

Old-fashioned Kitchen Wine-making

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Wine-making 101

FRUIT/YEAST/WATER + TIME + HEAT = WINE

FRUIT (or veggies, flowers, grains, spices or even herbs)
The fruit must have its cell walls permeated - that means you have to cut it up in little bitty pieces in order for it to ferment before it rots.

YEAST & WATER

Most edible plants have some naturally-occurring sugars & yeasts on them that can convert to alcohol, however, few have as much as grapes/raisins, figs or dates. So, lots of sugar is added to all other wines and, since the natural yeast on the outside is often rinsed off, use a yeast packet even in those. Sometimes yeast breads or crackers are floated on top--but avoid GE/GMO ingredients like high fructose corn syrup or any corn that isn't labeled 'organic.' Hot water poured over the fruit should get the fermentation started. Filtered water is better than chlorinated tap water--but any will do.

TIME

Wine must ferment twice. The first fermentation takes anywhere from 4 days to 8 weeks, depending on the recipe. Put the mixture in a plastic bucket with an air-lock on top. The pulp is broken down and must be stirred every day during this time. It'll fizz.

When it quits fizzing when stirred, strain out the pulp and put the liquid in a glass or plastic container with a bottom-spout for the second fermentation. This requires NO stirring and takes from 2 days to 4 weeks. It's left to settle so the sediment goes to the bottom.

The trick is to get the wine into bottles or canning jars with minimal sediment from the bottom. A clean egg shell or wo can be used in the 2nd fermentation to clarify a 'cloudy' wine.

HEAT (in degrees Fahrenheit)

Thermometers can help determine when the 1st fermentation is over (it'll drop in temperature a little). It requires about 70

degrees Fahrenheit to ferment--80 and 90 degrees are even better.

The 2nd fermentation doesn't require as much heat--70 degrees is okay. Then, before the alcohol dissipates (and it turns to vinegar), bottle and store it in the back of the refrigerator at about 40 degrees.

That suppresses active fermentation. Cork lightly (or cap with cellophane & a rubber band) for the first few days--you don't want it to explode in the fridge. Cork or put screw lids on tightly later. The only 'downside' to these recipes is, you can't store the bottles on their side—because this increases the chance of explosion!

Here's what you really need to get started:

- 1 air-lock (*they can be found online for under \$5*);
 - 2 large containers with lids (*1 with a small hole poked in the lid to insert an air-lock & 1 with a spout at the bottom for bottling*);
 - 1 sieve or colander with small holes;
 - bottles & lids (or corks); & room in the back of your refrigerator!
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Grandma Ginger's Favorite Wine Recipe

- 4 quarts of ripe berries—ALL kinds mixed together
- 4 quarts of filtered boiling water
- 2 more quarts of filtered & boiling water
- 8 cups of plain old white sugar
- 1 box of raisins, finely chopped (enhances yeast)
- 1 ounce (2 TBSP) yeast & 2 TBSP water
- 1 slice of toast (a temporary raft for the yeast)

Day 1: Fresh fruits & berries work well for this recipe, but, if your crops come in slowly, you can freeze them up as they come into season until you have just under 2 pitchers full (two 2-quart pitchers). Frozen fruit will only ferment if you add fresh (unfrozen) berries or fruit to it, so be sure to add a cup of fresh fruit or berries to make the total 4 quarts.

Almost any combination of fruits & berries will do.

Then, pour 4 quarts of boiling water over the mixture and use a potato masher to mash the fruit. Don't break any large pits or the wine will taste bitter—like cyanide.

And, cut up fruit (like plums) to break down the cell wall & speed fermentation. Set aside in a large (5-10 gallon) clean, covered plastic bucket in a temperature-controlled (75-85 degrees) place in the kitchen—so it isn't forgotten—for 2 or 3 days. Extreme temperature fluctuations can hinder the fermentation ('fizzing') process.

Day 4: Dissolve 8 cups of sugar in 2 quarts of boiling water and add it to the mash. Sprinkle chopped raisins on top & stir. Moisten the yeast and spread it on one side of the toast and float it—yeast side down—on the top. Put on a lid with an air-lock (air needs to escape) and put in a warm (body temperature) place for 2 weeks. **Stir every day**--trying to break up the fruit on the sides without disturbing the toast--although it will fall apart.

