



The Spirit of the Forest

Kefir Grains by The Spirit Of The Forest with Lebanese Family Tradition!

Yes, Lebanese family tradition and we live in the most beautiful country in the world, USA, but we keep some of our traditions and delicious recipes from our ancestors. Sometimes combining two countries can be very delicious, like for example a delicious blueberry jam with a strong kefir cheese!!! These instructions are for everyone, whether it is your first time or consider yourself an expert. Making Kefir and caring for the grains is not hard but there are a few things you need to make sure you do or do not do in the best interest of the grains. I will not only go over the steps but also the why. Knowing the why will help you understand and make sense of it all, which may prevent you from overlooking the step or precaution. Keep in mind, these instructions and tips are from my years of experience. I do not proclaim to be all knowing. I just want you to start off on the right foot.

Culturing milk with kefir grains and keeping the grains happy is not hard. All the grains need is lactose (milk sugar) and they will live and multiply forever. What I find people have difficulty with is fine tuning the process to meet their expectations or liking. I am going to offer two sets of instructions. The first will be simple and straight forward. Mainly the rules that must be adhered to. The second set of instructions will be more in depth with reasoning. These instructions will hopefully teach you how to make great tasting kefir with a smooth creamy consistency.

Now for the simple instructions.

When you receive your batch simply put them in a jar and cover them with about a cup of milk. Let them soak in the milk for about 12-24 hours, shaking or stirring at the half way point. Then strain the kefir grains out, discard the milk, and give them a fresh cup of milk. This time let them sit for 24 hours, again stirring or shaking the jar at the half way point. At the end of the 24 hours check to see if the milk has been cultured. This batch may be OK to consume but may or may not be to your liking just yet. Just use common sense before consuming. As the grains grow and get stronger, you will need to add more milk or take some grains away. Depending on their strength and season you are in will determine the ratio of

IMPORTANT PRECAUTIONS:



Use "Clean and Clear" PLASTIC OR GLASS containers, PLASTIC or WOODEN SPOONS and PLASTIC STRAINERS!

Never let the Grains com in contact with chlorinated water.



Never subject the Grains to cold bellow freezing temperature unless they are properly stored.

Never subject the Grains to extremely Hot temperatures for a prolong period of time.



Never let the Grains be in Direct Sunlight

Never let the Grains get in contact with METAL OBJECTS



NOT FOLLOWING THE INSTRUCTION MAY KILL THE GRAINS!



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grains to milk. Start with one cup of milk and adjust from there. As long as you feed them lactose, they will be happy campers.


Comprehensive Kefir Instructions

There are a few tools that are necessary for you to give the best environment to the grains and to produce great tasting kefir. You may already have these in your kitchen. If not your local grocery store or market may have them. It is up to you if you would like to modify the list as long as you are abiding by the above precautions. This is what I use and what most others use.

What you will need

1. A Good Strainer: I like to use a fine plastic or nylon mesh strainer. Stainless steel will work but other metals should be avoided. Other metals can mess with the balance of the bacteria and yeast. I prefer a fine plastic or nylon mesh over a stainless steel one because sometimes you need to break up the curds and push them through the strainer with a plastic or wooden spoon. Doing this with a stainless-steel strainer can be a little rough on the kefir grains



2.  A Glass Mason Jar: This way you can see through the glass and have a visual on what is going on inside. A plastic vessel is also permitted if you can see through it. It's just easier to see when the culturing is complete.

3. A Breathable Top: Many people like to use a coffee filter and a rubber band. When fermenting anything, gas is released, and it needs to escape. If it does not have anywhere to escape it can pop, however with milk kefir it is not likely. I like to use a plastic mason jar lid. I just do not tighten the lid. You can purchase plastic mason lids at your local store or of course online. I never use the lids that come with the jar. They are metal and can rust.



4. A Rubber Band





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5. The Spirit Of The Forest Special Booster help to the grains to restore from the travel



6. Regular Pasteurized Whole Milk: This is specifically for the reviving period. You may use other milks later down the road but for the first couple of batches I have found that pasteurized whole milk works best and maximizes the kefir grains strength. This is not a hard rule but a best practice for reviving the grains. If all you have is raw milk that is OK. This is simply a recommendation to start.



