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## Living Homegrown Podcast – Episode 169 Homemade Body Care Gifts

Show Notes are at: [www.LivingHomegrown.com/169](http://www.LivingHomegrown.com/169)

Stephanie: It really does make a big difference when something comes from your heart. I love getting a handmade gift, and I love giving them because I'm giving myself the fun of crafting at the same time, and I'd rather do that than be out in the store shopping.

Theresa: This is the Living Homegrown podcast, episode 169.

Announcer: Welcome to the Living Homegrown podcast, where it's all about how to live farm fresh without the farm. To help guide the way to a more flavorful and sustainable lifestyle is your host, national PBS TV producer and canning expert, Theresa Loe.

Theresa: Hey there, everybody. Welcome to the podcast. I'm your host, Theresa Loe, and this podcast is where we talk about living farm fresh without having a farm now. That includes organic small space food gardening and artisan food crafts like canning, fermenting, and even baking homemade bread. It's all about the different ways that we can live closer to our food and take small, delicious steps towards living a more sustainable lifestyle. Now, before we get started with today, I want to let you know about a brand new resource guide that we just put up in the last month or so on my website. I've packaged together a free farm fresh resource guide for you. This is a guide filled with my very favorite resources for what I use in my own organic garden, like my favorite gardening tools, and my kitchen, like my favorite fermenting and dehydrating tools, and so much more. To get this guide, you can just go to [livinghomegrown.com/fresh](http://livinghomegrown.com/fresh) and I'll have everything there for you for free.

All right. Let's dive into today's episode, which is all about handmade botanical gifts. At the time of this recording it is Fall, and this particular episode is going to be coming out at the very, very end of November right after Thanksgiving. I wanted to do a specific episode that was geared towards gift making. And I thought this is the perfect topic to make it combined gardening and botanical things, things that we might be growing in our garden with something that we can make to give to others at the holiday time. It doesn't matter what holiday you might be celebrating, or if you've decided maybe it's too busy to do something now, but maybe after the first of the year if you have someone's birthday or Valentine's Day, anytime during the year, you can make things that come from your own garden and it just is so special.

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I know I personally love getting a homemade or handmade gift from someone. It means that they gave of their time, and if it comes from their garden as well, it means that they're giving part of their garden to me, which is really touching, and it always means a lot. So I brought on Stephanie Rose, who we've actually had on the episode several times. This will be her third or fourth appearance. She was on episode 163 where we talked about body care products from the garden, and she was on episode 118, where we just talked about handmade garden gifts, anything with dried botanicals. I thought she would be the perfect person to come on and talk about gift giving for this episode as well. So she's going to talk about handmade or homemade botanical gifts.

I brought her on also because one of the books that Stephanie wrote just came out and it's called Home Apothecary: Easy Ideas For Making and Packaging Bath Balms, Salts, Scrubs and More. It's the packaging part that I find so much fun. Even if you make something, or even if you have something that you are giving as a gift, if you can add botanicals to the packaging as well, it makes it even more special and a part of your garden that you're giving to people. And I thought that would be kind of fun to bring on Stephanie to talk about this because she is a master at making the packaging absolutely gorgeous.

Let me tell you a little bit about Stephanie, and then I'll tell you what we're going to be talking about. Stephanie Rose is an award winning author and blogger. She runs the blog [gardentherapy.ca](http://gardentherapy.ca). Garden Therapy started as a personal blog many years ago, and has blossomed into a community of people who love to do garden and craft projects, and live a better life through plants. Stephanie's creative take on both crafting and gardening, has been featured in a ton of publications such as Better Homes and Gardens, HGTV, Romantic Homes magazine, Country Woman magazine, and Women's Day magazine. Stephanie has written several books, and I will list them all in the show notes for today's episode, but let me give you just a couple of them here. She has written, Make and Take Home Apothecary, the latest book that just came out. Also the Natural Beauty Recipe book, and Garden Made: A Year of Seasonal Projects to Beautify Your Garden and Your Life.

Also, just this year, Stephanie launched the Garden Therapy Seed Collection with Garden Trends, and this is a line of eight exclusive seed starting kits to create your own DIY dream garden. Stephanie spends her time as a gardener, writer, and mother and artist in Vancouver, Canada, and I'm so excited to have her back because she is super, super talented.