(During this time you can add other berries/fruits that ripen.)

Day 18: When it quits being real fizzy, strain the mash and discard the pulp. The juice that is left should be a little sweet. If it's too tart, stir in some more sugar. Let stand (this time, NO stirring) for 2 more weeks.

Day 32: Strain the mixture again (use cheesecloth, fine mesh or sieve) and return (so it can settle) to a container that has a bottom spout. For 2 more days.

Day 34: In about 2 days (longer if you added extra sugar-- since it extends the fermentation), carefully open the spout (sediment may come forth first but will quickly clear out) and slowly fill clean bottles. Try not to get much bottom-sediment. Then, put a loose lid or cork in each bottle and set upright in the back of the refrigerator—cooling stops fermentation. Don't tighten the lids for a few weeks. (Or, just cover with a piece of clear wrap & a rubberband—of course, you have to keep it upright, but it won't explode!)



Grandma Ginger's Elderberry Wine*

4 quarts of elderberries (w/stems)
4 quarts of hot water
8 cups of white cane sugar
1 cups of chopped raisins (or fresh, unwashed grapes)
1 ounce (1 packet) of baker's (NOT brewer's) yeast
1 slice of white bread (toasted) or 3 shredded wheat

Day 1: Snip (with scissors) away the *stalks* of the elderberries
--but leave the weblike *stems*--

they add color and flavor. Put elderberries (& stems) into a porcelain or stainless steel kettle.
(To measure 4 quarts, cram the berries on the stems into a 4 quart pitcher until you can't push them down any further--this isn't rocket science, it needn't be exactly 4 quarts).

Pour hot water over them and bring to a rolling boil for about 30 minutes.
Move the kettle from heat and let it cool to lukewarm--this takes a few hours.

Then, strain the juice through a colander or sieve into another container,
mashing the berries to get all of the juice. This is messy.

When you have all the juice out of the berries, and while it's still warm,
put the dark liquid back in the kettle and dissolve the cane sugar into it.
Stir in a cup of chopped raisins (to help fermentation).

Next, moisten a packet (or 1 ounce) of yeast and spread it on one side of the wheat toast
(use shredded wheat for a 'heavier' wine) and float them--yeast side down--in the liquid
(floating glucose speeds up fermentation). Put a lid on it with an air-lock and leave in a warm
place (around 80 degrees--but away from sunlight or where the temperature goes up & down)
to ferment for about 2 weeks. Stir every day.

Day 14: Strain the liquid again, put it in a pot with a SPOUT at the bottom
and leave it alone for 2 days (for the sediment to go to the bottom).

Day 16: Sterilize some jars or old wine bottles (glass OR plastic) with corks or screw-on lids and
have them dry and ready. Fill them with wine--trying not to get the bottom sediment (it clouds
the wine) and seal *lightly* (so bubbles can escape) *until the fermentation stops*--it takes anywhere
from 2 to 4 weeks to be SURE that it's finished fermenting (so it won't explode when sealed).

Day 30+: When no tiny bubbles are left inside the bottle, either *tightly cork* or otherwise
seal the bottles--if you don't do this--you'll eventually have vinegar.

This makes about 4 quarts of wine. Keep the bottles in a cool place (40-50 degrees inhibits
further fermentation) for at least 6 months (the longer, the better) before opening.
You can use the back (or warmest) spot in your refrigerator to store the bottles.

*Unpasteurized (home-made) elderberry wine helps remove mucus & phlegm. Elderberry extract is sold as a
flu remedy in Europe and in health food stores in the U.S. as an immune system enhancer.



Grandma Ginger's Apple Wine

10 lbs of apples (2 giant bowls full of cut-up pieces)
2 cups of chopped raisins
1 cup of (unpearled) raw barley
4 quarts of water
6 cups of light brown sugar

Day 1: Shred the apples--this is important--they won't ferment as well if they aren't shredded. Bruised apples are okay (it speeds fermentation).

Put into a large container (NOT aluminum) and add the raisins, barley and water. Put the covered container in a warm (70-80 degrees) place to ferment.

