

Business Name: Birchwood Botanicals
Owner: Christie Tomlin
Web site: <http://www.birchwoodbotanicals.com/>



What makes your products unique, unusual, or special?

All of our products are made with farm-fresh herbs & flowers. We organically grow tons of calendula, chamomile, lemon balm, roses, and a collection of perennial medicinal plants. All our products are handcrafted in small batches using fresh herbal oils, butters, local beeswax, fragrance and essential oils.

What is one thing people would be surprised to know about you or your business?

We are located in the city limits of Bellingham on a 3 ½ acre parcel. All of our herbs and plants are grown on the farm. We handpick, dry and process the herbs all on our farm, infusing the fresh and dried herbs in high-quality oils, spirits, witch hazel, and apple cider vinegar.

What's the best thing about being a farmer/crafter?

One of the best things about being a farmer is the joy of working outside and seeing our harvests turn into the final body care products. It gives us a sense of independence and the ability to follow our passions.

What's the worst?

Hmm... battling the weather is always a challenge and my daughter Courtney says "always having dirty fingernails and needing a manicure."

What do you like best about selling at the Bellingham Farmers Market?

I love the energy at market and all the interesting people we meet... locals, tourists, customers from all over visiting! The variety of entertainment we look forward to each week had been amazing. To be able to make a connection with the growers and producers of our food makes our dinner table "full circle"!

When you were a kid, is this what you thought you'd be doing as a grown-up?

As a little girl, my only vision was to be a mother, and as a mother, my vision was to create a healthy, adequate, sustainable life for my children, which the farmers' market helps to provide.

What is your favorite memory?

My favorite memories are visiting my grown children wherever their travels take them... England, Hawaii, Texas, Montana... I love to travel and my daughters always treat me like a queen when visiting.

Please give us a brief bio.

I am a wife and mother to three daughters, and I have two grandsons. I was born and raised, 4th generation, in Whatcom County. My mother comes from a family of local fishermen and my father comes from a background of farming from Lynden. I was raised on local seafood and homegrown food, learning to sew, cook and preserve at an early age. Our vacations were spent out on the water fishing, harvesting local seafood, and exploring the San Juans.

It felt natural for me when my interests led me to study natural childbirth, herbal medicine, growing my own food, and to go back to my roots to live a simple, wholesome life. In the 80's I worked at Wonderland Teas & Spices, learning from Linda Quintana. This is where I started making herbal body care and studying herbal medicine. After many years of gardening and growing herbs, I decided to create Birchwood Botanicals. It has enabled me to be a "stay at home mom" and work out of my home.

What are your hobbies and how did you get started with them?

Well, currently my hobbies are my work, creating herbal oils, balms and teas. I love herb and vegetable gardening, cooking with fresh local foods, reading anything educational and sewing in the winter. I am an avid reader and I love my collection of books.

What word best describes you?

Creative and excited!

Do you have a guilty pleasure?

I love a good healthy shot of Patron!