

Easy, Cider

Contributed by Treacodactyl

Following on from the thread about Easy Cider we've had requests for a simple article for beginners to start with, so here it is. Everything can be varied to suit what you have available and your personal taste; for some more ideas and details on people's experiences or for somewhere to ask questions and post results then take a look at this thread: <http://forum.downsizer.net/about3420-0.html>

Equipment:

1 One Gallon Demijohn (sterilised)

1 Bung with an air lock

4 One litre plastic bottles or other bottles that can cope with pressurised liquid!

Ingredients:

One Gallon of apple juice (I'm using 5 one litre cartons) Yeast (sparkling or plain wine yeast, ale yeast or other yeast you fancy trying)

Method:

1) Sterilise the demijohn, I use a couple of campden tablets and warm water, and rinse. Add 4 litres of apple juice to start and enough yeast for a gallon. This should give enough room for the initial fermentation if it's a bit feisty. Add a bung with and air lock and leave somewhere warm to ferment, this might take a day or two to get going.

Take care where you place it as the cider has been known to escape if the demijohn is filled too much or if it's kept too warm!

2) After initial rapid fermentation, which in my last batch only took a couple of days, top up with more apple juice and leave to almost work its way out. Note don't be put off if there is a strange smell during the initial fermentation.

3) Bottle and leave somewhere warm to finish fermenting and then leave to settle for a couple of weeks. If you like your cider fizzy you may wish to prime the bottles with a small amount of sugar, I suggest no more than half a tea spoon per litre for your first attempt.

I stress again please ensure whatever bottles you choose can cope with pressurised liquid, they are stored somewhere that'll not be damaged if they burst and open with care.

4) Wait as long as you can for the cider to mature, few weeks should be fine, then drink! Lightly chilling should help a lively brew stay in the bottle once opened and only serve over ice if you're completely mad. If it's too dry you can try to sweeten it by adding a little apple juice to the glass.

Variations:

If you've not made it before I suggest starting with a single gallon and use a cheap apple juice to practice with. Then you should be able to decide if more expensive juice is worth trying, bigger batches are worth making or if you would like to try a different yeast etc.

Some people have also added sugar at the start to make a more alcoholic brew, perhaps 250g per gallon would be a reasonable starting point. Other juices can be mixed in and other flavourings added as well.

Once you've got the hang of it you can make larger batches!