Days 2-28: Each day for the next FOUR WEEKS, open the container and stir it up. It should fizz. When the fizzing slows down, the 1st fermentation is ending.

Day 28: After the month is over, strain out the yucky stuff and put just the liquid into a container with a spout near the bottom so you don't have to siphon it later to keep from getting the sediment at the bottom. Add the brown sugar and stir until it's all dissolved. Set the mixture back in the warm spot for another THREE WEEKS. This time, don't stir it at all. Let it settle.

Day 49: Seven weeks from the time you started, gently open the spout and start filling up bottles (or canning jars) with the wine. If you don't have a spouted container, carefully dip the top liquid out and bottle it. The idea is to leave the sediment at the bottom--it clouds up the wine.

Do not seal the bottles tightly yet, because they could explode. Instead, seal them lightly and put in a dark place for a few days--checking to make sure there isn't pressure building up and fermentation still going on.

Day 51 or 52 or 53: When you think they're done, seal & put the bottles in the back of your refrigerator or in a cool (40-60 degrees) place.



Grandma Ginger's Strawberry Wine

4 quarts of ripe strawberries
4 quarts of filtered water
8 cups of white sugar
1 box of golden raisins, chopped
1 ounce (2 TBSP) yeast & 2 TBSP water
1 slice of white toast (for light colored wine)

Day 1: Wash and stem the strawberries and add them to most of the water in a large pot. In another pot, put the rest of the water and all the sugar (to dissolve it). Mash the berries as they heat slowly but keep stirring the sugar-water mixture, too.

When the berries come to a full boil and the sugar mixture is dissolved, combine them in a 3-5 gallon clean plastic container and let them cool to lukewarm (so they won't be boiling-hot and kill the yeast, but warm enough to make it grow).

Pour the mixture through a sieve to strain out the berries (so they don't get moldy). Then add the cut-up raisins to the juice.

Next, take the dry yeast and add enough water to it to make a spreadable paste for the toast (don't burn the toast or it'll ruin the wine's taste).

After you spread the yeast on the toast, carefully float it (yeast-side down) in the strawberry juice. Put a cover over the container with an air-lock (so air can escape) and let it stand somewhere (at 70-80 degrees) for 1 week. Stir it every day. (It's okay when the bread falls apart. Keep stirring and watch it bubble.)

Day 8: Strain out the bread and raisins and put the fermented juice in a container with a spout at the bottom (so you don't have to siphon). Let it settle for 2 weeks undisturbed.

Day 22: Carefully fill bottles to the top with the strawberry wine, trying not to get the bottom sediment--it makes the wine cloudy. Cork or cap the bottles lightly. It'll keep fermenting for a few weeks and leak out some--or explode if it's corked too tightly.

Day 24: The wine can easily go flat and turn into vinegar if it quits fermenting and isn't chilled right away. Just to be safe, lightly cork it about 2 days after bottling and put the bottles in the back part of the refrigerator (50-60 degrees)--so they can't do much more fermenting. (Fermentation requires warmth.) Then, tighten caps or push corks all the way in. I don't recommend putting homemade wine bottles on their side. I keep them upright.

Grandma Ginger's Mulberry Wine

4 quarts of mulberries (with stems)
4 quarts of boiling filtered water
8 cups of white sugar
1 package (2.5 TBSP) dry yeast



Day 1: Boil 4 quarts of water, remove from the hot stove burner & add 4 quarts of mulberries. Let them sit for about an hour. While still warm, mash them with a potato masher for about 5 minutes and then transfer them into a large plastic or metal container that has a loosely fitting top or an air lock on top--so some air can escape. Stir in 8 cups of sugar until it all dissolves. Sprinkle the yeast on top. Set aside for 1 week, stirring every day. The mixture should become fizzy.

Day 8 (or when the wine starts to lose it's fizziness):
Strain through a sieve (colander) and put the juice into a container that has a spout at the bottom.
Throw away the spent mulberries. Leave the mixture alone for about 5 days (no stirring). This is the 2nd fermentation.