What we're going to talk about today are some things that you can make that come from your garden and you don't need any special equipment. You don't need anything special to make these handmade crafts. What I really wanted Stephanie to get across here in today's episode is that there's nothing complicated or scary or anything like that when it comes to making these types of botanical gifts. We're going to cover things like what sort of equipment do

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you need? How exactly do you put some of these ingredients together? And she's gonna tell us exactly how to make something called Tub Tea. And she was generous enough to share the recipe with us for tub tea, and I just wanted to let you know that the complete printable PDF for tub tea is in the show notes for today's episode. To get that, you can go there and download it and print it out, and all you need to do is go to [livinghomegrown.com/169](http://livinghomegrown.com/169), and everything will be right there for you. We'll also have links to an article that Stephanie talks about in today's interview, which is all about preservatives when you're making homemade garden products. And so I want you to have all of this information so I'm putting it all together in the show notes.

With that let's dive into our interview with Stephanie Rose From Garden Therapy.

Hey Stephanie. Thanks so much for coming back on the show.

Stephanie: Hi Theresa, thanks for having me.

Theresa: I was really excited that you did another book. I've had you on the show several times, and I love your blog, and I love all the books that you do, and when I saw this one I thought it would be such a great one to cover just before the holidays. We have you in the lineup, so this one will be coming out right at the end of November, so people can listen to this and dive right in to making some home crafted gifts that really are botanical, come from their garden and no one can get them anywhere else. So I'm really excited to have you on.

Stephanie: Yeah, thanks so much. When I make these different products as gifts in the Winter time or in the Fall. It's a way to get my garden therapy. It's the way to keep in touch with nature, and it's a really special thing to be able to give something away that you've made by hand. I say it's not just handmade, but it's heart made.

Theresa: Aww, yeah, that's absolutely true. Whenever I get something that someone either brought from their garden and created something, or that they've made from hand, it means that they gave of their time, and they've given of themselves, and that means so much to me. Especially as a gardener, I think we realize the effort that went into it, it makes it even more special. So you mentioned Garden Therapy, so I would love for people if they have never heard you on the show before, I would love if you could tell everybody about your blog, Garden Therapy, and describe what it is that you do if someone has never visited your blog before.

Stephanie: Sure. Yeah. I started Garden Therapy 10 years ago as a blog because I had to stop working suddenly. I became suddenly ill, and used gardening as my self-directed rehabilitation program. Instead of pumping myself up with a whole

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bunch of medication, and getting surgeries and doing that to recover, I ended up going back to nature. I scaled back. I looked at what I ate. I looked at how I lived my life. I used outdoors and fresh air as my exercise. I grew food to feed my body, and I also looked at what I put on my skin. It's amazing when you think about how much products, how many chemicals, how many things your body has to process in a day. The air we breathe, the food we eat and everything that goes on our skin gets absorbed and we have to filter it out somehow.

I looked at everything, and started living my life a really different way. I started blogging about the projects that I was working on, and I put them up on Garden Therapy. At first it was mostly about my garden and then it started to ... People asked how I was making the things. What were the recipes that I was using? How was I making the crafts? So I started putting up DIY instructions for how to do each of the steps, and kind of found this was my love. This was the thing that I absolutely loved to do. I love to teach. I love to share how I made things. People are always asking me to, if I could sell them. Can you sell me your jams? Can you sell me ... I'm sure you hear the same thing as-

Theresa: Yes. Yes.

Stephanie: ... and I'm like, no, I will give them to you. Invite me to dinner and I will give them to you. But I'll teach you how to do it because that's really where my passion came from. My passion comes from finding these creative ideas, doing the research to figure out what's good for me and my family, and then being able to share it. The blog for 10 years has grown and become popular, and I've met this amazing group of people who are just really into healing their bodies and living a better life through plants.

Theresa: Yeah, you bring up such a great point. Not only in connecting with nature and getting to share what it is that we're doing in our backyard, but when you say about how what we put on our skin goes into our body, I think so many times we forget that that is the case. We think, "Oh, I'm just going to slather this lotion on" and not think about what's in it. And when you create it yourself, you can read all those ingredients, and pronounce them and you know exactly what's in it, and it's so similar to what I teach here about what we put on our plate, and knowing all the ingredients on what we're feeding our bodies. And so I love that you show people how to do this so that they know what they're putting on their bodies as well. So, really great.

