

The LOST SKILLS

WORKSHOP SERIES

XXX

HERBAL VINEGARS



CEDAR HILL HOMESTEAD X LOST SKILLS WORKSHOPS

"THE IDEA WAS TO BRING MEDIEVAL HERBALISM BACK INTO PEOPLE'S KITCHENS, AS PART OF THEIR FOOD AND AS A WAY OF BEING, NOT JUST FOR MEDICINAL PURPOSES." - ROSEMARY GLADSTAR

Vinegar stems from two French roots: vin - for wine and aigre, which means sour. Vinegar is primarily made up of acetic acid & water, making it a crucial ingredient in food & medicinal preparations throughout the ages due to its ability to preserve foods & herbs, and for its use as a disinfectant, which is enabled by its high acetic acid content & bacteria's inability to grow in it.

Although vinegar has been made & used by people since before recorded history, we find its first mentions in accounts from Babylonia around 5000 BC. After this time, we found that throughout the world, many civilizations had their own version of a drinking vinegar.

"Since the beginning of time mankind has sought the magic elixir which bubbles from the fabled "Fountain of Youth". For most of us, apple cider vinegar may be as close as we'll ever come to such a universal remedy." - Emily Thatcher

Types of vinegar are differentiated by the source of the alcohol or the sugar from which the vinegar is made. Because all vinegars contain acetic acid, different types of vinegar can be used interchangeably. Of all the types of vinegar, apple cider vinegar, especially raw and organic varieties, are used most often in medicinal and cooking preparations due to its purported health benefits.



HERBAL VINEGARS

Herbal vinegars are alcohol-free herbal extracts that are great for children and those with alcohol sensitivities. Herbal vinegars are especially well suited for mineral-rich herbs because of its ability to draw out minerals more effectively than alcohol.

Basic Herbal Vinegar Recipe

1. Wash and sterilize your vinegar container
2. Fill jar halfway with dried herbs, top jar off with vinegar, screw on lid
3. Label your vinegar with: type of herb, type of vinegar, and the date.
4. Let your vinegar sit for 48 hours minimum and up to 3 weeks. When ready, strain through a cloth, press out your herbs, and compost them.
5. Pour strained vinegar into a sterilized jar with a lid that won't corrode, or with one that is layered with a new sheet of natural wax paper, parchment paper, or cloth.

Shelf life: No need for refrigeration. Use within 1-5 years. Discard with the presence of mold or any unusual variations.

SWITCHEL

Although Switchel most likely originated in the Caribbean, it was a popular beverage used in the US from the 1700's through the 1900's to combat heat & exhaustion, most often related to farming in the summer. Switchels traditionally contained apple cider vinegar & ground ginger and were lightly sweetened with molasses.

Basic Switchel Recipe

Ingredients: (2) tablespoons ACV, (4) teaspoons honey, (1/4) teaspoon ground ginger or grated fresh ginger, (1) cup water

1. Combine all ingredients in a glass jar.
2. Cover jar with a cloth or secure with a natural piece of wax paper and a lid.
3. Refrigerate for at least two hours and up to one day.
4. Shake or stir before serving. If using fresh ginger, strain through a cheesecloth.

Pour switchel over ice or mix with soda water

OXYMEL

The word oxymel comes from the Latin word oxymeli meaning "acid & honey". Oxymels have been used throughout the ages to administer herbs that were otherwise unpalatable, and are great as a base to a cough syrup, and helpful when diluted in water or tea during illness or as a throat gargle.

Basic Oxymel Recipe

1. Wash & sterilize a glass canning jar
2. Place desired herbs into your jar, filling the jar 1/2 way full.
3. Cover your herbs in your honey & vinegar mixture. That ratio is up to you, but an easy way to do it is to do equal parts herbs to honey to vinegar.
4. Stir your mixture & cover with a lid.
5. Label your oxymel & store in a cool dark place for up to two weeks, shaking every couple of days.
6. After at minimum of 48 hours, strain your oxymel & compost your leftover herbs.
7. Transfer your oxymel to a glass container with a non-corrosive lid and enjoy!

Shelf life: 1-5 years. No need for refrigeration. Discard at the first sign of mold or any unusual variations.

SHRUB

The word shrub originates from the Arabic word sharab, which means "to drink". A shrub, in its most basic form, is a combination of vinegar, sugar, and plant material.

Basic Shrub Recipe 1 part fruit, 1 part vinegar, 1 part sugar.

1. Add fruit & vinegar to saucepan & heat to just below boiling.
2. Pour vinegar and fruit mixture into a sterilized glass container.
3. Let vinegar and fruit mixture cool completely before storing in a cool, dark place for up to 3 weeks, shaking every few days.
4. When ready, strain your shrub and discard the fruit or use it in a chutney.
5. Put your fruit-infused vinegar back into your saucepan or pot, add the sugar, and bring to a boil until sugar dissolves.
6. Remove shrub mixture from saucepan and let cool completely before pouring it into a glass container with a rust-resistant lid.

Shelf life: Store in fridge for up to 6 months

TRADITIONAL HERBAL & SIPPING VINEGAR IDEAS

FIRE CIDER, FOUR THIEVES VINEGAR, SPRING "WEEDS" VINEGAR OR OXYMEL, RASPBERRY VINEGAR, PEPPER VINEGAR, PINE OXYMEL