Day 13: Carefully put a bottle under the spout and begin filling it (so as to not disturb the sediment--you don't want that in your wine). Throw the bottom sediment away, cork the bottles lightly (so they can ferment a little more), put them in the refrigerator or wine cellar and watch them for a week to make sure they can 'breathe' & not explode.

Day 20: Tighten the lids or corks and put the bottles in the back of the refrigerator or in a wine cellar.



Grandma Ginger's Plum Wine

8 quarts of plums (300 small ripe plums)
8 quarts of hot water
12 cups of white cane sugar
4 cups of chopped raisins
4 cups of cracked wheat (fresh ground or cereal)
2 packets (5 teaspoons) of baker's yeast

Day 1: Put the 8 quarts of water into one large pan or two 5 quart pans and add the sugar to it, stirring until it comes to a rapid boil for 3 minutes. Mash with a long-handled potato masher (the mixture will be very hot!). Then, add it to the plums in a large porcelain, plastic or stainless steel kettle. Let the mixture stand overnight (to allow the plums skins to set the red color).

Day 2: Put the mixture through a sieve and remove all the pits. Retain the pulp and discard the pits. Stir in the chopped raisins and cracked wheat. Sprinkle the dry granulated yeast over the surface and set it in a warm place to ferment for two weeks. Stir to invert the fizzy mash every day.

Day 15: Strain the mixture through a sieve and return to a container with a spout on the bottom to settle for 2 days. (Make sure a bottle will fit under the spout-- since you won't want to move the container at all when you fill the bottles.)

Day 17: Fill bottles and cork lightly for a few more days.

Day 19: Cork or cap securely and place in the back of the refrigerator for 6 months.



Grandma Ginger's Cherry Wine

4 quarts of ripe cherries (with pits)
4 quarts of filtered water
8 cups of white sugar
1 box of golden raisins, finely chopped
1 ounce (2 TBSP) yeast & 2 TBSP water
1 slice of white toast (for light colored wine)

Day 1: Pick the cherries (even small ones will do) and, unless they've been sprayed or have dirt on them, don't wash them (there are yeast cells on the outside that speed fermentation). Mash the cherries in a big bowl with your fingers to break the skins, but don't split the pits (the cyanide in them makes the wine bitter). Then pour 2 quarts of boiling water over them and set aside for 2 days.

Day 3: Dissolve 8 cups of sugar in 2 quarts of boiling water and add it to the cherry mash. Sprinkle chopped raisins on top & stir. Then, moisten the yeast and spread it on one side of the toast and float it (yeast side down) on the top. Cover lightly and put in a warm (near body temp.) place for 2 weeks. Stir every day--trying to break up the fruit on the sides without disturbing the toast--although it will fall apart eventually.

Day 17: Strain the mash and discard the pulp. The juice that is left should be a little sweet. If it's very tart, stir in some more sugar. Then, let stand for 2 more weeks.

Day 31: Strain the mixture again (use cheesecloth, fine mesh or even pantyhose) and return to a container with a bottom spout. In about 2 days (longer if you added extra sugar-- since it extends fermentation), carefully open the spout (sediment may come forth first but will quickly clear out) and pour into bottles.



Grandma Ginger's Blackberry (or Blueberry) Wine



10 cups of unwashed blackberries (or blueberries)
10 cups of hot water
6 cups of white cane sugar
2 ounces (packets) of yeast (NOT brewer's yeast)
1 slice of bread lightly toasted (optional)

Day 1: Add sugar to the hot water and then to the berries. Squish the blackberries with your fingers or a potato masher until they are all broken and then put in a large plastic or glass container (never aluminum). Moisten the yeast and spread it on one side of the toast (use shredded wheat for a 'heavier' wine) and float it--yeast side down--in the liquid (floating glucose speeds up fermentation). Put a lid on it and leave in a warm place (about 80 degrees is best--but away from sunlight or where the temperature goes up & down--I use behind the door at the top of the stairs--since hot air rises, it's always warm). Stir it every day for 2 weeks. The toast eventually breaks apart--that's okay.

While it is fermenting, you can add more blackberries any time with a little warm water & about a cup of sugar for each cup of extra blackberries. If you add berries, the 1st fermentation may take a little longer, though. This isn't rocket science--feel free to experiment. Fruit & heat WILL make wine--with or without your help. When it quits being active (fizzy) when stirred...

