We will be making two types of wine in this tutorial, cranberry and apple-strawberry kiwi. You can use any kind of juice from concentrate except high citrus juices like orange, grapefruit, lemon or blends of these. Gather the below ingredients:

Recipes

Cranberry

- 3 cups white sugar (I like pure cane sugar)
- 1 cup dark brown sugar
- 1 12 oz can frozen cranberry juice concentrate (thawed)
- 1 gal spring water (you can use any type of bottled water)
- 1 packet super/highly active bread yeast

Apple-Strawberry-Kiwi

- 4 cups white sugar
- 1 12 oz can frozen apple,strawberry, kiwi juice concentrate (thawed)
- 1 gal spring water
- 1 packet super/highly active bread yeast

Equipment/Supplies

- 2 l gal glass bottles with screw caps
- 2 #6 rubber stoppers with pre-drilled hole
- 2 airlocks
- 1 funnel

One gallon glass bottles

These bottles should be clean and sanitized. Glass works best for me (make sure you get the screw caps for the bottles). However, you can use plastic. If you do use plastic make sure the container is "food grade". I have even used the bottles the water came in.

If you use the water bottles, you will need to temporarily put the water in another container. You will also need balloons and rubber bands. The rubber bands are used to secure the balloons to the neck of the bottles.

#6 rubber stoppers

I bought mine at a local brew supply store but they are readily available online. Make sure you buy stoppers with a pre-drilled hole for the airlock. Also make sure you buy the correct size for your container. Most gallon "brew" bottles take a #6 stopper but not all bottles are created equal. If you buy equipment from a local store the sales person will help you and they are a great resource when you start experimenting.

Airlocks

Again, I bought mine at a local brew store. There are a few different types offered and they all do the same thing. I actually prefer a three piece airlock. The airlock uses water to trap oxygen in the bottle while allowing CO2 to escape. Allowing the CO2 to escape helps to reduce acidic taste in the final product. These airlocks are made of plastic, while I have never broken one they are not indestructible.

If you use the balloon method the CO2 cannot escape. The balloon will often inflate to a size almost as large/larger than the bottle. The balloon will gradually deflate as the fermentation process nears the end. In fact, when the balloon completely deflates you know the wine is ready for the next step.

Tip: Put the airlock and stopper together before placing the stopper in the bottle. The airlock is nearly impossible to get into the stopper if the stopper is in the bottle. Another tip is to fill the airlock with water after seating the stopper in the neck of the bottle. My first time I filled with water first and the water came shooting out as I stoppered the bottle (lesson learned).

Now the fun part

Step One

Using a funnel add the sugars into your bottles. Use a funnel large enough to accommodate your measuring utensil so you don't get sugar everywhere. My first time I couldn't find a funnel so I rolled up sheets of computer paper into a cone and used that. You will find the brown sugar is a little harder to get down the funnel, I usually use a chop stick to coax the brown sugar through the hole.

Step Two

Add the juice concentrate to your bottle. Make sure the juice concentrate is thoroughly thawed. Chunks aren't too bad, they will eventually thaw but it is best to get the ingredients well mixed. I usually will cap the bottle at this point and shake it a little bit. You definitely want to get the sugar dissolved as quickly as possible.

Step Three

Using the funnel again, add water to the gallon bottle. It is best to do this in thirds. Cap and shake the bottle to mix it up. Again, it is important to get the sugar thoroughly dissolved...this makes for a much better final product.

Be careful to leave room at the top of the bottle to allow fermentation to do its thing. It is normal for the mixture to foam up and bubble hard during the first couple of days. Most gallon "brew" bottles are marked "one gallon" in raised letters at the top of the bottle. I use these raised letters as a fill line keeping the liquid to right at the top of the raised letters. I'm not sure if this is the intended purpose of the raised letters but it works great for me.

Step Four

Add one packet of yeast. Cap the bottle and quickly shake or agitate the bottle again. This doesn't need to be a hard shake. The purpose is to get the yeast spread throughout the bottle.

Step Five

Put your airlock into the stopper. The airlock should be at least flush with the bottom of the stopper. It is okay for the airlock to be peaking out of the stopper so long as the curve in the stopper is not into the top of the rubber stopper hole. I don't think this would hurt too much but the tool will be in the bottle for quite some time. You don't want the hole to become permanently molded that way as it could cause an air leak later on.

Tip: Lightly wet the end of the airlocks stem and slow "screw" the airlock into the stopper's hole. Be careful, as I said I have never broken an airlock but they are made of plastic. With too much force you are likely to crack the airlock...if it doesn't hold water it is of no use to you.

There is a fill line on the airlock to let you know you have the right amount of water. The fill line is usually a small crack looking line (pretty non-descript). In the s-type it isn't as important as long as you have enough water in the chamber. For the three piece type airlock it is more important. The three piece requires enough water for the bobber piece to float to allow the CO2 to escape.

Step Six

The wine will rest for a minimum of six weeks in a cool dark place. I started by using an empty cabinet in the kitchen. I now use an entire closet with plans of expansion. 70-75 degrees Fahrenheit is the ideal temperature to keep the wine at. The more ideal the conditions the more potent your wine will be.

Step Seven

At six weeks the wine is drinkable but should really be racked for another six weeks to clear the wine up. I will address this and bottling at a later time. Either way you will need to siphon the

wine into another container or bottle. There will be sediment that forms at the bottom of the bottle. I usually siphon until just above this sediment. One gallon will yield about four bottles and a taster glass. I always drink the taster glass right away.

The bread yeast used in these recipes will produce about 14% alcohol by volume (ABV). Yeast is a living organism. Heat, cold and light can all effect the life span of the yeast. Basically, the yeast eats the sugar and the by products are alcohol and CO2. In an ideal run the yeast will die off when the alcohol reaches an ABV that it can no longer survive. It is possible to produce wine having 20-24% ABV or more but this requires special yeast, computers and other equipment.

You will need to gently agitate the wine every couple of days to once a week. You also need to check the airlock regularly to insure there is enough water in the lock. I check mine almost daily because I am a brew geek and I love to watch the process...I get excited! My kids tease me because I am always saying that I am watching the science happen.

Let me know how your process is doing.

Hope you enjoy!

Written by Kenne Sparks, the Cabinet Wine Maker.