

Asian Ayahuasca Analog 101: Acacia Confusa & Syrian Rue

Exploring Ancestral Healing through an Eastern Plant Medicine Pathway

Introduction

In the heart of the Amazon, Ayahuasca has long been the sacred medicine of the jungle—used for centuries by indigenous peoples to connect with the spirits of nature, to heal the soul, and to access deeper truths of the universe.

But across the world, on the other side of the Earth, plants with remarkably similar properties grow in the forests and mountains of Asia. Among them is **Acacia Confusa**, a tree native to Taiwan, the Philippines, and Southeast Asia. When combined with **Syrian Rue (Peganum harmala)**, a flowering plant from the arid regions of the Middle East and Central Asia, it creates a powerful analog to Ayahuasca.

This is a story not only of chemistry and consciousness, but of **ancestral remembrance, cross-cultural bridges, and a reawakening of Asia's own plant medicine traditions.**

The Plants and the Brew

Acacia Confusa is known in Taiwan as 相思樹 (literally "the tree of yearning"). Traditionally used for its tannins in dyes and woodcraft, its roots and bark contain **Dimethyltryptamine (DMT)**—the same visionary molecule found in the Amazonian Ayahuasca vine (*Banisteriopsis caapi*)'s companion plants.

Syrian Rue, or *Esfand*, has a long history in Persian and Central Asian cultures. It is burned as incense to ward off the evil eye, and ingested in small doses for its purgative and psychoactive effects. Its seeds are rich in **harmala alkaloids (MAO inhibitors)**—the very type of alkaloid that allows DMT to become orally active in Ayahuasca.

Together, Acacia Confusa and Syrian Rue form a powerful **ayahuasca analog**—a psychoactive tea capable of inducing visions, emotional release, spiritual insight, and deep healing.

History and Cultural Context

Though there is no known indigenous tradition combining these two plants in the exact way they are now used, both have been **respected for their psychoactive and spiritual properties** in their regions of origin.

- In Taiwan, Acacia Confusa has no known ceremonial use, but elders speak of the tree's presence as "watchful" and sacred.
- In Iran, Central Asia, and India, Syrian Rue was burned in homes to **banish negative spirits**, and used in **Zoroastrian and Islamic folk rituals** for purification.

What we are seeing today is a **reemergence of plant consciousness**, where traditions from Amazonia, Asia, and the Middle East **intertwine** to form new ceremonial expressions that still honor ancestral wisdom.

My Personal Experience

When I first sat with Acacia Confusa and Syrian Rue in Asia, I was called to go to Peru to train with the Ayahuasca tribe tradition. After years of dieting, I became an Onaya trained in Shipibo and Mestizo tradition. I carry the songs and spirits of the Amazon in my singing, but the presence of Acacia and her mystery has always been prevalent on my journey of the plant medicine path.

Yet In one ceremony in Taiwan, as I brewed the bark and rue under the moonlight, I felt the spirit of *Noya Rao*—our luminous tree of light—guiding the process. The medicine was bitter, earthy, and strong. It opened not only visions, but a **memory**—of other lineages, other mountains, other songs.

What followed was a night of purging, weeping, and insight. Not just for me, but for those sitting with me: Taiwanese, Japanese, Singaporean, and diasporic souls all seeking reconnection. The medicine felt like a **bridge**—between cultures, between ancestors, and between the past and the future.

Preparation: The Basic Recipe

[**Note: Always approach this with respect, intention, and safety. This is a simplified overview, not a substitute for proper guidance.**]

- **Acacia Confusa root bark:** 10–15g (dried and shredded or powdered)
- **Syrian Rue seeds:** 3–5g (crushed or powdered)
- **Water, lemon juice** or vinegar for acidity
- Slow-boil each plant together (some like to separate them, both can work) in acidic water for 3-5 hours, then reduce and combine

If you brew them separately. The **Syrian Rue** is traditionally taken first, followed 15–30 minutes later by the **Acacia brew**. The MAOIs in Syrian Rue allow the DMT in Acacia Confusa to become **orally active**, leading to a 4–6 hour journey. Fasting, intention-setting, and a safe, ceremonial space are essential.

Healing Properties

- **Emotional Catharsis:** Like Ayahuasca, this analog often leads to deep purging—physically, emotionally, and spiritually.
- **Visionary Insight:** Acacia journeys may include visual landscapes, ancestral visitations, and symbolic dreams.
- **Body Realignment:** Many report muscular trembling, breathwork-like states, and energy realignment.
- **Cross-Cultural Spirit Work:** It's particularly potent for those carrying **diasporic wounds**, **colonial trauma**, or **ancestral disconnection**—bridging East and West.

Current Use and Cautions

In Asia, a growing number of seekers are turning to this analog due to the **legal or logistical challenges** of accessing traditional Ayahuasca. But its use is still largely underground, and there are **risks**:

- **MAOIs** can interact dangerously with certain foods and medications.
- Without guidance, users may experience psychological overwhelm or dissociation.
- The plants are often **prepared without a traditional structure**, which can limit their healing potential.

As such, a **ritual container**—one that blends indigenous Amazonian wisdom with local respect and cultural adaptation—is crucial.

The Future: Toward an Asian Medicine Consciousness

What if Asia remembered her plants as the Amazon remembers hers? What if Syrian Rue, Acacia, Lotus, Betel, and other sacred botanicals could be reawakened in **new ceremonial forms** that **honor both their origins and their present-day context**?

We are already witnessing this possibility. In Taiwan, Thailand, and Japan, small circles of practitioners are integrating **Amazonian ceremonial ethics**, **Asian mythologies**, and **contemporary therapeutic needs**.

As one who walks between worlds—Amazonian and Asian—I believe this is **not cultural appropriation**, but **cultural re-indigenization**. A remembrance that the Earth gave all peoples medicine, and that healing belongs to everyone, but must be carried with **responsibility, humility, and heart**.

Final Thoughts

The path of Acacia and Rue is not for everyone. But for those called, it may serve as a **mirror**—not just of their soul, but of their **lineage**, their **place**, and their **purpose** in these changing times.

In every brew, I hear a song. Not just Shipibo *icaros*, but the whispers of bamboo forests, desert winds, and mountain springs.

May this medicine, like all sacred medicines, lead us back to ourselves—and to the Earth who speaks through every root, seed, and breath.