



# Kava: The Pacific Elixir: The Definitive Guide to Its Ethnobotany, History, and Chemistry

By Vincent Lebot, Mark Merlin, Lamont Lindstrom

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**Kava: The Pacific Elixir: The Definitive Guide to Its Ethnobotany, History, and Chemistry** By Vincent Lebot, Mark Merlin, Lamont Lindstrom

- The most comprehensive book ever written on nature's most effective stress-relieving plant.
- First paperback edition of the classic comprehensive text originally published by Yale University Press.

This complete guide to kava summarizes the literature and research on a plant that is now considered comparable or superior to anti-stress prescription drugs, and describes its use in the religious, political, and economic life of the Pacific islands for centuries. Beyond its soporific qualities kava is also used throughout the Pacific as an analgesic, a diuretic, and an anesthetic. There is even evidence suggesting it is effective in the treatment of asthma, tuberculosis, and venereal disease. Exhaustively researched, *Kava: The Pacific Elixir* offers an extensive survey of this amazing plant from the perspective of the horticulturist, the ethnobotanist, and the pharmacologist.

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### Editorial Review

#### Review

"A well-written, succinct, yet extensive overview of research on kava from several perspectives." (Patrick V. Kirch, University of California, Berkeley)

#### From the Back Cover

#### ETHNOBOTANY

The most comprehensive treatment of kava ever written, *Kava: The Pacific Elixir* summarizes the literature and research on a plant that is now considered comparable or superior to anti-stress prescription drugs. Kava is consumed throughout the Pacific as a relaxing beverage for social interaction and as a support to religious inspiration. Because of its many beneficial qualities it is superior to alcohol, nicotine, tranquilizers, and other substances that serve to reduce stress and improve mood. Interest in kava is growing worldwide and its consumption is now extending well beyond the Pacific Rim as new products are developed from it for pharmacological and recreational markets worldwide.

Exhaustively researched, *Kava: The Pacific Elixir* offers an extensive survey of this amazing plant from the perspective of the horticulturalist, the ethnobotanist, and the pharmacologist. It provides compelling insights into this plant that has been an integral part of the religious, political, and economic life of the Pacific islands for centuries. It contains information that is invaluable to the serious scholar yet is not written with the specialist alone in mind. Beyond its soporific qualities Kava is also used throughout the islands of the Pacific as an analgesic, a diuretic, and an anesthetic. There is even evidence suggesting it is effective in the treatment of asthma, tuberculosis, and venereal disease.

VINCENT LEBOT is a geneticist and plant breeder studying the improvement of tropical root crops. MARK MERLIN is a professor at the University of Hawaii specializing in ethnobotany and tropical ecology, and is a Fellow of the Linnean Society of London. LAMONT LINDSTROM is a professor of anthropology at the University of Tulsa and is also the author of *Knowledge and Power in a South Pacific Society* and *Cargo Cult: Strange Stories of Desire from Melanesia and Beyond*.

#### About the Author

Vincent Lebot was a research fellow in the department of Horticulture at the University of Hawaii. Mark Merlin is an associate professor in the General Science department at the same university. Lamont Lindstrom is a professor of anthropology at the University of Tulsa.

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