

~ I'd love your feedback! Please take the online survey on my home page. ~

## Shaken, Not Stirred: Herb & Fruit Cordials for the Holidays

---



Wintergreen Botanicals, LLC  
Maria Noël Groves, Clinical Herbalist  
Allenstown, NH (Near Bear Brook State Park)  
603-340-5161, office@wintergreenbotanicals.com  
www.WintergreenBotanicals.com

---

**PLEASE READ:** *The information handout has not been approved by the FDA and does not in any way intend to diagnose or prescribe. Always consult with your health practitioner before taking any remedy.*

**Above this, I also recommend that you...**

1. *Research an herb in at least three good sources before ingesting it (see website for sources),*
2. *Listen to your body/intuition to determine if an herb resonates or doesn't resonate with you.*
3. *Take proper steps to ensure that any wildcrafted or cultivated plant is what you think it is, AND*
4. *Check with your pharmacist for herb-drug interactions if you take prescriptions.*

Festive cordials featuring seasonal produce like apples, pears, and cranberries are a delicious way to celebrate the holidays, both to serve at gatherings and give as gifts. Fruit and herbs combine beautifully in simple, delicious recipes with limitless possibilities., like spiced pear cordial with maple syrup, will be ready to serve in just a day or two. Others – like vanilla cordial syrup, cranberry-rosemary cordial, and spiced cider cordial – will reach flavor perfection after one month.

### The Basic Recipes

---

#### Basic Cordial (~25% alcohol)

- 1 part simple syrup, honey, or maple syrup (ie: 2 2/3 ounces)
- 2 parts quality vodka, brandy, or other spirit (ie: 5 1/3 ounces)
- Chopped fruit, herbs, spices, etc.

Make your simple syrup (if using – see recipe below). Loosely fill your jar with desired fruit and herbs. Pour in your syrup and alcohol. Let sit for up to one month, shaking daily. Taste every day or two and strain when it tastes good to you. Strain through a cloth-lined colander or strainer, and squeeze as much out as you can with your hands. Store in glass in a cool, dark, dry spot.

#### What to do with cordials?

- Drink them in a cordial glass for or with dessert.
- Add them to mixed drinks.
- Add them to hot tea or coffee for a kick.
- Drizzle them over ice cream, cakes, and fruit.
- Heat up and thicken with cornstarch to use on desserts for a thicker consistency.
- Serve them in chocolate cups.
- Use them in marinades and sauces.
- Give them as gifts in cute bottles

#### Simple Syrup

*Simple syrup without herbs will last in the fridge for at least a month. It's an ingredient in cordials, elixirs, and some herbal syrup recipes. If you add herbs, it should be preserved with alcohol or frozen to give it a longer shelf life. Regular junky white sugar works better/keeps longer than fancy sugar, honey, maple syrup...*

- 2 part sugar
- 1 parts water
- Handful herbs (optional)

Simmer until the sugar is dissolved. You may infuse or decoct this with herbs (just eyeball it) for a few hours, then strain.

#### Notes:

- Use spirits with good flavor. Cheap vodka will not taste as good as quality vodka in the cordial.
- Fresh fruit cordials generally taste best within two weeks.
- Spiced cordials may get too strong after a few days.
- You can simmer your herbs and/or fruit in with the syrup to speed up and enhance the flavor extraction.

- Simple syrup made with white sugar and high-proof (ie: 80-proof) alcohols will have better shelf lives.
- Divide the proof of an alcohol in half to get the percentage alcohol. So, 80-proof is 40%. Most cordial recipes contain 17-30% alcohol to stay shelf stable. Higher alcohol percentages are fine but might not taste good undiluted.
- You can use wine instead of spirits, but you will need to adjust the recipe by adding much less syrup and/or extra spirits to keep it preserved.
- Feel free to make medicinal cordials with herbs chosen for a particular ailment. Popular themes include digestion (bitters, spices, carminatives) and immune (aromatic, respiratory herbs).

## My Favorite Cordial

---

### Spiced Pear Cordial in Maple Syrup

*This recipe makes about one pint of cordial and will keep for at least one year in the liquor cabinet. You can easily double or triple the batch.*

- 2 small, ripe pears (or 1 large), sliced
- 4 ounces of local maple syrup, pref. grade B
- 2 ounces of water
- 2 cinnamon sticks
- 1/2 teaspoon grated nutmeg
- 6 whole cloves
- 1/2 vanilla bean, sliced lengthwise
- 2 cardamom pods, crushed
- 8 ounces quality vodka\*

Simmer the pears and spices in the maple syrup and water for approximately one hour. Remove from heat occasionally if it seems to be boiling too hard. Pour all the ingredients into a mason jar. (Remove the cinnamon sticks if you want the cinnamon flavor to remain subtle.) Cover with vodka, cap, and let sit on the counter for one to four weeks, shaking daily. Taste it every few days. The flavor will gradually change, becoming more spicy and less fruity/nutmeg-y over time. When it tastes good to you, strain your cordial into bottles, and enjoy! \* *I highly recommend the Flag Hill's General Stark Vodka, which is made with apples from Apple Hill Farm in Concord.*

## Cordial Ideas

---

**Vanilla Syrup Cordial:** Simmer 1-2 vanilla beans in simple syrup, and make your cordial in about a 1:1 ratio of syrup to alcohol. Let sit for about one month or to taste.

**“Lemoncello” Cordial:** Squeeze the juice of 1 lemon into a jar. Loosely fill with lemon slices. Feel free to also add fresh chopped lemony herbs like lemon verbena, lemon balm, lemongrass, and lemon thyme. Cover with a 1:2 ratio of syrup:alcohol. Let sit for 2-14 days, tasting daily.

**Peach & Pineapple Sage Cordial:** Cover fresh chopped peaches and pineapple sage with a 1:2 ratio. Let sit 2-14 days.

**Apple Cinnamon Cordial:** Use a similar recipe as the pear cordial, swapping in apples, double the cinnamon, omit the cardamom.

**Spiced Cider Cordial:** Use apple cider in place of the water when making simple syrup and/or add some maple syrup. Add whole cinnamon sticks and spices to taste. Cover with enough alcohol for at least 1:2.

**Cape Codder:** Simmer cranberries in simple syrup and then add alcohol in a 1:2 ratio.

**CranRosemary Cordial:** Simmer cranberries in simple syrup. Place a few sprigs of fresh rosemary in a jar. Pour in the cranberry/syrup and alcohol in a 1:2 ratio. Let sit 2-14 days.

**Carminative Cordial:** To enhance digestion. Simmer (or not) fennel seeds, cardamom, cloves, star anise, and cinnamon sticks with a pinch of nutmeg and perhaps vanilla. Use a ratio of 1:1 or 1:2.

**Cinnamon Blueberry Cordial:** Simmer blueberries, mashing them, with simple syrup. Put 1 cinnamon stick in the jar. Cover with a ratio of 1:2 let sit to taste. Remove the cinnamon if it is getting too strong but does not yet have the blueberry flavor you want.

**Winter Toddy Cordial:** Cover chopped ginger, lemons, and thyme with a 1:1 or 1:2 ratio.

---

Visit the Links page of [www.WintergreenBotanicals.com](http://www.WintergreenBotanicals.com) for Local & Online sources for bottles, jars, herb supplies... as well as recommended books & links to informative websites.

---