Stephanie: Yes. I can't even express how important it is. Our skin is our largest organ, and it really does absorb everything we put in. Now that being said, our bodies are wonderful bio-filters. We take in all those chemicals, and then our organs work really well to bring them out. But if you don't have to put those things on your body in the first place, they're safe because they've been tested. For some people they are safe, and for some people they are not safe. So why put all this

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extra stuff on your body that you don't need to put in? It's exactly going really back to basics, and if you like to make your own cheese, and make your own jams and harvest food from your garden, then why wouldn't you want to take those same elements and put them on your body?

Theresa: Absolutely. So true. Well, today we're going to be talking about your latest book, Home Apothecary. Before we dive into that, I would love for you to tell everybody some of the other books that you've written because I think as they listened to you, and hear about some of these wonderful things that we can make, I know they're going to be interested in some of the other books that you have. So, tell everybody some of the other things that you've written.

Stephanie: Great. Okay, so I'm a maker. And so all of my books are project books. They're books where you can take things that you have grown in the garden are found in nature and being able to craft them into something. The first book that I wrote is called Garden Made, and it's seasonal garden projects. Projects that you can make throughout every season of the year, that take those wonderful elements of the garden like wreaths, and at Christmas you can make beautiful garlands for your fireplace or Christmas tree ornaments from the previous year's Christmas tree. That's all in my book Garden Made, and that one came out in 2015.

Then I've got about eight books now. Well, I've got seven books and another one coming out. [crosstalk]

Theresa: You've got a lot going on.

Stephanie: Yeah. But the ones that I'm really focusing on right now, especially in this season, are natural beauty. I focus on gardening from about January all the way through until June, and then I start harvesting everything that I've planted and grown. Drying herbs, drying botanicals, pressing botanicals so that I can use them in all of the natural beauty products. I have a book called Natural Beauty, and that one is a recipe book that has all the recipes that I use at home. It's got lotions, and body butters, and healing salves, and facial spray, toners and things like that. It's all natural, comes from the garden, very easy to make recipes, and that one's even measured, which is not typical for skincare recipes. That one's even measured in cups to make it really accessible. You don't even need a kitchen scale for that one.

But typically you would measure everything that you're doing for skincare products using a kitchen scale. And so when I did the Home Apothecary book, it's the one that just came out this June, I've got recipes that have exact measurements, so you can make the exact projects look like they do on the pages so that they can be given as gifts. This book is a little bit different because

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it's got the projects, and then a section on how to wrap them and make them just stunning to give them away.

Theresa: Well, I have to say something on that because you do so much on your blog and everything is so well done. Like that's what I love about you, aside that I just love you anyway. But I love that you take everything really step by step, and it's really easy to follow, and then you always have the most beautiful images with your how-to that is very inspirational. In other words, when I see how you've packaged it up, then I can see how I can give it as a gift. And I love that you include gift wrapping ideas in this one as well. And so much of what you do can make fantastic gifts, but this whole Home Apothecary is all about things that you can give to someone else as well as a gift to yourself. So it's really good.

I want to touch on something though that you said about equipment because I think one of the things that hold people back from wanting to dive into making some of their own botanicals or any kind of home gift craft like this where you're making lotions and things like that, is that they think that you need a lot of special equipment, and you always tell everybody you don't. You don't need anything special. Right?

Stephanie: Oh, you probably have everything in your kitchen right now. The most specialized you would need for a project book like this is a double boiler, which you can make with pretty much any set of two pots or a pot to put water in, and then a heat proof container inside, so a mason jar. I mean, you can make a double boiler out of anything for these. It doesn't need specific temperatures, so as long as you're melting the ingredients slowly, that's all you need the double boiler for. And a kitchen scale. I mean these are things that you most likely have in your kitchen. You don't need spatulas, like I said, mason jars, maybe a bowl, but I'm sure you have those in your kitchen.

