

Alcoholic Ginger Beer – The Master Recipe... :-)

Okay... maybe not the master recipe, but it is damned good!

The method and recipe described here came about after a great deal of experiment with various sugars, quantities of ginger and many other odd ideas. It is for sure not the only way to make delicious ginger beer, but please try it “as is” before beginning your own experimenting – it certainly makes a great drink.



See my Ginger Beer video on YouTube: tinyurl.com/gingerbeer1

Download a PDF of these instructions from: <http://tinyurl.com/gingerbeerpdf1>

Equipment:

- 2 x Empty 6L plastic water bottles
- 1 x bubbler (airlock) and bung (or a balloon, or a surgical glove, even a condom!)
- 4 x Empty 1.5L plastic pop/soda bottles (or 5 x 1.25L)
- 1 x Very large funnel (to fit 6L water bottle's mouth)
- 1 x Small funnel (to fit pop/soda bottles)
- 1 x mesh laundry bag, or something similar, to use for coarse filtering

Consumables:

- 1 lemon (frozen to make zesting easier)
- 300g of whole root ginger (unpeeled, but washed)
- 700g of plain white sugar (plus a couple of cups extra for bottling time)
- 1 tspn of wine yeast (most should work fine. I use Youngs' all purpose)
- 1 tspn of yeast nutrient (optional, but I add it to ensure good rapid fermentation)
- 1 tspn of cream of tartar (adds a little “mouthfeel”, but is entirely optional)

Method

Job 1:

This is all about getting everything nicely combined and starting the ferment. It looks a big list, but is really not very much work at all – I find it easy, and I am lazy...

1. Put 3 or 4 litres of water in a pan and begin heating it (less if you only have a small pan – it doesn't really matter)
2. With a fine grater zest the lemon, then add this zest to the heating water
3. Put the ugly looking lemon remains in the microwave on defrost, set for 5 minutes
4. Bash the ginger with a mallet, then roughly chop it and add it to the heating water
5. Get the defrosted ugly lemon, chop it in half then add the juice and pulp to the water
6. Add in 700g of white sugar and stir to dissolve
7. Bring water to boil, stirring a little to prevent the sugar burning. Simmer for 5 minutes, then put a lid on and leave to cool slowly

Wait for a few hours to let it stew and cool (this can be overnight if you did everything above in the evening – it only takes 10 minutes the next morning to complete the few steps below...)

8. Using the huge funnel, pour the stewed mixture, including all ginger and lemon pulp (this is important, or you will have a nasty “thin” ginger beer) into your 6L water bottle, then fill to nearly the top with more water
9. Check that the liquid is sufficiently cool (it can't be in any way hot), then add 1tsp each of wine yeast, nutrient (optional), and cream of tartar (also optional)
10. Put the lid on the bottle and give it a good shake
11. Replace the lid with your bung and bubbler (or a balloon, or a surgical glove, even a condom – in any case they need a pin hole putting in them to let the gas escape)
12. Set aside in a warm place to ferment for 4 to 7 days or so, depending on air temperature
13. Leave until the bubbler no longer gurgles, or your balloon/glove/condom becomes flaccid!

Job 2:

Bottling time – this takes only about 10 minutes... 15 if you are sloth like...

1. Using your giant funnel lined with a laundry bag, or other coarse filtering material (just trying to filter chunks not sediment) slowly and gently pour your fermented brew into your second clean 6L plastic bottle. You should be able to get nearly all of the liquid and not too much sediment (don't worry about getting some sediment, it will settle out in the pop bottles later)
2. Wash (no need to sterilise) your 4 x 1.5L pop bottles (or equivalent volume)
3. Whilst your small funnel is dry use it to assist you in adding 1/3 cup of sugar into each bottle
4. Now pour the brew equally into each of the 6 bottles. It should come to somewhere around where the bottle starts to narrow.
5. Put lids on the bottles and shake each one 2 or 3 times until all of the sugar is fully dissolved
6. Put the bottles back in the same warm place that you fermented the brew. Leave it there for between 24 and 48 hours depending on air temperature
7. As soon as the bottles are hard when you try to squeeze them it is time to move them to the fridge. This will stop the yeast working any more and prevent messy explosions!
8. Let it get cool, then drink it... I prefer to leave it for some yeast to settle out over the next day or two, but it doesn't make much difference really. Drink over ice, and with a dash of soda if you prefer it more fizzy or “lighter” (it is strong!). Aim to drink it within two or three weeks for the best taste – best drunk young in my opinion, but you can keep it for 5 or 6 weeks if need be.
9. ENJOY....

If you have any comments, or additions of your own please leave a message on my YouTube video: tinyurl.com/gingerbeer1

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