Day 14: Strain out the pulp & toast, pour the blackberry liquid into a container with a spout at the bottom. Let the mixture sit, undisturbed for 1 week (2nd fermentation).

Day 21: Sterilize some jars or wine bottles and have them dry and ready. Pour the mixture into them without disturbing or getting the bottom sediment (the first bottle will get some sediment--since it will shoot out of the spout first) and seal *the bottles lightly* (so bubbles can escape) with a lid or cork *until the fermentation stops*--it takes anywhere from 2 to 4 weeks. This is the 'tricky' part, you need to check it to be SURE when it's finished fermenting.

Day 30+: When no tiny bubbles are left inside the bottle and the temperature drops (fermentation is known by it's heat), either *tightly cork* or otherwise seal the bottles (*if you do this prematurely, they may explode in storage*) but if you don't do it--you'll get vinegar.

Keep the bottles in a cool place (40-50 degrees inhibits further fermentation) for at least 6 months (the longer, the better) before opening. You can use the back (or warmest) spot in your refrigerator to store the bottles.

Grandma Ginger's Fig Wine

Day 1: 3 quarts of unwashed (organic) figs
2 quarts of water

Day 2: 3 cups of water
6 cups of sugar
1 cup of raisins



*Best tasting
wine!*

Day 1: Chop the figs up and put in a glass or plastic container.

Cover with 2 quarts of cold water and let stand overnight.

Day 2: Put 2 quarts of water in a pot on the stove and slowly add 6 cups of sugar. While hot, add the chopped figs/water solution and put it back in the container. Chop the raisins up and add them to the mixture to speed fermentation.

Set aside in a warm place for 2 weeks.

Stir every day (it should soon become fizzy).

Day 14: Strain the juice out and discard the fig & raisin pulp.

Let the juice sit undisturbed (do NOT stir) for 2 weeks (sediment needs to settle on the bottom).

Day 28: Strain again to get out any seeds that may be left.

Then put the mixture into a container with a spout at the bottom.

Let settle for 2 days.

Day 30: Carefully put a bottle under the spout and begin filling it (so as to not disturb the sediment--you don't want much of that in your wine). After all the clear wine is bottled (throw the sediment at the bottom away), cork it lightly (so it can ferment a little more) and watch it for a few days until you're sure it's done fizzing. Then seal tightly.

Then put it in the back of the refrigerator for at least 6 months.

This is the best tasting wine. It's very sweet & rich.



Grandma Ginger's Grape Wine

2 quarts of stemmed, unwashed, organic grapes
5 cups of white cane sugar
8 average-sized healthy grape leaves
4 quarts of filtered water (2 heated, 2 at room temp.)
1 package of dry granulated yeast (NOT brewer's yeast)

Day 1: Grapes have yeast cells growing on their skins that help the wine to ferment.

If you buy the grapes, make sure they are organic (no pesticides on them) and go ahead and wash them--they've probably had the yeast cells washed off anyway. But, it's better if you pick them fresh and don't wash them--you may not even need the package of granulated yeast.

After you have two big bowls (about 2 quarts) of grapes and have discarded the bugs & hard, pit-like raisins, put the grapes in a clean plastic bucket and, with a clean bare foot, stomp them until they're pretty well mashed. (Stand next to a sink when you do it to rinse your foot afterwards & have a towel handy to dry it.)

Then heat 2 quarts of the water and add the 5 cups of sugar to blend it in--but don't boil it. Pour it into the mash, add 2 more quarts of filtered water and, if you want more flavor to the wine, add about 8 grape leaves (pick the best ones). Then top it off with a package of dry yeast & cover. Stir every day for 1 week. (*This is the 1st fermentation.*)

Day 8: Strain out the pulp & leaves and pour the liquid into a container with a spout at the bottom. (Put it where you can easily fill bottles later from the spout without moving the container.) Let the mixture sit, undisturbed for 2 weeks. (*2nd fermentation.*)

Day 22: Sterilize some jars or wine bottles and have them dry and ready. Pour the mixture from the spout into them without getting the bottom sediment (the first bottle will get some sediment--since it will shoot out of the spout first) and then seal *the bottles lightly* (so bubbles can escape) with a cork --or even plastic wrap with a rubber band--*until the fermentation stops*. Refrigeration stops fermentation in about a month, so a corked bottle shouldn't explode. (But I don't take any chances. I just keep a piece of a plastic baggie secured with a rubber band on the top, no corks. Obviously, I can't use a tilted wine rack.)