Theresa: Yeah. And even kitchen scale. A lot of people don't think ... maybe they don't do a lot of baking. I have a kitchen scale because I use it for when I'm doing bread making and things like that. But they're not expensive. So even if you didn't have one, and you were looking at a recipe that called for weight versus measure, a kitchen scale you can get it anywhere, like any shop that has anything for kitchen, even spatulas will have a kitchen scale and they're very inexpensive.

Stephanie: Yeah. And like I said in the Natural Beauty recipe book, the one that I do at home, it's more like cooking, so I didn't use scale measurements in that book, so it's quite easy. But in Home Apothecary I wanted the measurements to be exact so that you could replicate the beauty of each one of the products. I want you to be able to walk away and have it look just like it does on the pages. And they're so easy to make, it just means following the directions, and having the right measurements.

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- Theresa: Very good. What are some of the types of recipes that you cover in Home Apothecary? Like I noticed you had bath salts, you had some bath things. What else do you have in there?
- Stephanie: Yeah, so there's bath balms, bath salts, a really nice herbal foot soak, some body scrubs, bath melts, lotion bars, a massage bar. Basically there's two methods to making everything in the book. There's the mix it together in a bowl and put it into some sort of packaging. So if you can make a salad really you can make those ones.
- Theresa: Yeah, I love that.
- Stephanie: And then there's the melt and pour. You'll melt the ingredients together, and pour it into a mold. For example, you would melt together oils and fats to make a lotion bar, and then pour it into a silicone baking mold. You could put it into an ice cube tray. You could put it something that you have round. Silicone molds aren't absolutely necessary, but they do make some really beautiful lotion bars.
- Theresa: Oh, that's a good point. So you don't have to make it fancy, you could just do it in like an ice cube tray, and it would work perfectly.
- Stephanie: Yeah. You could even put it in a cupcake tray top for baking muffins or cupcakes. And you could even pour them right into little paper cups and then they'd be almost ready to give.
- Theresa: Yes. You could use paper cups that maybe had like a Christmas theme if you were doing it at Christmas time. That's a really good idea.
- Something you mentioned there, bath melts. I want you to tell everybody what that is because you've talked to us about bath melts before, but I'm not sure everyone knows bath melt is.
- Stephanie: Yeah. Bath melt ... Some people call them bath truffles, which sounds ... I mean you're starting to get the idea for what it is if you call it a truffle or melt. It's some fats that are put together into a small shape so that you can melt it in the tub. When you get in, you put it into a warm tub, and if you use cocoa butter or coconut oil or things that melt at warm temperatures. Then it adds just a little bit of oil to your water, and you can add botanicals and essential oils as well. And these oils and butters just gently absorb into your skin while you're in the bath. I mean, I started doing this ... When I came home from Florida, I was at the Epcot Flower and Garden Show, and when I got back to rainy Vancouver, my skin was so dry from just all of a sudden being dry and then being moist. And like I rushed downstairs at 11:00 at night because I couldn't sleep. I made bath melts, and then I threw one in the tub and had a bath and then I was fine. I couldn't sleep my skin was so itchy.

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Theresa: Oh, that's so funny. Yes. Oh, I love that. Yeah.

Now something else I know you keep mentioning about putting botanicals in, so let's define what we mean by botanicals. I'm assuming it can be dried herbs, but it could also be flowers, right?

Stephanie: Yeah. I usually say botanicals now rather than just herbs because I really expanding from just using lavender and calendula, which could be considered herbs because there are also edible flowers, but also pressing flowers. Right on the front of the Home Apothecary book I've got pressed violas that have all the beautiful color, and there I've just pressed them right onto the top of the bath balm, so they look so pretty. And then when you put the bath balm into the tub, the flower floats in the tub along with the calendula petals and the lavender and all the other things that you've included in it. So yeah, I dry rose, calendula, peony pedals, centaurea, pretty much anything I can get my hands on. I just tried drying a bunch of salvia to see how the flowers would dry, and if they would retain their color and it looks really great. I've got bright red ... they've shrunk quite small, but they've got beautiful colors. Sunflowers, I mean really, there's just so much that you can take from the garden and dry and then be able to use in these products to add natural color and natural interest.

Theresa: Yeah, it makes it really pretty. And I love the bath balm on the cover, and if anyone doesn't know what a bath balm is, I'll have you explain. But I made these with my boys one year. They made them for Christmas, and we've made them for Easter and different holidays. And it's something that you could do, supervised, but you could do it with kids. So explain what a bath balm is.