7. A Large Bowl with Easy Pouring. It's always easier when you have an easy transfer method. This helps to avoid messy spills. Remember we want to create an easy routine that you can implement. The easier it is the more likely you will continue to do it.

Instructions

1. When you receive your package carefully cut the pouch open and pour the entire contents into the mason jar and add the Kefir Activator Booster on this moment!!
2. Pour enough of the regular pasteurized whole milk to cover them. No more than a cup worth. Whole milk is what they are accustomed to. It has plenty of lactose (milk sugar) which is what they will consume to gain their strength. Raw milk is not recommended, but isn't forbidden, during this time. Raw milk already has friendly bacteria and can compete with the grains for the lactose while reactivating. Plus, the first few batches may not turn out the best, so we do not want to waste the good expensive raw milk during this time. After the grains have regained their strength then you may use any other milk that contains lactose you like.
3. Let the grains sit in the cup of milk for 12-24hrs. If you can, stir the milk once or twice during this period. This helps to redistribute the lactose. If you do not have the ability to stir during this time it is OK, it just may take a little longer to activate. Pictured on the right you can see that I have the lid on but that it isn't tightened. There is no worry about the top blowing off, but it is good to get into the habit and let the gas escape.





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4. When step 3 is finished strain the kefir from the grains and start the process over. It typically takes 1-3 days of doing this to get a good consistency with the kefir and to get the grains back to normal strength. The picture to the right is what the grains looked like while straining them after the first 24 hours. As you can see kefir curds are starting to form around them. This is a very good thing, and you know your grains are on their way to gaining their strength back.



5. When the grains have gained their strength back (Usually within a week's time) you will be able to make 2 - 6 cups of kefir a day depending on your ferment time and preference. Culturing kefir is a matter of balance. Depending on the strength and activity of the grains, and temperature, a ratio between 1/8 and 1/50 or more can be used. Meaning 1-part grains to 8-50 parts milk. I know that is a big range, so play around with it. Regardless of the amount of kefir grains you purchased the same applies. I would start with one cup. As you reactivate them and as they grow, and gain strength adjust from there. If you ordered more than 1TBS just keep in mind you may have to adjust the milk quicker. If your kefir is separating with the curds on top and the clear whey on the bottom before the 24hr mark, then you need to add more milk. If all of the milk has not cultured by the 24hr mark then you need use less milk.

Tips, Tricks & FAQ's

I use whole milk. You may use others like 2% but I recommend whole milk. Whole milk will give you a much creamier consistency and is loaded with nutrients for you and the grains. You don't need to worry about the higher fat content. Kefir is already broken down and very easy to digest. When the grains start to get stronger, curds will start to form very quickly, and this is perfectly natural. Before straining your kefir you can give it a vigorous stir. This will help to break up the curds. When straining the kefir you can also work your spoon around the nylon strainer giving the fresh kefir a homogenizing effect. After straining you can place it in the fridge to further thicken it up.

The following are a list of questions I have received in the past. This list seems to grow on a daily basis, but I will include the most common questions and answer them to the best of my ability. Hopefully I will answer some of your own questions.

Using Other Milks:

There are a few guidelines as in best practices. There is only one hard rule, the Kefir Grains need lactose to survive if you give them lactose, they will be happy. Milk Kefir Grains survive on lactose (milk sugar). They can consume other sugars, but they need lactose to survive. If you would like to use coconut milk or almond milk you can as long as you transfer them back to cows or goats milk every few batches. The best coconut milk to get is in the can. Most coconut milks in the carton are too processed. I would also stay away from Soy



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Milk. As far as cow's milk you may use any kind you like. I would stay away from non-fat. It certainly won't hurt the grains, but the consistency or thickness will not be great. I would also stay away from Organic milk unless you can find one that is not Ultra-Pasteurized. I like to refer to Ultra-Pasteurized milk as Ultra-Dead. Most grocery stores do not sell Organic milk as quickly so they prefer to Ultra-Pasteurize it so it will last longer on the shelf. Raw milk is certainly one of the best to use. It has naturally good bacteria in it already so if you have access to raw milk and you can afford it, it's a very good choice.

