



Sarsaparilla – The Root of Purification & Vitality

Botanical Profile

- Latin Name: *Smilax ornata* (also *Smilax officinalis*, *Smilax regelii*)
- Alternative Names: Indian Sarsaparilla, Honduran Sarsaparilla, Zarzaparrilla
- Plant Family: Smilacaceae
- Parts Used: Root
- Origin: Native to Central and South America, Caribbean, and parts of Asia

Sarsaparilla is a deep, earthy root known for its powerful cleansing and revitalising properties. At Peridotflow, we recognise sarsaparilla as a foundational plant of purification—working through the blood, lymph, and hormonal systems to restore balance, vitality, and clarity. Its sweet-bitter, mineral-rich nature supports the body’s natural detoxification while building inner resilience.

Blood Purifier and Detoxification Support

Sarsaparilla is traditionally used to cleanse the blood, reduce toxic heat, and support the elimination of metabolic waste. It’s helpful in skin conditions, chronic inflammation, and systemic congestion—gently clearing what no longer serves.

Hormonal Balance and Endocrine Support

The root contains plant sterols that may support hormone balance, especially in reproductive and adrenal systems. Sarsaparilla is often used to balance libido, ease symptoms of menopause or PMS, and assist with chronic fatigue or burnout.

Anti-inflammatory and Joint Support

With its saponin content, sarsaparilla helps reduce inflammation in the joints and connective tissues. It’s used in herbal approaches for arthritis, rheumatism, and stiffness—supporting fluid movement and relief from heat or swelling.

Liver and Lymphatic System Cleanser

Sarsaparilla supports detoxification pathways by stimulating the liver and lymph. Its ability to gently mobilise stagnant fluids makes it ideal in long-term cleansing protocols or when supporting post-illness recovery.

Skin Conditions and Clear Complexion

Historically used for psoriasis, eczema, and acne, sarsaparilla helps clear skin by addressing internal heat, inflammation, and poor elimination. It partners well with herbs that support the liver and kidneys for radiant, resilient skin.

Folklore & History

Sarsaparilla was introduced to Europe in the 16th century as a remedy for syphilis and skin diseases. Its Spanish name, zarzaparrilla, translates to 'bramble vine,' referencing its trailing, spiny growth. It later became a popular base for root beer and tonic beverages, beloved for both its flavour and its 'blood-cleansing' reputation.

Traditional Usage

Used as a decoction or tincture, sarsaparilla is a common ingredient in spring detox blends. It is often combined with burdock, red clover, or cleavers to support elimination and hormonal balance. Its saponins also improve absorption of other herbs.

Herbal Actions

Alterative, Anti-inflammatory, Hormone Modulator, Lymphatic, Hepatic, Tonic, Antirheumatic, Carminative

Energetics & Tissue States

Temperature: Neutral to slightly Cooling

Moisture: Slightly Drying

Tissue States: Stagnant, Toxic, Damp/Hot, Atrophic

Active Compounds

- Saponins – anti-inflammatory, hormone-like effects
- Plant sterols – support hormonal balance
- Flavonoids – antioxidant and vascular support
- Minerals – blood-nourishing and tonifying

Dosage & Preparation

- Decoction: 1–2 tsp dried root per cup, simmer 20–30 mins, 1–2x/day
- Tincture: 2–4 ml up to 3x/day
- Blend with: burdock root, cleavers, dandelion root for full-body cleansing

Safety & Contraindications

- Generally safe in recommended doses
- Avoid during pregnancy and breastfeeding due to potential hormone-modulating effects
- Excess use may cause mild stomach upset

Herbal Pairings

- Burdock Root – for deeper liver and skin detox
- Red Clover – to support hormonal and lymphatic systems
- Licorice Root – to soften and nourish adrenal function
- Cleavers – to move stagnant lymph
- Schisandra – for long-term vitality and skin glow

Peridotflow Perspective

Sarsaparilla is the root we reach for when the body needs renewal and clarity. It brings strength to tired systems, light to congested pathways, and grounded support to skin, hormones, and spirit. A true purifier, it clears the way for deeper vitality and radiance.