



## Mountain Medicine: The Herbal Remedies of Tommie Bass

*By Darryl Patton*

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Tommie Bass was a pivotal figure in the changing landscape of American herbalism and an inspiration to a whole generation of younger herbalists. Tommie practiced what he preached, living a life true to his beliefs, creating an archetype whose influence transcended the Appalachian area of north Alabama where he lived. The time-tested techniques and pharmacopoeia of Appalachian fold medicine form a component of traditional Western fold medicine that embodies American self-reliance and creativity, which is still evolving today. This book presents, often in his own words, the living legacy that Tommie left us of plants and their healing powers.

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## **Mountain Medicine: The Herbal Remedies of Tommie Bass** By Darryl Patton Bibliography

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### Editorial Review

#### Review

If you want an illuminating look at the philosophy and wisdom of Tommie Bass, the legendary herbalist from Alabama, you won't find a more informative book than Darryl Patton's *Mountain Medicine*. Put together from tapes of the extensive conversations Patton had with Tommie Bass before the herbalist died in 1996 at the age of 88, the book offers descriptions of Bass's botanical knowledge in Bass's own words. In addition to Tommie Bass's home-spun advice, Patton also offers wide-ranging information about the herbs Bass used in his practice. The stories in this book are just the kind you'd expect to hear if you were sitting around Tommie Bass's shack, the pot bellied stove warmed with a comforting fire, himself reeling off tale after tale. Whether or not you're interested in herbs, the stories are entertaining in their own right. And the book's compelling, first hand insight into a rural, traditional Alabama lifestyle that is rapidly disappearing, makes it a valuable historical artifact and a folkways treasure. --Phyllis Light, RH

Tommie Bass was one of two highly influential folk herbalists (Catfish Gray was the other) that practiced in the American South in the mid-20th century. Bass deserves this posthumous tribute to his life and to his simple but highly effective herbal practice. The book is a loving tribute to a great herbalist, full of beautiful color photos of the plants he used and details on the way the plants are used and prepared. I especially like the emphasis on lesser-known Southeastern plants such as Dogwood, Cucumber Magnolia, Crossvine, Bay Laurel, Peach, Rabbit Tobacco, Redbud, and Sourwood. --David Winston, RH

#### About the Author

Darryl Patton is also the author of *Tommie Bass: Herb Doctor of Shinbone Ridge*, *America's Goat Man* (Mr. Ches McCartney), and co-author of *Grandpa Whiting's Mountain Medicine*. Darryl has been featured in *FoxFire Magazine* as well as on Public Broadcasting Service and Comedy Central. For 12 years, he was privileged to study under the late A.L. Tommie Bass, one of the last of the old mountain herb doctors. During this time, Tommie taught Darryl the identification and uses for literally thousands of the plants found on the mountains of Appalachia. It is this passion for plants and the folk characters of America's past that led Darryl to research and write *Mountain Medicine*. Currently an adjunct faculty member of Clayton College of Natural Health, Darryl is in demand as a speaker on the identification and historical uses of herbs as medicine. A past publisher of *Wilderness Way Magazine*, Darryl is the editor and publisher of *Stalking The Wild...The Magazine of Outdoor Discovery*, *The Southern Herbalist*, and co-founder of *Wild Alabama*, a nationally recognized environmental magazine. Primitive and wilderness survival skills, outdoorsman, adventure traveler, herbalist you name it and Darryl does it. He is a member of Randall's Adventure Training and is a veteran of many trips to the Peruvian Amazon where he graduated from the Peruvian Air Force's Jungle Operations and Survival School. He has instructed classes and training seminars on primitive and wilderness survival skills. Living with his wife Jane on Lookout Mountain, not far from Tommie's shack, Darryl operates a wilderness survival training school in the mountains of north Alabama. He can be reached by writing P.O. Box 8481, Gadsden, AL 35402.

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**Edna Garza:**

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