honeysuckle, bergamot, pansies, marigolds) grated, dried peel of 2 lemons grated, dried peel of 2 oranges 1/4 cup orris root powder 8 drops rose, gardenia, or bergamot oil.

2. Winter Holiday Mix: 2 cups tiny pine cones 2 cups broken pine needles 2 cups peony petals cup rose hips (dried) optional: a handful of whole star anise 1/4 cup orris root powder 8 drops bayberry oil.

3. Spicy mix: 4 cups flower petals, 3 cups of a mixture of any of the following: broken cinnamon sticks, juniper berries, bayberries, whole allspice, whole star anise, whole cloves grated, dried peel of 3 oranges 2 tbsp each of powdered cinnamon & cloves 8 drops of rose-cinnamon, or cinnamon oil.

4. Poor mans Potpourri: Any mixture of flower petals -- from roadside, lawn, field, garden, etc. any mixture of greens including dried ferns saved from floral arrangements grated, dried peel of oranges or lemons as desired spices from the supermarket shelf as desired essential oil as desired.

Conclusion

Potpourri is a timeless and versatile art form that has evolved over centuries, captivating our senses and enriching our lives. From its ancient origins to modern-day applications, potpourri continues to delight and inspire, offering a unique blend of fragrance, aesthetics, and

emotional connection. potpourri offers a simple yet effective way to enhance our living spaces, promote relaxation, and explore creativity. By understanding its history, ingredients, and craftsmanship, we can appreciate the beauty and benefits of potpourri, inviting its warmth and fragrance into our daily lives. Potpourri is an art form that combines fragrance, aesthetics, and craftsmanship. From its ancient origins to modern-day applications, potpourri continues to captivate our senses and enhance our living spaces.