Tip: When transitioning to other milks it may take a couple batches for the grains to get acclimated to their new environment. So patience is the key.

How can I tell if my grains are dead?

The key indicator is this. During step 3 of the reactivation and the 24hr culturing process is complete, when you strain the kefir from the grains there should be thicker milk or curds that is sticking to them. This is a good sign. On the other hand when you go to strain the milk off and the milk just runs through and your grains are completely clean then this is cause for concern. If this is still happening after the third batch then you can be sure that they have gone to kefir heaven. Here are some photos to illustrate.



"Alive Grains"



"Dead Grains"

Another way to tell if your grains are doing anything is to see if the milk has changed at all at the end of the 24hr culturing process. If there is any change to the milk visually then they are working. If you were to put a jar of milk on the counter for 2 days straight the milk would not visually be any different. It may smell a little but other than that it will have the same look and consistency. I have personally done this experiment to see a comparison.



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My kefir is not very thick. What can I do?

As I have said, kefir is a matter of balance. What is usually the problem is your ratio. What naturally happens during the culturing process is the curds start to form on the top and the whey begins to make its way to the bottom. What you do not want to happen is complete separation before the 24hr mark. The picture to the right is an example of this separation, or milk that has been over cultured. Think of curds and whey somewhat like oil and water. They just can't be mixed back together once the separation has occurred, and the kefir will be chunky, grainy and appear to be thin. It is also hard to strain the curds off the grains. So, if you are getting separation before the 24hr mark you either need to add more milk or take some grains away. If your milk is not completely cultured before the 24hr mark you need to use less milk.



Tip: Before you begin to strain the kefir off the grains give it a vigorous stir. This will help to break up the curds and will be easier to strain. Using a good fine plastic or nylon mesh strainer also helps to break up the curds as you work your spoon around. This creates a homogenizing effect. Chilling your kefir will also help to thicken it up. Keep in mind though it will never be as thick as yogurt. More like a drinkable yogurt. If your kefir does separate just shake it up. This is a natural thing. Shaking it up before consuming or making a smoothie is all you need to do. Using whole milk is best to achieve creamy kefir. You can potentially culture a quart of milk with just a teaspoon of grains. If you are getting complete separation before 24hrs try doubling the milk. Try culturing the milk for two days, you may get the results that you desire. Just make sure however long you culture your milk that it does not separate before you decide to strain, or you will not get the thick consistency you desire.

How long will my kefir be good for?

In my personal experience I have kept my kefir up to two weeks in the fridge. I have only done it for two weeks, but I have read from multiple sources that it can last for much longer. It simply cannot go bad. Harmful bacteria cannot exist in that type of environment. Use your own discretion.

Yeast and Sourness:

Everyone has their own preferences when it comes to culturing. That is the beauty of it. You can make it exactly how you desire. When using a small number of grains to milk the kefir will be tart and have a clean sourness. When you use a large number of grains to milk your ferment will be shorter and may be milder, but the yeast will be stronger as well. Most people like to have a balance between the two. Friendly bacteria need more time to multiply. We recommend fermenting the full 24 hrs. However, this is entirely up to you. The only thing I want to stress is to avoid repeated over culturing. Don't stress if it happens every once in a while, but you will see a change with repeated offense. When over culturing, the kefir becomes more acidic and this isn't optimal for the grains and certain microbes can be harmed. When this happens, the yeast can become too strong and produce an undesirable kefir. Many do not like the presents of the yeast but it's part of what makes up kefir grains. What you can do



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is chill the finished kefir in the fridge for an additional day. The yeast will dissipate, and the kefir will be more pleasant. Even though making kefir is a very simple process, there is also an art to it. Be patient, enjoy the process, and have fun learning how to make the type of kefir you enjoy.

All of a sudden, my kefir isn't turning out as it has in the past. What can I do?

Sometimes the curds that stick to the grains and or the whey can become too acidic and disrupt the culturing process. A simple wash may be in order. Take a clean bowl and pour in some fresh filtered water. Never use tap water! Then dump your grains in the bowl and swish them around to clean them. You may even need to gently rub them with your fingers to get any leftover milk crust that can sometimes build up on them. Strain the water off and start the culturing process again. It's that simple. This does not need to be done frequently though. In fact, I would only do this as a last resort. It is beneficial for the grains not be washed every time so that some residual kefir is transferred to the new batch of milk. This helps to jump start the new batch and helps with the production of kefiran.