Keep the bottles in a cool place (40-50 degrees) for at least 6 months (the longer, the better) before opening. You can use the back (the warmest) spot in your refrigerator to store the bottles. Or buy a small refrigerator that isn't noisy (most are) & use it as a wine & pickle cellar.

Grandma Ginger's Pear Wine

4 quarts of chopped, unpeeled, ripe pears
4 quarts of hot water
6 cups of white cane sugar
1 cup of brown sugar
3 cups of chopped raisins
1 cup of shredded wheat biscuits
1 packets of baker's (NOT brewer's) yeast



Day 1: In a large pan, warm up 2 quarts of water and slowly add 6 cups of white sugar and 1 cup of brown sugar until it's all dissolved. Bring to a boil and remove from heat. Add the other 2 quarts of water to cool the mixture.

Cut the pears and take out the seeds (any seeds left in will make the wine bitter), then shred the cut-up pears (like coleslaw) and put in a large kettle. Add the 3 cups of chopped raisins and 1 cup of shredded wheat (mash the wheat biscuits down somewhat).

Then combine this fruit-mash with the sugar water in a large plastic bucket, preferably with a hole punched in the top and an air-lock in it. (These are available online for about \$2-\$5 apiece and last a long, long time.) Put the mixture in a warm place (next to the refrigerator or at the top of a staircase is usually warm enough) and stir every day for 3 weeks.

Day 21: Put the mixture through a sieve and remove all the pulp and discard it. Set the liquid in a plastic (or glass) container that has a spout at the bottom in a warm place for the 2-week second fermentation --NO stirring.

Note: if you notice mold on the top, remove it and add 1 cup of sugar. Taste it (from the bottom spout) the next day. The mixture should still have some 'fizziness' (carbonation). If it doesn't, you probably should go ahead and bottle all of it and refrigerate to save it from becoming vinegar.

Day 35 (or earlier, if necessary): Fill bottles from bottom spout and cork lightly (or cover with clear wrap & a rubber band) and put in the back of the refrigerator.



Grandma Ginger's Raspberry Honey Wine (Mead) Recipe

1 quart bottle of honey (about 2 lbs.)
2 quarts of boiling water
3 quarts raspberries (stems removed)
1 cup of raisins, finely chopped
1 TBSP bread-baker's yeast & 1 TBSP water
1 slice of toast (a 'life raft' for the yeast)

Day 1: Boil water & honey in a large pot for 10 minutes and skim off any froth that rises to the top. While it's boiling, put raspberries in a blender or mash them by hand. After the water/honey mixture is done, remove from heat source and add raspberries.

Then add raisins and moisten the yeast, paint it onto the toast and float the toast (yeast side down) on the mixture. Put a lid on it with a water lock (for air to escape but keeping ants out).

Set in a warm place undisturbed for 2 weeks. By warm place, I mean about 80 degrees, without a draft or any big temperature fluctuations.

Day 15: Strain the mash and discard the pulp & bread. Put the juice into a large glass container that has a spout at the bottom and leave alone for 2 more weeks. This is the 2nd fermentation.

Through the glass, you should be able to tell when the sediment has gone to the bottom. The spout should be slightly above the sediment.

Day 29: Slowly open the spout at the bottom and let the mead (wine) flow into bottles or canning jars (anything with a lid that can be tightened later). Lightly cap, cork or screw on lid and store in a cool place (refrigerator is okay) for a few more weeks, until the fermentation has quit.

If you cork too tightly at first, it could explode.
But, there will still be some carbonation (fizz) when served.

P.S. It's okay to add fruit juice or other wines when serving to make it sweeter or to cut the sweetness.