Stephanie: Well, bath balms have the canner's favorite ingredient, citric acid.

Theresa: Yes. Yes.

Stephanie: Got citric acid mixed with baking soda and Epson Salts and a starch, like cornstarch or a different kind of starch with essential oils to give it scent, and then you use a little bit of moisture. There's a bit of technique involved, so I'll let you read the book to see how the technique goes because it's really the kind of technique you have to show to get it to exact consistency, and then press it into a mold, and it hardens into that mold. Then once you take that balm and throw it into a bathtub, it fizzes like a Jacuzzi.

Theresa: It does. The kids love it.

Stephanie: Yeah, it's great. And it releases the aroma of the essential oils. It releases all the pedals and other elements that you've added in. I know some people with kids will add a toy in the middle, so that sort of becomes uncovered-

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Theresa: That's a great idea.

Stephanie: Yeah. Stick a little toy in the center, and then when it fizzes they get a bath toy as well.

Theresa: Oh, that's great.

Stephanie: Yeah. But I like the pedals floating. So rose and calendula look really nice floating in the bathtub. And if you add natural colors then you're also not going to have all this stuff dying the sides of your tub. You might have a little bit of color, but it's gonna be a lot easier to clean up than sort of the ones that you can buy that have got the bright oranges and blues and things like that. I do everything with all natural ingredients like ground up powders. Like tumeric, just a little bit goes a long way to give it sort of that Easter-eggy color rather than the glowing sun of-

Theresa: Yeah. Neon. Yeah. That's a great point though about things like floating in the tub, and I know some of the things that you have in there are things that we can make, but if people don't want to have something floating in the tub, one of the recipes that you have in the book is for tub tea, which I love. I love the way you package it. I love the whole thing. Explain to everybody what is tub tea.

Stephanie: All the ingredients that you're adding into the bath balm are really good for your skin too. It's not just because it's a fun experience, but it's really nice to sort of sit in a tub with the fragrances, and with the skin softening elements. I've also found that as much as I love having the pedals as sort of a spa experience, I do have a bath pretty much every day, and sometimes cleaning out all the pedals can be a little bit overwhelming. So instead of having to have that spa experience, or the cleanup of the spa staff, and I get to still have the spa experience, I've been taking all those botanicals and putting them into paper tea filters. You take all of the bath salts ... You wouldn't do it with the bath balm ingredients, but instead you would start with a base of Epson salts. And then you can add a lot of skin healing, a colloidal oatmeal, Himalayan pink salt, Dead Sea salt, milk, powdered milk, all these different things, plus any of the pedals. So if you wanted to add lavender, rose pedals, scents, all of that, mix it together in a bowl and then you can scoop it into a paper tea filter.

You can buy these in a pack of 100, in an extra large size, usually at the grocery store, but you can get them online really easily. I've had my one pack of 100 for probably four years, and I give away a lot of tub tea, and I still have them.

Theresa: That's great.

Stephanie: Yeah, once you get those paper tea filters, you're off and running. And I've seen some people take tub teas as well and put them into a little muslin bag, which

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looks really cute. You'd take that tub tea, and whether it's at the paper filter or the muslin bag and you would soak it in the tub, and it would release everything, the salts would dissolve, and then at cleanup time all you have to do is pull the bag out. The reason why I like the paper teabags is because you can just throw the whole thing in the compost, full of pedals that are leftover in the paper can go in the compost. With the muslin bag, you would have to empty it out, rinse it, and then you could fill it again. So it's really up to you how you'd like to do that. But I like the paper teabags as well because I have a sewing machine and it's got a whole bunch of fancy stitches. Because I'm always out in the garden, I never get a chance to sew. So I just sew a fancy stitch of hearts, or flowers, or leaves or something like that along the top of the tub tea, and it closes it and then it looks like a gorgeous gift, and it gets me a chance to use my fancy stitches.

Theresa: Oh, that's so cool. Yeah. I don't have a fancy stitch thing on my sewing machine, but that's a great idea. You could just zip across the top though if you want it to.