What is a second fermentation?

After straining off your grains from the initial fermentation you can simply leave your cultured kefir on the counter for an additional day or two. The friendly bacteria will continue to grow, and complete separation will occur with the whey on the bottom and the curds on top. Many people like to eat the curds right off the top with a spoon. It's completely up to you. The longer you let it ferment the more bacteria it will contain, and the less lactose will be present.

Shapes and sizes:

Kefir grains come in many different shapes and sizes. The most common are small cauliflower looking gelatinous balls but as they grow, they can become all sorts of shapes and sizes. They can be stringy or flat even. As the seasons change and the temperature changes so do the grains. I have seen flat kefir grains over a foot in length. So, don't be alarmed. It is all natural.

Slime, Slime and More Slime:

Slimy kefir grains is a very good thing. The slime is actually called kefiran. It is the friendly bacteria thriving. However, if they do not appear to be very slimy it is very easy to correct the balance. Double the amount of milk you are using and let it ferment a little longer. This will allow the friendly bacteria to build up. Using raw milk will also help as it already has the friendly bacteria already in it. The longer you ferment the more alcohol will be present as well. Don't be alarmed, kefir only has at about 2% or less. What is important though is the kefir



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grains need the alcohol to produce more kefir, and the best temperature to produce more kefir is 76 degrees.

Floating Grains:

It is very natural for the grains to float. Remember they are giving off CO₂ and many times air pockets form around them before releasing the gas. Some stay at the bottom as well. It just all depends. Just think of the ones that are floating as over achievers.



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Simple Kefir Recipes

SHISH BARAK SOUP (My favorite ever)
if you try this receipt, please share with us!!

Ingredients: 32 oz Plain Kefir Milk—1 1/2 tsp Salt—2 tbsp Corn starch—2 cups Water may need more—Dumplings or Tortellini aprox 5 per person and flavor like you prefer **Garnish** 1 head Garlic crushed—3 tbsp Dried Mint crushed—Black Pepper



Place the dumplings or tortellini onto a nonstick pan sprayed with olive oil about 10 minutes until it is lightly browned!

Mix the Milk Kefir, corn starch, salt, pepper, and water in a blender, and you will get a Kefir Sauce add this mixture to a pot and place on medium heat.

Keep mixing until the sauce starts to thicken about 10–15 min until it boils. The soup should be thick enough to coat a spoon.

Once at the consistency you prefer, add the dumplings and cook for 10 minutes together. They should be floating to the top.

In a pan, sauté the garlic in olive oil until crisp. Add this to the Kefir sauce and garnish with dried mint and black pepper as well. Enjoy warm!



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Thickened Kefir Cream (LABAN)

Ingredients:

Milk Kefir

White cotton, linen, or silk cloth with a tight weave

Pour the Milk Kefir into the tight weave towel. Avoid a cheesecloth. They are not woven tight enough. Hang above a bowl or jar and allow the whey to drain off for 2-4 hours depending on the thickness desired (generally the consistency of yogurt or sour cream).

The Laban is perfect to enjoy with any meet, quibbe or shawarma o gyros, just add salt, pepper, garlic, peppermint and olive oil

Kefir Cheese (LABNE)

The main difference between laban and labne is the consistency that's it, we use laban like a sauce and the labne like a cream cheese!



Ingredients:

Milk Kefir

White cotton, linen, or silk cloth with a tight weave

Fresh or Dried Herbs (optional)

Pour the Milk Kefir into the cheesecloth or tight weave towel. Hang above a bowl or jar and allow the whey to drain off.

Soft Spreadable Cheese: Drain for 6-12 hours depending on the consistency desired.

Herbed Kefir Cheese: Combine the herbs and soft cheese. Serve as a cream cheese spread on crackers, bread, etc.

Kefir Cream Cheese: Drain for 12+ hours depending on the consistency desired.

