

Sangre de Drago (croton lechleri)

Common Names: Drago, dragon's blood, sangue de drago.

Location: The Amazon rainforest.

Description: The sangre de drago tree grows thirty to one hundred feet high, sometimes reaching the canopy. When the trunk of the tree is cut or wounded, a resinous sap oozes out, as if the tree were bleeding. This explains the name; sangre di drago is Spanish for "blood of the dragon." The red resin, or "blood," of sangre de drago has been used for hundreds of years as a healing resource both by native peoples of the Amazon basin and by African and European immigrants to the Amazon.

Properties: Sangre de drago ointment forms a "second skin" to stop inflammation and prevent infection.

Uses: It fights bacterial, fungal, and viral infections. Tinctures of the herb help to stop bleeding due to peptic ulcers. Benefits of sangre de drago for specific health conditions include treatment of cuts and scrapes, abrasions, eczema, insect bites, diarrhea and vaginitis.

Doses: Sangre de drago is available in ointments and tinctures. Some importers sell pure liquid resin, which should be taken in doses of no more than 2 to 3 drops in a cup of warm water.