Stephanie: Oh yeah. A regular stitch would look great [crosstalk]

Theresa: But I like the idea of-

Stephanie: Fancy thread do you could put in a purple thread or something, all machines have a zigzag or something.

Theresa: Yeah. Oh sure. Yeah, absolutely. But I love the idea of doing a color. I hadn't thought of that, but that would be really good. And have you ever tried the teabags that you iron closed, or do you find that they don't stay closed?

Stephanie: I haven't tried them.

Theresa: Yeah. I've used those years and years ago and they were pretty good, but I'll have to see if I still have a source for that. But that's another ... They're large and you fill them up and it's just another option if you don't have a sewing machine, but they ironed closed. And you like tore one off and you could fill it, and then you had like a little stickum or something that was heat sensitive, and you could iron it.

I love this because you can make up a bunch of these. You mix up all your ingredients, your Epson salts, powdered milk, whatever the herbs you're going to use, and then you just spoon it into the bag, seal them up. But then you had some really cute ways of packaging them up. Like you could do a group of them together. You could put them in a jar. What are some of the ways that you'd like to give the tub tea?

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- Stephanie: Yeah, you could put a group of them together in a little box. You could make a little tag that said that it was tub tea, so it actually look like a teabag-
- Theresa: Oh, that's cute. Yeah.
- Stephanie: ... and tie that on. And say you did a calendula and mint one, or a chamomile and mint one and you could say it's sleepy time tub tea or [inaudible] something like that.

But I also did just regular labels in the book. I did a picture of them with them sewn closed. And then I have like a regular gift tag, just a white gift tag, and I took a stamp and stamped the words Tub Tea, and then hand wrote, "Add one bag to warm bath" and then I stamped the word, "Enjoy." I just connected that with a teeny tiny little clothes pan and it's just that really natural sort of maker feel, something that you would see at a craft show at the holidays. Something that looks very artisanal, handmade, but also elevated in style. I think you could just a simple gift tag can add a little bit of extra flair and give the person who gets it the instructions for how to use it.

- Theresa: Yeah, absolutely. And it makes it so it's something they could never find anywhere else and just makes it even extra special. I love that one.

You talked at the beginning about there's really two different types of gifts that you have in this particular book. One was the mix it up and then you're ready to go, and the other one was something that's melted. Could you talk a little bit about like a recipe, how it works when you have to melt together and make a recipe like a lotion bar or something like that?

- Stephanie: Yeah. It's pretty much the same as what we were talking about with the lavender bath melts. A lotion bar. I've got a massage bar, a lotion bar and bath melts that all really have the same type of method, which is melt and pour. You would bring the ingredients up to a temperature that just melts them together. You don't need to heat them, you definitely don't want to cook them, but you just want to melt the ingredients. Stir them together, add fragrance, add color if you're using, add botanicals, if you're using, and then pour it into a mold.

With the calendula lotion bars, I love these. They're perfect in the summer. They've got a little bit of beeswax. They've got some oil, some grape seed oil, and they've got cocoa butter, melting these together I add a nice bright ... I always find that calendula petals look really nice with the scent of orange, so I add a brighter citrus scent, especially for summer or something like a grapefruit or a sweet orange. And then you can use this lotion bar to rub on your skin. Instead of having the lotion pump, it's just a bar. It goes right on your skin like a bar of soap would and leaves all that nice moisture behind, and keeps you moisturized for quite a bit of time.

The one thing I should say though, when I talk about using a calendula lotion bar in summer that's centered with orange, is that orange essential oil or citrus essential oils can increase photosensitivity, so it can increase the opportunity for your skin to burn more if you use citrus oils on your skin. So that's something that I would normally use at the end of the day after my bath, rather than at the beginning of the day right before I go out in the sun.

Theresa: And that's very important. Yes. Also when we're using something for fragrance, I know you always talk about this, but there is a difference between pure essential oils and then something that's synthetic called fragrance oils. I'm sure you want us all to use the pure essential oils.