Hard Cheese: Drain for 12+ hours then wrap the cheese in the cheese cloth and place in a colander. Weight the cheese down to press out more whey. Use a plate with canned food as weights. Start with minimal weight increasing the amount of weight every few hours until the cheese stops dripping.



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Kefir Whey

Using the above method collect the whey from the bottom of the bowl or jar. You can drain for up to 24 hours. The longer the draining period the more whey it will produce and the thicker the kefir will become. Use the resulting kefir in place of yogurt, spreadable cheese or cream cheese in recipes depending on the finished consistency.

Kefir Whey can also be used for soaking grains or when culturing vegetables (e.g. sauerkraut, pickles, etc.) or making lacto-fermented condiments and salad dressings.

Kefir Sour Cream

Make Kefir Cream with Heavy Whipping Cream. Great probiotic substitute for Crème Fraiche or conventional Sour Cream.

Kefir Butter

Ingredients:

Kefir Cream

Remove the cream from the fridge and allow it to come to room temperature. If using a Kitchen Aid Mixer, place the bowl in the freezer for 10-15 minutes prior to making butter. Place the cream in the bowl and turn the mixer on as high as you can without splattering the cream. Watch the mixture carefully. Within a minute or two, the cream will have thickened a bit and you should be able to increase the mixer speed. Continue to watch the cream carefully as a cold bowl and room-temperature cream should set to butter quickly. Once this happens, it's very easy to spray the remaining liquid (traditional buttermilk) all over the kitchen so be sure to turn the mixer down when needed. Once chunks of butter form, slow the mixture down to allow the chunks to come together.

If making butter by hand, simply pour the pint of cream into a quart size jar with a lid. Shake the cream vigorously until small balls of butter form. Then slow down the shaking so the balls of butter can clump together.

Remove the butter to a small bowl (or just your hands). Wash the butter with filtered water, pressing out any remaining buttermilk with a spoon. When the water runs clear, the butter should be free of buttermilk. This portion of the process is very important as leaving buttermilk in the butter will cause the butter to spoil quickly.

Salt the butter if desired. You can also add herbs if desired.

Add the butter to a plastic container or wax paper. Store in the fridge or on the counter (butter will spoil at room temp within a few days so use it quickly).



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Sweet Kefir Milk

Ingredients:

1 cup Milk Kefir

Sweetener of your choice (Sugar, Raw Honey or Agave, Maple Syrup) I like Maple Syrup the best.

Blend together.

Coconut Milk Kefir

Ingredients:

- Coconut Milk
- Milk Kefir Grains

Add the Milk Kefir Grains to the coconut milk and allow the milk to culture for 12-36 hours until the desired consistency and taste is achieved. Remove the kefir grains and place the kefir grains in fresh milk. Milk Kefir Grains can be used repeatedly in coconut milk but should be returned to cow or goat milk occasionally to revitalize them.

Chocolate or Vanilla Kefir

Ingredients:

- 1 cup Kefir
- ¼ tsp Vanilla Extract or 1 tbsp. Chocolate Syrup
- If using Vanilla Extract sweetener may be desired

Blend together and serve cold.

Creamy Fruit Juice Kefir

Ingredients:

- 1 tablespoon Grape Juice Concentrate or ¼ cup Grape Juice
- 1 cup Kefir
- Dash of Vanilla Extract (optional)
- Sweetener if desired



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Blend together serve cold.

Chai Kefir

Ingredients:

- ¼ cup Liquid Chai
- ¾ cup Kefir
- Sweetener if desired

Blend together and serve over ice.

Banana Kefir Smoothie

Ingredients:

- 1 cup Kefir
- 1 Banana
- 1 tsp Vanilla
- Sweetener (Honey or Agave Works Best)

Add ingredients to a blender and process until smooth. Serve chilled or at room temperature. Makes one serving.

Apple Compote Kefir Smoothie

Ingredients:

- ¾ Cup apple compote
- 2 cups Kefir
- Dash of Vanilla Extract
- Dash of Nutmeg
- ¼ Whole Grain Oats

Take oats and soak in milk to soften. Add all ingredients to a blender and process until smooth. Serve chilled.

