



Making Herbal Vinegar

To make herbal vinegar with fresh herbs, pick your herbs in the morning after the dew has dried, when the flavor is most intense. Rinse and dry them in a salad spinner, then on paper towels.

Pack a dry sterilized glass jar loosely with slightly bruised leaves and tender stems of the chosen herbs. Cover the herbs with good quality white wine, red wine, or Champaign vinegar.

Details regarding recommended types and quantities of ingredients are provided in each of the recipes below. If you would like to create your own recipes, approximately 2 cups of herbs, loosely packed, for every four cups of vinegar is often appropriate. Herb vinegars can be made in batches of any size. Just maintain a constant proportion of herb to vinegar.

Once the herbs and vinegar have been added to the jar, cover the mouth of the jar with plastic wrap and seal tightly. Make sure no metal comes in contact with the vinegar. It will cause an adverse chemical reaction and turn the vinegar black. Affix an identifying label including the date. Let steep in a dark cool place for 3 to 12 weeks. Taste the vinegar periodically and continuing steeping until the herbal flavor reaches the desired intensity.

Separate the herbs from the vinegar by pouring through a coarse strainer. Then strain the vinegar twice through a coffee filter or fine mesh jelly bag. If the herbal flavor is a too intense, dilute with some of the original vinegar. Bottle in dry, sterilized glass jars or bottles. Affix identifying labels including the date of bottling.

If you wish, when bottling, add a garnish, for example a fresh herb sprig, a clove of garlic, a hot red pepper, or a strip of orange or lemon peel.

Always make sure that all your bottles, caps and tools are very dry, as any moisture will cloud the vinegar. No metal, no moisture!

Making Berry Flavored Herbal Vinegar

Making an herbal vinegar that is flavored by berries, for example Blueberries and Spice Vinegar, may require heated vinegar or additional steps as described in the relevant recipes below.

Herbal Vinegar Recipes

Basil Red Wine Vinegar

2 cups basil
4 cups red wine vinegar

Basil Burnet Red Wine Vinegar

1 cup basil
1 cup burnet (which is also known as salad burnet)
4 cups red wine vinegar

Tarragon White Wine Vinegar

2 cups tarragon
4 cups white wine vinegar

Purple Basil Champagne Wine Vinegar

2 cups purple basil
4 cups Champagne wine vinegar

Note: If the finished vinegar is dark red in color, dilute with more Champagne wine vinegar until the color of the finished vinegar matches the color of a rosé wine.

Ravigote Vinegar

2 cups burnet
1 cup basil
1 cup French tarragon
1/2 cup thyme
1 red chili pepper
2 cloves garlic
1 sprig rosemary
4 sprigs peppermint
1/2 gallon red wine vinegar

Gourmet Red Wine Vinegar

2 cups basil (any kind, mix and match), coarsely chopped
2 sprigs rosemary leaves, stripped off the stems and chopped
½ cup thyme leaves, stripped off the stems
3 cloves garlic, halved
3 tablespoons whole black peppercorns
1 quart red wine vinegar

Lemon Herb Vinegar

2 cups lemon thyme sprigs
1 cup lemon balm leaves
1 cup lemon verbena sprigs
1 continuous peel from a fresh lemon
4 cups white wine vinegar

Dill Vinegar

8 to 10 sprigs fresh dill
1 clove garlic, sliced (optional)
10 peppercorns
3 cups cider vinegar

Dill Chive Vinegar

1 cup snipped fresh dill
1/2 cup snipped chives
1/3 cup snipped fresh mint
1 clove garlic, quartered
1 quart white wine vinegar

Blueberries and Spice Vinegar

3 cups blueberries
2 cinnamon sticks
1 whole nutmeg, halved
1/2 cup sugar
1 quart white wine vinegar

Combine vinegar and sugar and simmer until sugar is dissolved. (Do not boil). Pour hot vinegar over the berries, cinnamon sticks and nutmeg. Let stand for 48 hours. Strain through coffee filters and store in dark place for up to 6 months.

Blueberry Basil Vinegar

3 cups fresh blueberries, crushed
1 cup loosely packed basil leaves, torn
1 quart white wine vinegar

Heat vinegar to simmer and pour over berries and basil. Let stand for 4-6 weeks in covered jar. Strain through coffee filters or cheesecloth. Discard fruit pulp. Add additional basil leaves to bottles, if desired. Seal bottles.

Note: Purple basil is very pretty in this recipe.

Raspberry Vinegar

3 12-ounce packages frozen red raspberries
1 gallon white wine vinegar

Place raspberries in one-gallon glass jar. Cover with vinegar. Cover tightly. Let set for at least 4 weeks in cool dark place. Pour off vinegar slowly without disturbing the berries. Use coffee filters to strain.

Put some of the vinegar in a non-aluminum pan with 2 cups sugar and warm, over low heat, just until sugar dissolves. Let cool, then add to the rest of the vinegar. While this is cooling, finish straining the rest of the vinegar until no fruit or seeds remain. (This usually takes 3 strainings.)