

Hoist By Your Own Picard

from Carin Huber

Difficulty

Pint

Ingredients

8 c/1.75 l vodka
10-12 Earl Grey teabags
2 c/400 g sugar
2 c/475 ml water

You Will Also Need

- one 2-qt/1.75 l jar with tight-fitting lids
- funnel
- clean bottles with tight-fitting lids or corks

Chef's Notes

- This cordial is so easy, you don't even need a replicator to make it!
- Choose a good quality Earl Grey tea, don't just grab the cheapest thing on the shelf. I use Republic of Tea® Earl Greyer. If you use loose tea instead of tea bags, you can either put it into a large muslin herb bag (used to contain herbs for flavoring a soup stock), or just toss the loose tea into the jar. If you do the latter, you will have to strain the tea out of the cordial before sweetening it.
- All your equipment should be very clean before use. The alcohol in the vodka will kill most unwanted biological matter, but I have had a cordial mold during the infusing process before.

Makes approx. 2 quarts/1.75 litres. Prep time: 60 seconds. Infusing time: 4 to 6 weeks. Cooking time: 5 minutes.

Directions

Toss the tea bags into the jar, and dump the vodka in on top of them. Put the lid on and give the jar a shake. Put the jar in a dark, cool place and leave it there to infuse for four to six weeks. Every day or two, take the jar out and give it another slosh, to keep things mixed up and mingling. While you have it out, inspect the contents for mold or any of Wesley's science experiments. If you find anything you weren't expecting, throw the Prime Directive out the airlock! Use your superior technology to displace the lower life forms, clean the jar and other tools thoroughly, and try again.

After four to six weeks, open the jar up and take a whiff. It should smell very strongly of the tea. Fish out the tea bags.

At this point you have flavored vodka. Feel free to stop here in favor of concocting new and unusual cocktails with your Earl Grey vodka. Maybe a little actual tea in that Long Island Iced Tea? If, however, you prefer a sweeter drink, read on.

Stir the water and sugar together in a pot over medium heat, until the mixture comes to a boil. Turn the heat down to a simmer and continue to cook and stir the syrup for a minute or two, just long enough to make sure the sugar is all dissolved. Remove the syrup from the heat, and let it cool to room temperature.

Once the syrup has cooled, sweeten the cordial with it. Mix one cup of the syrup into the cordial and stir it in gently, but thoroughly. Ladle a little—just a taste—into a cup, and test it for flavor and sweetness. If it's not sweet enough, add a little more syrup and taste again, until it's as sweet as you like. Discard any remaining cordial in your tasting glass each time—never put it back in the bowl with the rest of it, and always ladle the cordial from the jar to the glass; don't dip your glass into the jar. Keep it all as clean as you can.

Any remaining syrup can be saved to sweeten non-alcoholic iced tea, or anything else you like sweet, but don't want sugar granules sitting at the bottom.

Funnel the cordial into individual bottles and cap or cork tightly.

Take a bottle to 10-Forward to share.