Kefir Fruit Smoothie

Ingredients:

- 1 cup Kefir
- ½ cup Frozen Fruit (berries work well)



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- 1/2 Banana
- Frozen Kefir Cubes if desired

Kefir cubes work well if your fruit is not frozen. Otherwise you may omit. Add all ingredients to a blender and process until smooth. Serve chilled. Makes one serving.

Super Fruit Smoothie

Ingredients:

- 1/2 cup Frozen Cranberries 2 tbsp. Frozen Blueberries
- 1-2 tsp. Lemon Juice (fresh is best)
- 1/4 cup Cranberry Juice
- 1/2 cup Kefir

Add fruit, juice and vanilla to a blender and process until smooth. Blend in kefir and serve chilled or at room temperature. Makes one serving.

PB & B Breakfast Smoothie

Ingredients:

- 1 Cup Kefir
- 1/2 Banana
- 2 tbsp peanut butter
- Dash of Vanilla
- Sweetener (preferably honey or maple syrup)

Add all ingredients to a blender and process until smooth. Serve chilled. Makes one serving.

Tropical Smoothie

Ingredients:

- 1 Frozen Banana
- 1 Cup Fresh Pineapple
- 2 tbsps. Coconut Milk
- 3/4 Cup Kefir
- Sweetener (preferably honey)



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Add all ingredients to a blender and process until smooth. Best served chilled. Makes 2 servings.

Kefir Ranch Dip

Ingredients:

- 1/2 cup Strained Kefir (consistency of sour cream or slightly thicker)
- 1/2 cup Mayonnaise
- 1 teaspoon Dill
- 2 teaspoons Parsley
- 1/4 teaspoon Garlic Salt
- 1/4 teaspoon Onion Salt
- 1/4 teaspoon Pepper, freshly ground

Mix together the strained kefir and mayonnaise. Combine with the other ingredients and mix well. Cover and refrigerate for several hours prior to serving to allow the flavors to meld.

Creamy Kefir Horseradish

Ingredients:

- 1 cup Strained Kefir (consistency of sour cream)
- 8 oz. Cream Cheese, or Kefir Cream Cheese
- 3 tablespoons Salsa (non-chunky variety)
- 2 tablespoons Prepared Horseradish
- 1/2 teaspoon Garlic Salt

Mix together the strained kefir and cream cheese. Combine with the other ingredients and mix well. Cover and refrigerate for several hours prior to serving to allow the flavors to meld.

Kefir Banana Bread

Ingredients:

- 2 cups Organic Sugar
- 2 Eggs
- 1/2 cup Butter
- 2 cups Whole Wheat Flour
- 3 1/2 cups soft ripe Bananas, mashed



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- 1 1/2 cups Kefir
- 1 1/2 tsp. Baking Soda
- 1/2 cups Walnuts or Pecans, chopped (optional)

12-24 hours prior to making bread, mix the flour and kefir together. Cover and allow the flour to soak. Preheat oven to 350 degrees. In a large bowl, mix together the sugar, butter, flour, bananas and nuts. Add the kefir and flour mixture and mix just until blended. Add the baking soda and mix just until blended. Pour into a greased bread pan (generally there will be enough batter for 1 large bread pan, 2 medium bread pans or 3 small bread pans). Bake until an inserted toothpick comes out clean (exact time will vary depending on size of pan and number of pans baking at once).

Kefir Biscuits

Ingredients:

- 2 cups Flour
- 1/4 tsp Baking Soda
- 1 tsp Baking Powder
- 1 tsp salt
- 6 tbsp Butter (very cold)
- 3/4 cup Kefir (approximate)

12-24 hours prior to making biscuits, mix the flour and kefir together. Cover and allow the flour to soak. Preheat the oven to 450 degrees. Cut the butter into chunks then work it into the flour/kefir mixture along with the baking soda, baking powder and salt. Do not over mix. If the mixture is too dry, add a bit more kefir. Turn the dough onto a lightly floured board.

Gently pat the dough to 1/2 inch thick (this will yield lighter biscuits than using a rolling pin). Use a round cutter to cut out the biscuits. Place biscuits on a cookie sheet. If you want biscuits with soft edges (and a higher rise), place the rounds touching each other. If you want biscuits with crusty sides, place the rounds about 1 inch apart. Bake for 10-12 minutes until golden brown. Makes 10 biscuits.