Stephanie: Yeah. Everything in my books, it comes from nature. It comes from plants. There's no glitter. There's no sparkly ribbons. There is no paint or artificial dyes or artificial fragrances. You can't get the scent of strawberry kiwi or cucumber from essential oils because they don't have them extracted, so they're not available. If you're finding fragrance oils or scents in that, they're usually a synthetic oil. I don't use those in any of these products because the whole idea of replacing what I use on my skin with something better is that I'm trying to get back to basics, and I feel like when you add natural elements to your products, it's not just masking ... For example, if you're using a lotion bar for dry skin, that lotion bar is nourishing your skin at the same time as giving it the healing properties of the essential oils, of the botanicals and it's more like a vitamin, rather than a pain killer where you've got really dry skin in your slathering some lotion on to try to help it be less uncomfortable, it's healing it at the same time. The more naturally you get, the more benefits you'll get to your skin.

Theresa: Perfect. Yes. This is something also, as you were talking, I'm thinking, so if we're making these gifts and we're going to be giving them at the holidays, or really anytime of the year, how long should we tell someone is the shelf life? Is there like a rule of thumb for expiration dates on some of these homemade gifts?

Stephanie: Well, you know me, I like everything easy, so I don't want things to be too difficult. And so all of the projects that I have in the books that I've put out are projects that don't require any additional preservatives, and the expiry dates last as long as the expiry dates on the ingredients you're using. So for example, if you're making a lotion, bar, bath melt and the oils and the cocoa butter have expiry dates on them, that's how long your end product will end up lasting. Once you introduce water into any ingredients, so like a liquid lotion or even when water gets into the scrubs that you're using, that's when mold and bacteria are invited into it as well. That's when you would need a preservative. When you make a lotion, not a lotion bar, but when you make a lotion that's liquid and comes out of a pump, you need to add preservatives to that, and there are natural preservatives available.

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I just wrote a big article on Garden Therapy explaining all of this, sharing my most favorite moisturizing lotion recipe, and discussing the preservatives, the emollients and all the things. But for this purpose, I wanted everything to be really simple, and not talk about having to add things to really keep mold and bacteria and that stuff out. So this does it naturally. Very similar to canning. Usually in canning, you're using sugar, you're using salt, you're using fats to preserve food. Well, it's the same thing here. We're using the same concepts, and making them into skincare products that have shelf life.

Theresa: Okay, perfect to know. And I'm gonna have you give us the link to that preservative article that you just wrote, so we can put that in the show notes as well. Because everything you write is always so good, and I know that'll be really informative. Everyone can go to the show notes for today's episode to get that, and it'll totally explain everything and that'll be great.

Well Stephanie, I just want to thank you for coming on. This is so good. It's such perfect timing for us to make some things for maybe friends or family this holiday season, and I'm really excited that you came on to share about your book. Thank you.

Stephanie: Thank you so much for having me. I hope that people get the opportunity to handcraft something, and get out there and touch natural elements because it really does make a big difference when something comes from your heart. I love getting a handmade gift, and I love giving them because I'm giving myself the fun of crafting at the same time, and I'd rather do that than be out in the store shopping.

Theresa: Me too. Me Too. I'd much rather get something that's home crafted, and I'd much rather give something that's home crafted. Perfect.

Stephanie: Yeah. Great. Well, thank you so much for having me on the show. It's been an absolute pleasure. It's my third time, and hopefully I'll be back again because I absolutely love ... I love your podcast, and always have so much fun when I'm talking to you.

Theresa: Thanks, so I know you'll be back.

Stephanie: Great.

Theresa: Well, I hope you enjoyed that interview with Stephanie Rose of Garden Therapy, the author of Home Apothecary: Easy Ideas for Making and Packaging Bath Bombs, Salts, Scrubs and More. So remember the recipe that Stephanie shared about how to make tub tea that is in the show notes and you can just print it out along with information and links to everything else that Stephanie mentioned. And to get to the show notes, just go to [livinghomegrown.com/169](http://livinghomegrown.com/169).



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That's it for today. Thanks so much for taking time out of your busy day to listen to this podcast and I hope it gave you a little bit of inspiration of some things that you can make for the holiday season. So until next time, just try to live a little more local, seasonal, and homegrown. Take care of everybody.

Announcer: That's all for this episode of the Living Homegrown podcast. Visit [livinghomegrown.com](http://livinghomegrown.com) to download Theresa's free Canning Resource Guide and find more tips on how to live farm fresh without the farm. Be sure to join Theresa Loe next time on the Living Homegrown podcast.