



Leonhart Fuchs: The New Herbal of 1543

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Potent plants: Mother Nature's medicine cabinet

Leonhart Fuchs (1501—1566,) was a founding father of modern botany, honored to this day in the vivid flower, and corresponding color, Fuchsia. In 1543, Fuchs combined his **masterful botanical knowledge** with **groundbreaking medical research** in his *New Herbal*, a catalog of some 500 types of plants and their healing properties.

While a dependable scientific reference, *The New Herbal* won fame above all with the detail and quality of its illustrations. Alongside essays describing the plants' features, origins, and medicinal powers, Fuchs presented each plant with **meticulous woodcut illustrations**, refining the ability for swift species identification and setting **new standards for accuracy and quality in botanical publications**. From the age of great exploration, *The New Herbal* also documented plant types from the recently discovered New World, offering the **first visual record of tobacco, maize, kidney bean, and cactus**.

This fresh TASCHEN reprint is based on **Fuchs's personal, hand-colored copy**, which has miraculously survived four-and-a-half centuries in pristine condition. Fascinating for historians of medicine and art, gardeners, and anyone interested in herbal medicine, the volume features over **500 splendid illustrations**, excerpted facsimiles of Fuchs's original texts, and **an essay exploring the history of healing herbs**.

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