**A “GOOD” STING, STINGING NETTLE**

**SIMILAR IN LOOK TO LEMON BALM, BUT WITH ‘STICKERS’ AND NO LEMON SCENT.**

Me, “Oh wow. That looks like stinging nettle!”

Me, “OUCH!!”

I learned about wild stinging nettle a few years ago while visiting my Great Grandfather’s home of origin, Pitomaca, Croatia. After noticing a lot of “green” meals, I asked about the proliferation of greenness. Our meals there became quite entertaining. My first morning, I was up early and meet the owner’s son sitting outside under an umbrella of trees. He introduced himself and then said, “Let me get you a cup of coffee. Would you like American coffee? Or a good cup of coffee?”

At dinner, on our first night, we were handed a menu. With no one in a hurry, we read the whole menu and decided on some special dishes of local cuisine. The waiter came to take our order. Then he said to us in his broken English, “We don’t have ‘that’ but we do have Kopriva, a delicious soup of the day.”

Same with the main dish, “We don’t have this, but we have that.” And yes, same with my friend’s wine choice. For each meal thereafter we didn’t even look at the menu, just asked, “What do you recommend?” We ate delicious meals, mostly green, my favorite food color. It was heavenly.

One morning when things seemed to have slowed down, I asked about the “green” of so many foods. Bernard, the owner’s son, told us the story of their whole family collecting stinging nettle annually in a back area. He said they spend days collecting bags full, drying them, and storing them for the upcoming year. He went on to tell us that nettle is their most useful and healthy food that they try to include in as many dishes as possible.

This explained the green pasta, the seasoning in the potato dishes, and the green bread.

In my studying and use of stinging nettle, I’ve come to understand the enthusiasm of having access to a wild herb with a reputation as a superfood. I plan to encourage the spread of what I’ve found on my property so that I can also “collect stinging nettle annually in my back area” as Bernard and his family does.

Some nettle dishes that I’ve since discovered and continue to enjoy are:

 [Lemon-nettle tea](https://www.wolfcollege.com/how-to-make-stinging-nettle-tea/)

As a natural, healthy, easy-to-grow superfood, stinging nettle offers the following benefits.

* Antimicrobial
* Antioxidant
* Pain-reliever due to its anti-inflammatory abilities
* Nutritionally dense, providing many vitamins and minerals
* Helps with detoxification
* Can provide relief to respiratory issues
* May help lower blood pressure

 [Pesto](https://honest-food.net/nettle-pesto/)

 [Omelet-](https://savedaily.co.uk/nettle-omelet-recipe-bitter-sweet/) Green eggs and no ham 😊

 [Easy Quiche](https://www.lifeslittlesweets.com/stinging-nettle-crustless-quiche/)

 [Lentil-Wild Nettle soup](https://veryveganval.com/2019/04/29/lentil-and-nettle-soup-stinging-nettle-benefits-recipe/)

 [Green Pasta](https://www.wildedible.com/blog/handmade-nettle-pasta)

 [Nettle-Feta Spanakopita](https://www.bbcgoodfood.com/recipes/nettle-spanakopita)

 [Chicken with Nettle](https://www.gettystewart.com/creamy-chicken-nettle/)

 [Onion Phyllo Pastry with Nettle](https://bonapeti.com/recipes/r-26205-Onion_Phyllo_Pastry_with_Nettle)

 [Chickpea Nettle Burger](https://eatsleepwild.com/chickpea-nettle-burgers/)

To explore more science-backed benefits: <https://www.organicfacts.net/health-benefits/herbs-and-spices/stinging-nettle.html>