Sourdough Kefir Pizza or Bread

Ingredients:

- 5 cups all-purpose flour
- Tablespoon sugar or honey
- 2 teaspoons salt (or 2 teaspoons sea salt)
- Tablespoons olive oil
- 3/4 to 2 cups Kefir



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The Dough: Makes 2-3 13-inch pizzas or two loafs of bread

Combine all of the dry ingredients in a large mixing bowl and stir vigorously with a wooden spoon. Make a well in the center and add all the liquid ingredients. Combine all of the dry and wet ingredients in a large mixing bowl and stir vigorously with a wooden spoon (or if using a stand mixer process in the stir setting for 5 minutes).

The dough should be wetter and stickier than your typical bread dough. It should be dry enough that it holds together and pulls away from the side of the bowl when you mix it.

Sourdough pizza

Divide the dough into 3 pieces for thinner crust or 2 for a thicker crust. Grease two or three pizza pans or baking sheets. On a lightly floured surface, roll each dough portion into a 13 inch circle. Transfer to pans. Cover completely with plastic wrap. Leave in a warm draft free place undisturbed for 24 to 48 hours. Leaving it for 48+ hours makes a more sour pizza.

After 24-48 hours, very carefully remove the plastic wrap. Bake at 275 degrees for 15 minutes. Remove from oven, spread pizza sauce unto hot crust. Top with cheese and toppings of choice. Bake at 375 degrees for 15 minutes more or till bubbly.

Sourdough Bread

Lightly grease and floured 2 loaf pans. Divide the dough into 2 pieces. Place the dough in the prepared pans. Cover completely with plastic wrap. Leave in a warm draft free place undisturbed for 24 to 48 hours. Leaving it for 48+ hours makes a more sour bread.

After 24-48 hours, very carefully remove the plastic wrap. Bake at 275 degrees for 30 minutes. Cover with loosely with foil and bake for 20 more minutes at 375 degrees or until top is golden brown. Immediately remove bread from pans. Cool on wire racks.

Coconut Milk Kefir Ice Cream

Ingredients:

- 3 cups Coconut Milk Kefir
- 3-6+ tbsp. Raw Honey
- 1-3 tsp. Vanilla Extract

Blend the coconut Milk Kefir, raw honey and vanilla extract well. Place in an ice cream maker and follow the manufacturer's instructions.

Start with a conservative amount of honey and increase the amount to taste. Remember that once the ice cream is frozen, it will be a bit less sweet than the original mixture.

Kefir Vanilla or Fruit Ice Cream



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Ingredients:

- cup milk, well chilled (or half and half, or heavy cream for a smoother texture)
- ¾ cup sugar or ½ cup agave
- cups kefir cream cheese, well chilled
- 1-2 teaspoons pure vanilla extract, to taste
- Fruit of your preference, cantaloupe or mango work surprisingly well

In a medium bowl, use a hand mixer or a whisk to combine the milk and sugar until dissolved. Stir in the kefir cream cheese and vanilla on low speed for 1-2 minutes, until smooth. Pour mixture in ice cream machine, follow ice cream machine directions. Or place in the freezer for about two hours and enjoy.

If you are making fruit ice cream, place all the ingredients in a blender first. Blend until smooth. Pour mixture in ice cream machine, follow ice cream machine directions. Or place in the freezer for about two hours and enjoy.

Blueberry Kefir Muffins

Ingredients:

- 2 cups Sifted Flour: White Flour, Whole Wheat Pastry Flour or combination
- ½ cup Organic Sugar
- 1 teaspoon Salt
- ¼ teaspoon Baking Soda
- 2 ¼ teaspoon Baking Powder
- ¼ cup Melted Butter or Coconut Oil
- 1 Egg, beaten
- 1 cup Kefir
- 1 cup Blueberries (frozen or fresh)

12 hours prior to baking, combine the flour and kefir. Cover the bowl and allow the flour to soak. When ready to bake muffins, preheat the oven to 425°. Add the other ingredients except the blueberries and stir to combine. Do not over mix. Gently fold in the blueberries. Fill muffin tins 2/3 full. Bake 20-25 minutes. Makes 12 muffins.

