SALVES

To make a basic salve:

1 1/2 cup oil (eg. olive oil, almond oil)
3/4 oz beeswax
1/2 oz cocoa butter (or use all beeswax)
1 oz calendula petals or comfrey leaf or chickweed leaf
Warm oil in a double boiler or stainless steel pot - do not overheat, keep warm to the touch.
Add the herb and leave warming for 3-5 hours. Remove from heat and strain. Put aside.

Measure out the beeswax and cocoa butter in a stainless steel pot or double boiler. Melt at low heat. If you wish you can add 1 tablespoon of honey. When all is melted add the herbal oil infusion, stir in well until all is melted. Let cool.
If you wish you can now add 5-6 drops of essential oil (eg. lavender for skin problems). Keep stirring if you are using honey. Pour into containers. Because the honey separates and you have to keep stirring it, when putting into containers it is not as smooth as you like so you can warm the containers to let everything relax and melt a bit.

MAKING YOUR OWN HEALING BALMS

We keep a huge data base of formulas and recipes from all over the world in the last 25 years. Here is one that works with fir, pine or spruce trees (which we have growing in our area). I like pine the best. It uses juniper berries also, but don't use juniper needles for this.

Pick 3 cups pine needles, add 3 tablespoons recently dried, cut and grated juniper berries, and also 1-3 tablespoons grated fresh orange peel. Mix together and fill a 1 quart glass jar 2/3 full. Fill up to top with oil (almond or grapeseed or extra virgin olive). Put in a knife and stir a bit to release any bubbles.

Now put the lid on and keep it in a warmish place for 4 weeks.

Strain out the oil and reserve it. Using a double boiler - put water in the bottom pot, your oil in the top pot and warm the oil on your stove. Add grated beeswax (the ratio is 3 cups oil to 4 oz beeswax). When the beeswax has melted, stir the mixture together with a clean stainless steel fork or knife, then take from the heat, dry the bottom of the pot and pour into salve containers. Cool before capping and store in a cool, dark place.

You can use this remedy for sore muscles, as a mild chest rub for chest congestion and as an ointment for dry, chapped or cracked skin.