

BOTANICALLY DYED EASTER EGGS



This project is inspired by and adapted from the blog *Reading My Tea Leaves*. In our after school programs and Farm in the Garden summer camp we play with natural dyes, often made from food waste. This botanically dyed Easter egg project follows the same basic principles as any natural dye project. Prepare dye, prepare the materials to be dyed, wait. You'll want to leave at least 24 hours for this project. Hands-on time is about 1 hour, then you'll wait to see the results the next day.

Materials: pot, cutting board, knife, large jars or bowls, white vinegar, hard-boiled eggs, natural dye materials: red cabbage, powdered turmeric, beets.

Step 1. Cut vegetables and combine them with water. Simmer covered on the stovetop. See recipes on page 2.

Step 2. Strain liquids and submerge hard-boiled eggs.

Step 3. For a deep rich color, leave eggs submerged in the dye for up to 24 hours.

*Note: 1 cup of dye is enough to dye 3 eggs.



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Cabbage: Simmer half a cup of sliced red cabbage in 1 cup of water for half an hour, covered. Scoop out boiled cabbage and strain the liquid through a colander and into your vessel for dyeing the eggs. Add 2 Tbs white vinegar.

Turmeric: Add 1-2 tbs of powdered turmeric to one cup of warm water stir to dissolve. A higher concentration of turmeric will result in a deeper dye. Add 2 Tbs white vinegar.

Beets: Simmer 1 cup of sliced red beets in 1 cup of water for half an hour, covered. Scoop out beets and strain the liquid through a colander and into your vessel for dyeing the eggs. Add 2 Tbs white vinegar.

Variations

- Before dying, draw on your eggs with a white crayon; the wax of the crayon will prevent the dye from adhering to the egg, and your design will appear.
- Use white eggs for pastel colors and brown eggs for jewel tones.
- If you are using fresh eggs, be sure to scrub them before dying, as their natural coating will prevent the dye from sticking.
- To create a sun print effect, pick small flowers or leaves and place them on your eggs. Wrap the eggs in cheesecloth or old stockings secured with a rubber band to hold the covering in place. Follow all other directions and submerge eggs. After removing your eggs from the dye, unwrap them and peel off flowers/leaves. The image of the flower/leaf will appear on your egg.



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