

# Orchid Essence Healing



## **A Guide to the Living Tree Orchid Essences**

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Foreword by Martin Shaw

# Why Orchids?

With tens of thousands of flower essences being made in the world today (there are over 60 essence-making operations in the UK alone for example), surely there is little need for more..? It is true that there are many flower and other vibrational essences available now, and many of these are of a very high quality. But there are both special reasons for the making of essences with orchids, and also distinct challenges.

The family Orchidaceae represents nearly 10% of the flowering plants on Earth. There are some 800 genera, with very roughly 30,000 species. The vast majority of these are found in the tropics, although orchids are found on every continent except Antarctica. Because the vast majority of orchids are tropical, the typical amateur orchid grower tends to have an interest dominated by these plants. And it isn't simply the great number of species: there are also over 400,000 hybrids which humans have helped bring into being in the past 150 years.

The first person in the essence community to bring attention to the special qualities of orchids was Andreas Korte\* of Germany, who pointed out in 1991 that orchid essences were able to have an effect on chakras that exist above our physical body - something which non-orchid essences are rarely able to do. Many others have made essences with orchids, but have simply included them in their overall range, without giving them particular focus. Star Riparetti of California has made a small range of essences with orchids found in the wild in Peru. The Alaskan Essences include a number of orchids amongst the 200+ flower, gem and environmental essences in their range. But it was Shabd-sangeet Khalsa (SSK) with her Dancing Light Orchid Essences who was the first person to make essences with orchids in a greenhouse, and then give these essences her principle focus. The passion she feels for orchids is powerfully expressed, and infectious. And so it was through her interest that I discovered my own.

However, to make essences with tropical orchids whilst living in the northern hemisphere pretty much necessitates having a greenhouse. That's the baseline requirement, as otherwise you are limited to what can fit and is willing to grow on your windowsills. (There are exceptions of course, but these tend to include reports of peeling wallpaper as the humidity climbs...) Beyond that you need the plants themselves, and as you begin a small collection, you will quickly find that such an interest is expensive! Beyond the realm of what is on offer in the supermarkets, there is a vast realm of beautiful diversity, and gone are the days when a single orchid might sell for the price of a house. The orchids I have bought over the years have cost on average just over £20 (roughly \$30) each. That's not too bad, but when you have over 200 or 300 it quickly begins to challenge your bank balance.

Add to this the need to be obsessed, to be bitten by the orchid bug. Without that you simply will not have the inclination to devote countless hours looking after your plants on a daily basis year in and year out. I have been growing orchids for over a decade now, and must have spent close to 10,000 hours directly involved with caring for the orchids in my collection. It is not something to undertake lightly!

Beyond that there is a further requirement for orchid-essence making: some knowledge of

*\* IFER used to distribute Andreas' essences in the UK, and we hosted his Orchid Essence workshop twice in our early years. However, Andreas' interest was in the essences primarily, and not the orchids themselves, and so hosting his seminars did not awaken my interest in orchids. See our section "The People & The Story".*

**Andean Fire** In the course of our many lifetimes, the trials and challenges we have faced will often have left their mark. The deeper the experience in crisis, the greater the impact on our being which can persist through time and lives. The natural courage and sense of purpose of the soul may become dimmed, unless these deep memories can be healed. Andean Fire helps one to regain the soul's natural courage, which provides the wind in the sails for pursuing our purpose.

In meditation Heather saw herself visiting scenes of overwhelming devastation, then standing at the foot of Christ on the cross. Heather touched his blood on the ground, then her heart with it, which brought about a deep shift in her; she then re-visited the scenes of devastation but was now far better able to handle herself, and be of help to others.

*Phragmipedium Andean Fire* is a primary cross of *Phrag. besseae* and *Phrag. lindleyanum*.



**Angelic Canopy** was made a week after 9/11, and would have helped with the deep sense of despondency and deep emotional & even spiritual trauma which those terrible events engendered. We had several orchids in bloom at the time, and Heather noticed that this one, unlike the others, had not 'dimmed' in response to the trauma of spirit we all felt. When the essence was made, Heather saw a woman dressed in a chiffon gown the same colours as the orchid, carrying a bowl filled with the sweet nectar which oozes from the blooms, and as she walked around us, she sprinkled the nectar into our auras, saying "Balm for the troubled soul".

Angelic Canopy remains our most universal essence, with its wonderful sense of reassurance about the fundamental goodness of life. Applied topically it will push negative energies out of the chakras within the body. For the same reason it is very good for cleansing crystals: just place a crystal in a bowl of water, and add 3 drops of Angelic Canopy.

An extremely useful essence for anyone who is upset, anxious or feeling low. Helpful for the challenges of being a parent.

*Laeliocattleya Angel Love* is a warm-growing hybrid based on two genera from Central and South America. The genus *Cattleya* has nearly 50 species, and the genus *Laelia* roughly 20 species. There have been many thousands of *Laeliocattleya* hybrids made over the past 120 years. Most of these, like the species they derive from, are astonishingly beautiful.



## Afterword

The first of the Living Tree Orchid Essences was made in September 1998, three years after our flower essence business started. The purpose of the International Flower Essence Repertoire (IFER) was the importing and distribution of the finest flower essences from around the world. We carried a few established ranges from the UK, but our focus was on helping the very best quality ranges from abroad to reach the UK market with integrity. In this capacity IFER has represented some 24 different ranges over the years since December 1995, when we were appointed as UK Distributor for the Petite Fleur Essences of Texas.

In order to help therapists and members of the public appreciate and understand how to use the various ranges we carried, IFER also began a program of weekend workshops at our premises, the Living Tree in Milland, near Liphook in Hampshire, England. These were taught by the various essence makers whose lines we represented. That we would begin producing our own line of essences was in those first few years completely unforeseen, and was indeed unexpected when it did begin to happen. But there was also a great benefit for me in hosting these numerous workshops, as the strengths (and weaknesses) of the various essence-making approaches could be reflected upon; it was for me not unlike attending a post-graduate University of Flower Essences. Our essence-making process is a result of that long process, and is, I believe, a good one. It has the merit of not only not harming or stressing the plants, but also enables the essence to be as free as possible from the emotional and energetic 'footprint' of the essence makers. Should anyone have any questions relating to our essence-making procedure, I am only too happy to share further about it - although the description provided in this book does relay all the salient details.

SSK once mentioned to me that her initial reluctance to make essences with greenhouse-grown orchids disappeared when she realized that these beings - the orchids - were in our greenhouses as volunteers, that they positively *wanted* to work with us in this manner. That has been what I have found as well over the past eleven years. The greenhouse is a magical space; if you get the chance to visit Gigha, be sure to ask to experience this for yourself. I am in the greenhouse usually at least an hour a day, which is always very special. Caring for the orchids is like spending time with old friends. Stay in Achamore House for a night or two and see for yourself... I'm always happy to show our guests the very special space which is the home to our orchids.