Grandma Ginger's Goji/Grape/Blackberry Wine



4-5 cups of fresh goji berries*
8-10 cups of sliced red grapes
4-5 cups of blackberries
4-5 cups of hot water
6-8 cups of white cane sugar
1 ounce (1 packet) of baker's (NOT brewer's) yeast
1 slice of bread (toasted) *or* 3 shredded wheat squares

Day 1: Put blackberries, grapes and goji berries in a large container on the stove, add water and sugar. Simmer for about 30 minutes.

Use a potato masher to squish the berries & grapes. Then, remove from heat and let cool to lukewarm--this may take an hour or so. Put the mixture into a large plastic bucket that has a lid with a small hole for an air-lock.

Moisten a packet (1 ounce) of yeast and spread it on one side of the wheat toast (use shredded wheat for a 'heavier' wine) and float it--yeast side down--in the liquid--floating glucose speeds up fermentation. Put a lid on it with an air-lock (with water in it) in the hole and leave in a warm place (around 80 degrees--but away from sunlight or from where the temperature goes up & down) to ferment for about 2 weeks.

Gently stir every day until it ceases being 'fizzy.'

Day 14: Strain the berries out & discard, put the liquid in a container with a SPOUT at the bottom and leave it alone for 6 days (for the sediment to go to the bottom).

Day 18: Sterilize some jars or old wine bottles (glass OR plastic) with corks or screw-on lids and have them dry and ready. Fill them with wine--trying not to get the bottom sediment (it clouds the wine) and seal *lightly* (so bubbles can escape) *until the fermentation stops*--it takes anywhere from 2 to 4 weeks to be SURE that it's finished fermenting (so it won't explode when sealed).

Day 32+: When no tiny bubbles are left inside the bottle, either *tightly cork* or otherwise seal the bottles--if you don't do this--you'll eventually have vinegar.

Keep the bottles in a cool place (40-50 degrees inhibits further fermentation) for at least 6 months (the longer, the better) before opening.

You can use the back (or warmest) spot in your refrigerator to store the bottles.

*Goji bushes are invasive and have long thorns on the stems, but grow easily in Tennessee. They don't taste particularly well (kind of like store-bought tomatoes that are picked green) but they are rich in zeaxanthin and are being studied for their anti-tumor properties.

Grandma Ginger's Wild Grape Wine



4 quarts unwashed* wild grapes
8 cups of sugar
3 quarts warm water
1 TBSP (or 1 packet) of baker's yeast
1 slice of toasted bread or plain shredded wheat

Day 1: Put grapes in a large plastic bucket (that has a lid with a small hole for an air-lock) with 3 quarts of warm water and, with a very clean foot (and a towel in hand) stomp them for 10 minutes. Moisten bread & sprinkle yeast on one side of it (use shredded wheat for a 'heavier' wine) and float it--yeast side down-- in the wine--(floating glucose speeds up fermentation). Put a lid on it with an air-lock (with water in it) in the hole and leave in a warm place (around 80 degrees if possible--but away from sunlight or from where the temperature goes up & down) to ferment for 4 weeks or until it ceases being 'fizzy.' Stir every day. This is the first fermentation.

Day 28: Strain & discard the berries and bread. Pour the liquid in a container with a SPOUT at the bottom and leave it alone for 7 days. This is the second fermentation that causes the sediment to go to the bottom.

Day 35: Sterilize some canning jars or old wine bottles (glass OR plastic) and have them dry and ready. Fill them with the wine--trying not to get much bottom sediment--(which is drinkable but clouds the wine) and seal *lightly* (so bubbles can escape) it takes from 2 to 4 weeks to be SURE that it's finished fermenting (so it won't explode when sealed). The enzymes should remain alive (unlike 'store-bought' wines) and can go through a minor fermentation period in the spring & fall--and may be cloudy if opened then.

Keep the bottles in a cool place (40-50 degrees inhibits further fermentation) for at least 6 months (the longer, the better) before opening.
Use the back (or warmest) spot in your refrigerator to store the bottles.

*unwashed? Unless they're dirty, of course. The live yeast cells on the fresh-picked grapes helps the fermentation process. Washing it off is counterproductive.