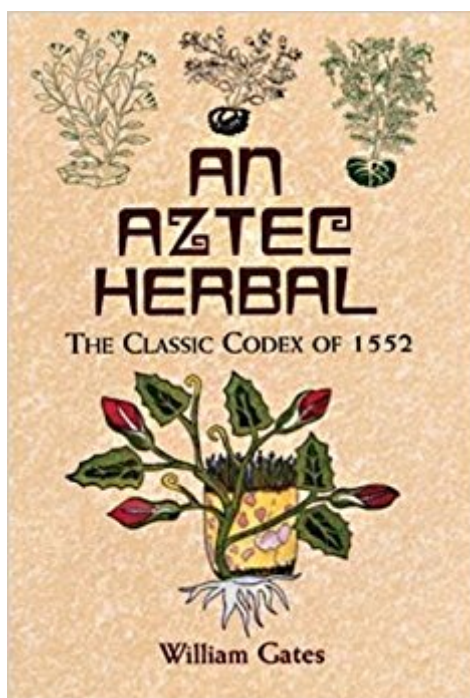


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An Aztec Herbal: The Classic Codex Of 1552



Synopsis

Originally written in the Aztec language, Nahuatl, in 1552, this classic codex was the first herbal and medical text compiled in the New World. The author of this extraordinarily rare and valuable document was Martín de la Cruz, an Aztec physician, whose work was subsequently translated into Latin by an Aztec nobleman, Juan Badiano. The book was translated into English in 1939 by William Gates. In these pages are centuries-old Aztec remedies for boils, hair loss, cataracts, insomnia, sore throats, hiccups, gout, lesions, wounds, joint diseases, tumors, and scores of other ailments. Over 180 black-and-white figures of the plants augment the text, along with 38 full color illustrations made specially for the Gates edition. Additional supplements include an introduction to the Mexican botanical system, an analytical index of the plants, and a new Introduction by anthropologist Bruce Byland of the City University of New York. Remarkable for its scope, detail, careful observation, and accurate description, An Aztec Herbal stands as a magnificent example of the impressive medical knowledge of indigenous peoples. This handsome and inexpensive edition of a long-unavailable work promises to engender a new appreciation of the skill and inventiveness of Aztec medical practices in particular and of Native American science in general.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Text: English (translation) Original Language: Latin

This little book has an amazing history. Supposedly, it's one of the only copies that was left behind that documented the medicinal uses of Aztec healers. It was not known to have still existed until it

was given back as a gift to Mexico by the Vatican only in our life time. The Aztecs knowledge of herbal remedies are fascinating to read about. Most of the ailments we experience today are mentioned but the extensive set of plants and even animal remains are worth learning about since many of the particular ingredients are also commonly used in Southeast Asia today by a number of healers. For instance the use of the dogs gallbladder, and other species alike in curing skin infections or fractures. Also the use of urine which today is frowned upon but considered an important valuable remedy by many first nations. The codex is valuable in the way it combines many different unrelated ingredients, similar to how we now isolate a particular active chemical from a particular plant. At first glance you might wonder how in the world did they think of combining these plants with a burnt hawks wing for example? But after further examination you will appreciate the reasons behind the complex mix of ingredients and realize the far reaching value of these medicines used by people who survived for thousands of years healing themselves by using only the very ingredients that existed around them. Since most people today can barely understand the ingredients used in their shampoos, at least the Aztecs used ingredients that we could actually visually imagine.

The buyer should note before purchasing not a lot of the book lists plant names in nahuatl. Some of them have been identified and translated through scholarly study, and are listed in the glossary section. However, not all of the plants have been translated. This is a source of study, as well as an incomplete Botanical documentation.

Great information and tips

excellent information

It's an interesting edition to anyone's library

Great research material

This paperback was way over my head. I am not familiar with the language and all the plants names were given in Spanish? It's well illustrated and an interesting read if you want to spend a bit of time studying the text. B. Harley

Good information for research, price is adequate, but the reproduction of the images is not of great quality. I would have been willing to pay for better images.

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