

DIY Root 'Beer'

Original source: seriouseats.com

If applicable, recipe adapted to Imperial measurements as well as for availability of ingredients in South Africa

Homemade root beer is earthy, bold & sweet all at the same time. Home brewed root beer has a slight alcoholic content (around 1%). Be sure to sanitize the plastic bottles before use.

NB: Makes 5 litres

Ingredients:

- 4 litres filtered water, divided into 2 x 2 litres
- 1½ cups brown sugar, packed
- 125ml / ½ cup molasses
- ⅛ teaspoon ale yeast

Spices &/or Herbs:

- 15ml / 1 Tbsp sarsaparilla root bark
- 15ml / 1 Tbsp sassafras root bark
- 8ml / ½ Tbsp birch leaves
- 3 star anise pods
- 1 vanilla bean, split and scraped
- ½ teaspoon crushed fresh ginger
- 4 sprigs fresh mint (preferably chocolate mint or spearmint, but any mint will do)

Brewing Instructions:

- In a medium saucepan, combine 2 litres water with all the spices and bring to a boil.
- Reduce to a simmer and cook for 10 minutes.
- Remove pot from heat, cover, and let steep for 2 hours.
- Strain liquid through fine mesh strainer lined with cheesecloth into a large pot. Add remaining 2 litres of water along with the brown sugar and molasses. Stir until mixture is integrated, then cover.
- Let cool to 24°C, then stir in yeast and let it sit for 15 minutes.
- Fill plastic bottles with mixture, leaving 5cm of space at top. Screw on caps.
- Keep bottles at room temperature for 36 hours, then open a bottle slowly and carefully to see if it is carbonated enough. If it is, then go on to the next step. If not, reseal the bottle and let rest for another 12 – 24 hours until desired carbonation is reached.
- Place bottles in the refrigerator for 2 days before drinking.
- You can store refrigerated root beer for about one month.

Recipe from: www.BrewingWithSpicesAndHerbs.co.za 