

Home brewed lemonade

Here are two recipes for the brewed lemonade;

- A "Mixing Edition" which is lightly flavoured and fairly dry which was primarily designed for mixing with gin and anywhere else you might use tonic. On its own, this is quite refreshing simply because it isn't sticky with sugar.
- A stronger, sweeter version which might suit those more used to sweet commercial lemonades.



The recipe for my home brewed lemonade is very simple. It is basically the same as ginger beer but doesn't have any ginger and has more lemons. I developed it to reduce our plastic bottle waste stream seeing as we were buying tonic to go with our gin. It was also developed to mix with my home-made mandarin and banana wine which, although tasting nice, turned out to be **extremely** dangerously powerful and really needed watering down. Adding gin to it may have made it slightly less potent, but I thought a lemonade spritzer might be a safer way to go. It turned out very well and made a refreshing mix. We discovered an added advantage of this lemonade was that it re-pressurises a bit rather than going flat once opened.

In developing this recipe I did several versions as I adjusted it to suit being mixed, rather than being a stand-alone lemonade. The first edition was really nice, but had more flavour and sweetness than necessary for a mixer – to my taste anyway.

Mixing Edition – works well on its own too

Makes 7.5 litres

5x 1.5L soft drink bottles

1 teaspoon of dried yeast

1¾ cups of sugar

4L of water

2 smallish lemons

- Take a plastic pail or bowl which can hold 5L of liquid.
- Fill to 4L with water
- Stir in your sugar (you don't need to get it all dissolved. The yeast will sort it out on its own.)
- Add the yeast and stir in
- Grate or peel your lemon into the water
- Briefly warm your peeled lemon in the microwave (This helps extract maximum juice)
- Squeeze the juice into your bucket of liquid.
- Cover and leave to start brewing. On a warm day this will only need about 1 day. If it is cooler, you may need to brew it in the bucket for a couple of days. For this low sugar version it is worth keeping this primary ferment period to a minimum because you have less sugar available to pressurise the bottles. I have found that even 12 hours in the bucket is enough to get good flavour extraction. Basically the longer the brew stays in the bucket the more flavour you will extract from the peel but the more sugar you will use up that won't contribute to bubbliness*.
- Sieve or strain the lemonade into your five bottles. Top the bottles up with water to about 40mm from the top. Cap them tightly.
- Put the bottles somewhere until you need them. It is generally ready after about two, to three days after bottling. The bottles will feel very hard and when you tap them they will tend to ring.
- When you want to drink one, just transfer it to the fridge and once chilled open it carefully.

We have also made the same recipe using Grapefruit in place of the lemons. This too works very well.

* *Bubbliness* – your new word for the day.

First Edition

Makes 6 litres

4x 1.5L soft drink bottles
1 teaspoon of dried yeast
2½ cups of sugar
5L of water
3 lemons

- Take a plastic pail or bowl which can hold 5L of liquid.
- Fill to 4L with water
- Stir in your sugar (you don't need to get it all dissolved. The yeast will sort it out anyway.)
- Add the yeast and stir in
- Grate or peel your lemons into the water
- Warm your peeled lemons in the microwave (This helps extract maximum juice)
- Squeeze the juice into your bucket of liquid.
- Cover and leave to start brewing. On a warm day this will only need about 1 day. If it is cooler, you may need to brew it in the bucket for a couple of days. Don't brew it too long otherwise you'll use up all the sugar and won't have any left the pressurise the bottles.
- Sieve or strain the lemonade into your four bottles. Top the bottles up with water to about 40mm from the top. Cap them tightly.
- Put them somewhere until you need them. It is generally ready after about three or four days in the bottles. The bottles will feel very hard and when you tap them they will tend to ring.
- When you want to drink one, just transfer it to the fridge and once chilled open it carefully and slowly so you don't end up washing the room with the stuff.



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