



## “Cordials, Shrubs and Bubbles”

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Both cordials and shrubs are based on a syrup made from fruit and sugar or alternatives such as honey. A cordial, or “squash” (not the vegetable type!) or “juice” in other countries is made from fruit and sugar, with the possible addition of lemon juice or citric acid as a stabilizer to stop fermentation. Fruits can be used singly or combined with other fruits. In addition, one can add spices or ginger or citrus.

### Cordials

#### Recipes

##### **Rhubarb punch cordial –makes about 4 litres –adjust to requirement**

- 18 cups of rhubarb,12 cups water,3 cups white sugar,1/3 cup lemon juice,1/2 cup orange juice

You can add spices to this for a winter warmer – ginger, cinnamon and cloves etc.

In a large pot, bring water and rhubarb to a boil and simmer about 15 minutes

Strain through thin cotton. Bring strained liquid to a boil and add sugar. Boil again and add juices. Syrup can be stored in the freezer. Mix with water or carbonated water to taste, or for added pizzazz add ginger ale or lemonade.

##### **Elderberry syrup –can be used as a tonic (neat) or the base for a cordial.**

- 2/3 cup black elderberries,3.5 cups of water,2 T fresh or dried ginger root,1 tsp cinnamon powder,1/2 tsp cloves or clove powder,1 cup raw honey)

Pour water into medium saucepan and add elderberries, ginger, cinnamon and cloves (do not add honey!)

Bring to a boil and then cover and reduce to a simmer for about 45 minutes to an hour until the liquid has reduced by almost half. At that point, remove from heat and let cool enough to be handled. Pour through a strainer into a glass jar or bowl.

Discard the elderberries (or compost them!) and let the liquid cool to lukewarm.

When it is no longer hot, add 1 cup of honey and stir well.

When honey is well mixed into the elderberry mixture, pour the syrup into a pint sized mason jar or 16-ounce glass bottle of some kind.

##### **Blackcurrant cordial – high Vitamin C content –makes about 1 litre**

- 900g blackcurrants,450g caster sugar,500ml water, juice of 2 lemons

Use cold or hot method of extraction – see below but omit vinegar!

##### **Rosehip syrup – also very high Vitamin C –makes about 500-750ml**

- 1kg rosehips, trimmed and washed. About 500g granulated sugar, 1 ¼ litres water. Place rosehips and water in a steel pan, bring to boil and simmer for 15 minutes. Strain through muslin in a sieve. Add sugar – 325 gr for every 500ml (adjust to taste), and dissolve over heat. Bottle and store in fridge.

## Shrubs

### What's a Shrub?

In beverage history, the word *shrub* (from the Arabic *Sharrub*) has carried several meanings. A modern shrub is an acidulated beverage made of fruit juice, sugar, and other ingredients. Two methods of making a shrub:

#### Hot method:

Add equal parts of sugar and water to a saucepan, and heat and stir until the sugar dissolves.

Add berries or fruit and simmer until the fruit's juice blends well into the syrup.

Let that mixture cool. Strain out the solids.

Add vinegar to the syrup, bottle it all up, and store in the fridge.

#### Cold method:

Wash and prepare the fruit. Most berries can be lightly crushed, even with your hands, if you prefer. Strawberries should be hulled and quartered. Stone fruit needs to be quartered and pitted.

Cover the fruit with sugar. A recommended ratio of one part each of fruit, sugar, and vinegar is a great place to start. Stir to combine, cover, and stash in the fridge.

After several hours, or a day or two, your fruit should be surrounded by juice and syrup.

This will depend on the fruit you are using – the softer the fruit the quicker it will release its juice.

Strain the syrup away from the solids, pressing lightly on the solids to expel any stubborn juice. If any sugar is clinging to the bowl, scrape it into the syrup. It should settle to the bottom, underneath the syrup.

Add the vinegar (to taste), and whisk to combine, until sugar is dissolved.

Pour through a funnel into a clean bottle. Cap, shake well, and refrigerate.

Check the shrub periodically. Some sugar may settle out onto the bottom of the bottle. If so, shake well to combine. Eventually, the acids in the juice and vinegar will dissolve the sugar.

Proportions will vary from fruit to fruit: but base your recipes on 1 cup each fruit, sugar, and red wine or apple cider vinegar, or a blend of vinegars, e.g. white, white wine, red wine, malt and balsamic (a few drops).

This will give you about 2 ½ to 3 cups shrub, which will make between 10-20 drinks.

## Recipes

### 1. **Blueberry shrub- (can be used for most soft fruits)**

- 4 cups fresh blueberries, 2 cups cider vinegar, 2 cups sugar

Place the blueberries in a non-metallic container. Add the vinegar. Cover tightly and refrigerate for at least 3 days. Pour the vinegar-marinated blueberries into a sieve over a bowl; press the berries to release all their juice. Discard the solids. Pour the blueberry liquid into a medium saucepan. Add the sugar and boil for 3 minutes, stirring occasionally. Remove from the heat and let cool. Pour the sweetened blueberry liquid into a small container and chill. To make each drink, add 1/4 cup blueberry concentrate to a medium cocktail glass filled with ice and add 1 cup cold water.

### 2. **Fresh Apple Shrub**\_Makes 3 cups

- 3 medium apples (choose a variety that is flavorful and sweet), 1 cup apple cider vinegar, 2/3 cup granulated white sugar

Shred apples on a box grater. Funnel the shreds into a wide-mouth quart jar. Top with apple cider vinegar and sugar. Use a narrow spoon to stir the apples, vinegar and sugar together. Apply a watertight lid and give the jar a good shake. Place jar in a refrigerator for four or five days. Taste the liquid and if you're happy with the balance, strain out the apple bits, making sure to press firmly to remove all the liquid. Place the strained shrub in a clean jar and keep refrigerated. It is ready to use now, but will mature in flavor over time.

Stir it into cocktails, sparkling water or use in homemade vinaigrettes and marinades.

### 3. **Ginger Switched** Makes 1-2 drinks

- 2 tablespoons apple cider vinegar, 4 teaspoons sweetener (molasses, maple syrup, honey, sugar) 1/4 teaspoon ground ginger or 1 teaspoon grated fresh ginger, 1 cup water

Combine all ingredients in a jar or glass. Cover and refrigerate at least 2 hours and up to a day.

Shake or stir before serving. Taste and adjust sweetener, if desired. If using fresh ginger, strain through a fine sieve or cheesecloth.

Pour over ice or mix with soda water, if desired.

## **Bubbles (Fermented drinks)**

For all fermented drinks – take 1/3 to 1/2 of the container you are going to use and fill it with fresh or thawed fruit. Can be a single fruit or a mix of various fruits and berries e.g apple and blackberry, or apple blackberry, elderberry and chokecherry.

Add 1/3 c unpasteurized honey, maple syrup, barley malt or rice syrup to the mix. Add the juice of 1 fresh lemon to every 3 liters of water in the container. Do not use bottled lemon juice – it will stop the fermentation.

Pour warm, unchlorinated water over the mix till the container is just over half full.

Swoosh the mix around until the honey is dissolved and the fruit well broken down. Add more water till 7/8ths full. Do a taste test. The mix should be fairly sweet and taste of lemon.

As the bubble ferments the other fruit will intensify and the sweetness will lessen.

Cover the container, but not with a lockable top. It must be able to breathe. Leave in a warmish position in the kitchen.

It will bubble and fizz by the third day. Strain into bottles and cork them or stopper them. Refrigerate for 2-3 weeks until really fizzy. Drink within 1 month or so of bottling.

Sometimes you land up making dry wine – the biota (natural yeasts) will become alcoholic very quickly.