Kefir Pancakes

Ingredients:

- 2/3 cup Whole Wheat Flour



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- ¼ cup Oat Bran
- 1 tbsp Cornmeal
- 1 tbsp Brown Sugar
- 1 ½ tsp Baking Powder
- ¼ tsp Baking Soda
- ¼ tsp Salt
- 1 cup Kefir
- 2 large eggs, separated
- 2 tbsp Oil

12-24 hours prior to making pancakes, mix the flour and kefir together. Cover and allow the flour to soak. When you are ready to make the pancakes, mix the egg yolks and oil together. In a separate bowl, beat the egg whites until stiff peaks form. Mix the oat bran, cornmeal, sugar, baking powder and baking soda into the flour and kefir mixture. Stir in the egg yolk and oil mixture. Fold in the egg whites. Lightly coat a skillet with butter or coconut oil and set over medium heat. When the skillet is hot, cook the pancakes using about ¼ cup batter for each. Cook for about 2 minutes on each side until golden brown. Serve with butter, fruit and/or real organic maple syrup. Makes 12 pancakes.

Kefir Chocolate Chip Cookies

Ingredients:

- 2 cups Organic Sugar
- 1 cup Coconut Oil, Palm Shortening or Butter
- 2 Eggs
- 1 ½ cups Kefir
- 2 tsp Vanilla Extract
- 4 cups Flour
- 1 tsp Salt
- 1 tsp Baking Soda
- 1+ cup Chocolate Chips or Chunks

12-24 hours prior to making cookies, mix the flour and kefir together. Cover and allow the flour to soak. Preheat oven to 375 degrees. Cream together the Coconut Oil/Shortening/Butter with the sugar until fluffy. Add the eggs and vanilla. Mix well. Add the flour and kefir mixture. Add the salt and baking soda. Mix just until combined. Stir in the chocolate chips/chunks. Drop dough onto a greased cookie sheet and bake for 8-10 minutes.

Kefir Brownie Cake

Ingredients:



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- 2½ cups. whole wheat flour
- 2 tsp. baking soda - Mix flour and baking soda together in small bowl.
- 1 cup. vegetable oil
- 2 cups. room temp. liquid kefir
- ½ cup. unsweetened cocoa
- 2¼ cups. raw sugar
- 3 eggs
- 1 tsp. vanilla
- 1 cup. chopped walnuts

In large bowl mix well the oil, kefir, cocoa, sugar, eggs and vanilla. Add flour mixture just to combine-don't over mix. Batter will be thin. Add walnuts. Divide into two pans. Bake 35 minutes or until cake springs back when lightly touched with fingertip. When cold turn out of pans.

Frost with chocolate kefir frosting.

Chocolate-Kefir Frosting

Ingredients:

- ¼ C. soft kefir cream cheese
- 3 tablespoons cocoa powder
- 3 tablespoons liquid kefir
- 1 C. powdered raw sugar*
- ½ teaspoon vanilla

*To make powdered raw sugar, place raw sugar in blender and turn on high until white and powdery.

(If freezing cake, make frosting and ice cake same day you serve.)

Combine cream cheese, cocoa powder, kefir and powdered sugar. Beat until smooth. Add vanilla. When cake is cooled, place 1 layer on serving plate and spread with frosting. Top with remaining layer and spread frosting on top and sides of cake.

Cold Avocado and Kefir Soup

Ingredients:

- Avocado - 1 small



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- Red onion - 1 tablespoon chopped (1/4 small onion)
- Lemon juice - 1 to 2 tablespoons
- Cilantro - 2 tablespoons chopped
- Kefir - 200 ml (or more)
- Red pepper flakes - 1/2 teaspoons
- Salt, pepper

Combine all the ingredients in a food processor.

- Process until smooth.

- Add more kefir if the soup is too thick.

Add more lemon juice if kefir is not acidic enough.

***KEFIR FOR SEASONING** Kefir milk is very good for seasoning chicken, which will be cooked in the oven, I suggest seasoning it for 24 hours with a generous layer of kefir, and then baked! And if you are going to use the chicken to prepare shawarmas, they will be fabulous! do you want the recipe? you can write us!!*