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*Salvia divinorum*

**CHIA** is a hybrid perennial. Found in Mexico it has tiny bluish flowers.

It is also known as *Hierba de la Pastora* (Mexican Indian), *Hierba de la Virgen* (Mexican Indian), *Pipiltzintzintli* (Mexican-Aztec), *Salvia of the seers*, *Wahrsagesalbei* (German), *Yerba de la pastora* (Spanish), and *Zaubersalbei* (German).

*Divinorum* is derived from Latin *divinus* (divine) with reference to the hallucinogenic properties of these species.

Familiar to several local Middle American Indian tribes the seeds were used by them to produce a refreshing drink. Some authorities have suggested that the Aztecs used chia as an intoxicant.

As with some Hawaiian practices the plant was used to detect evil-doers. Today it is said to be cultivated secretly by the Mazatec Indians for its hallucinatory properties. It seems that harvesting the plant is itself a ritual and can be accompanied with prayers to the Virgin Mary and various undisclosed incantations. During divinatory rituals participants either chew the fresh or crushed leaves or drink them in an infusion.

Oil extracted from these seeds has been used in painting (art).

It has been noted by some authorities that the plant has been taken for its hallucinogenic properties when no other alternative has been available.