

Basic Fire Cider Vinegar



Herbal vinegars are easy to make and the acetic acid in apple cider vinegar makes it the perfect menstruum to extract the medicinal constituents and nutrition of many plants. Fire Cider is my favorite version of herbal vinegar. I learned a version of this recipe from my teacher Kat Maier many years ago, who learned it from her teacher Rosemary Gladstar.

Technically though, this preparation is an oxymel, as it is an herbal vinegar sweetened to taste with raw honey—a sweet and sour “kitchen medicine” if you will. The medicinal properties in the ingredients are extracted by the vinegar and then the vinegar and honey bring their benefits as well. Apple cider vinegar has many benefits, as it is antimicrobial, astringent, helps balance PH, supports digestion, and balances blood sugar. Basically, with Fire Cider, you end up with a very effective winter immune tonic that can be taken daily to kindle metabolic fire and keep seasonal illnesses at bay.

This has been a common folk remedy for ages and most herbalists share some version of this preparation widely with their community. In the not too distant past however, Fire cider was part of a controversy and lawsuit. Shire City Herbals trademarked it and started legally notifying others making or selling Fire Cider they were in violation. Most herbalists selling the preparation simply changed the name of what they were selling and continued on. Finally, our herbal elder, the godmother of American herbalism, Rosemary Gladstar and others took them to court and won! Herbalism remains the medicine of the people and we all share our recipes, regardless of whether we also sell them! You can read more about the saga here:

<https://www.motherearthnews.com/natural-health/fire-cider-recipe-zbcz1512>

Ingredients:

Organic apple cider vinegar (about 3 cups)

1 medium onion, chopped

5-10 cloves of garlic, crushed

½ cup grated horseradish root

½ cup grated ginger root

Raw honey

Optional items/to your taste: lemon zest & juice, Turmeric, Ginseng, Astragalus, or Burdock root, cayenne pepper, jalapeno pepper, star anise, fresh sprigs of Rosemary, Oregano, or Thyme, peppercorns

Directions:

- 1.) Fill a quart Mason jar $\frac{3}{4}$ of the way full of chopped ingredients above.
- 2.) Cover all with apple cider vinegar making sure it clears the ingredients by a couple inches and fills the jar to the tippy top.
- 3.) Tighten the lid (use a square of wax paper under it to prevent the vinegar from corroding the metal lid) or use a plastic lid.
- 4.) Steep for about a month in a cool, dark place. Shake occasionally.
- 5.) Strain using a strainer and cheese cloth.
- 6.) Add raw honey to taste.
- 7.) Bottle in glass and label according to ingredients.
- 8.) Take a spoonful daily to support winter wellness. It's also super tasty in homemade marinades and salad dressings!