

The Wine-Maker's Calendar - July

Contributed by cab

Bit late this month, sorry. If it stops raining you can get on with these...

July is when summer is really here, and for homebrewers it's another exciting month. Plenty of summer fruit, and more veg wines.

The foragers amongst us can hope to find plenty of wild raspberries, gooseberries, currants, cherries, cherry plums and various wild herbs and greens too. On the plot you might be lucky and get your first gluts of the year; runner beans, French beans, courgettes... Now, you can only make so much chutney, but the rest will make excellent homebrew.

Cab's Cherry Wine

4lb cherries

2 1/4 lb sugar

1 teaspoon yeast nutrient

1 cup strong tea

1 gallon water

1/2 teaspoon citric acid

1 teaspoon pectinase

Champagne yeast

This is a very delicate, and very tasty rose. And it works really well with wild cherries.

Truth be told, with our summers getting warmer and warmer you might be as well off if not better off putting this on in June. Pick your cherries from pretty nearly any cherry trees; just make sure you taste them to ensure that they've got a good flavour. Pack the cherries into a nylon straining bag, and drop them into a sterile bucket. Boil the water, sugar, acid, yeast nutrient and tea together and pour onto the cherries. When its cool, add the activated yeast and pectinase. After a day or so, quidge the cherries, and give it another two days in primary. Don't let it linger in primary much longer, you don't want to pick up any off flavours from the stones. Rack into a demijon and ferment out as normal.

Its a really tasty wine, but its delicate. I think its better drunk young (really after only a couple of months in the bottle) than aged.

Kinnopio's simpler cherry wine

There were so many cherries around last year that I made a gallon of cherry wine. If you can get enough really ripe cherries (I think I used morello type cherries) it gives a lovely soft well rounded wine that is very inoffensive (one for your older kids if you think they are responsible enough to enjoy a nice glass with their meal!)

Gallon of water

1.5kg sugar

1.5kg really ripe cherries

2 lemons

Yeast

Place destalked cherries in bucket, add 3 litres of boiling water and pour over. Once cool enough mash with yor hand. Stand for three days and put through wine bag into demijohn. Dissolve sugar in 1.5 litres of water and add along with grated rind of lemon and its juice and yeast.

Use cotton wool bung untill fermentation slows then fit airlock. Rack when fermentation stops. And bottle a few months later. Tastes good at this stage - can't comment on keeping qualities!

Raspberry Wine

2 lb raspberries

Juice of 2 oranges

2 1/2 lb sugar

1 teaspoon yeast nutrient

1 cup strong tea

1 gallon water

All purpose wine yeast

I've made a number of different raspberry wine recipes, and I think this is my favourite. Its a hard wine to get right I think, it can be too intense, too raspberryish. That sounds odd, but imagine being slapped in the head with a giant raspberry, thats what its like.

Anyway... Put the raspberries into a straining bag, and that into the sterile bucket. Get the rest of the ingredients, save the yeast, boiling, and pour it onto the raspberries. Cover, let it cool, add the yeast. Give it about a week in primary, and rack off as normal.

Raspberry and Red Currant Wine

This is another of my favourite ways of making raspberry wine. The red currants really complement the raspberries; use 2lb of each, leave out the orange juice and add a teaspoon of pectinase when you add the yeast, but otherwise the recipe is just as above for raspberry wine.

Bean Me Wine

4lb beans (runner, French, mixture)

2 1/2 lb sugar

1 teaspoon yeast nutrient

1 cup strong tea

1 teaspoon citric acid

1 gallon wine

general purpose wine yeast

Put all of the ingredients save for the yeast into a big pan, and boil it gently for about half an hour. Pour the liquid off into a sterile bucket, cover, let it cool, and add the activated yeast. Only needs a few days in primary, then rack and ferment out as ordinary.

Not the best, but after a year its a decent table wine.

Courgette Wine

4lb courgettes

juice of 2 lemons and 2 oranges

1 teaspoon yeast nutrient

2 1/4 lb sugar

1 cup strong tea

1 teaspoon pectinase

1 gallon water

general purpose wine yeast

Chop the courgettes and put them into a nylon straining bag, put that into your fermenter bucket. Boil up the other ingredients (except the yeast and pectinase) and pour it on to the courgettes when its boiling. Add the activated yeast and pectinase, and leave it in primary for about a week. Rack into a demijon, and ferment out as normal. Needs a good year to be good, but its drinkable in 6 months.

You can make this more interesting by adding ginger or other spices.

Blackcurrant Wine

2lb black currants

2 1/4 lb sugar

1 gallon water

1 teaspoon yeast nutrient

1 teaspoon pectinase

red wine yeast or all purpose wine yeast

Black currants have loads of acid and plenty of tannin, so you don't add any acid or tea!

Standard fruit wine this one otherwise, note that you can use more fruit if you like but you'll have something that may be too intense for a good while if you do. I go for less fruit which still gives me a dark red wine without being overpoweringly curranty.

Put the currants into a straining bag in a sterile bucket. Boil up the other ingredients save the pectinase and yeast, pour on to the currants. When its cool add your activated yeast and pectinase. Give it a week in primary, rack into a demijon and ferment out as normal.

Cherry Plum Wine

4lb cherry plums

2 1/2 lb sugar

1 teabag

1 teaspoon yeast nutrient

1 teaspoon pectinase

white wine yeast

One of my favourites of the year this one. You either have to have a cherry plum (or myrobalan) tree or you need somewhere to go and forage for them. In truth, the cullinary dividing line between plums and cherry plums (and bullace and damson) can be thin, but they ripen at different times.

Cherry plums can come in red, yellow, orange or dark red/purple, but they're all good. Make as for raspberry and redcurrant (above).