



The beginner's guide  
to making natural,  
non-alcoholic  
fermented drinks

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# FOR STARTERS

Fermented ginger beer is a refreshing, fizzy soft drink; despite its name, our recipe has nothing to do with beer. Its very low alcohol content of less than 0.5% puts ginger beer, along with other fermented beverages in this book, in the category of non-alcoholic drinks in most countries. To brew this drink you simply use a starter to add life to a strong, sweetened infusion of ginger. The starter is easy to make yourself from ginger, water and sugar. You feed the mixture every day — as you would a sourdough starter — until it begins to bubble. As easy as making ginger beer is, though, it does involve quite a lot of effort, so the recipe below yields a large quantity at once.

Still, we suspect that once you have tasted your own home-brewed ginger beer you will soon want to start up a new batch.





# BASIC RECIPE

Ingredients for 8 litres:

For the starter:

- 150 g organic ginger
- 5 tbsp unrefined cane sugar
- 800 ml filtered water

For the ginger tea:

- 250 g organic ginger
- 8 litres filtered water
- 400-800 g unrefined cane sugar (to taste)
- Juice of 4 lemons

1 glass jar (1 litre capacity)

1 glass container (10 litre capacity,  
of the demijohn/carboy type)

# METHOD



1. Make a starter by mixing 2 tablespoons of coarsely grated ginger with 2 tablespoons of sugar and 800 ml of water in a glass jar. Stir well with a wooden spoon. Put the starter in a warm place and stir frequently. Every day add 1 tablespoon grated ginger and 1 tablespoon sugar until the starter starts to fizz. The process may take only a couple of days but sometimes you have to be more patient.



2. Once your starter is showing signs of life, make the ginger tea. Slice the ginger finely, add it to 4 litres of the filtered water and boil, covered, for 15 minutes. Add the sugar and stir well. Dilute the strong ginger tea with the remaining 4 litres of filtered water so that the liquid cools more quickly. Let it cool to body temperature. Transfer the tea into the large glass container.



3. Once the tea is cool enough — waiting is essential because adding the starter when the liquid is too warm would mean sudden death for the carefully cultured organisms — strain the starter to remove the ginger pieces and add the liquid to the tea. Add the lemon juice and allow your brew to continue fermenting at room temperature in the large glass container. Cover the opening with a thin (cheese)cloth secured with a rubber band or with an airlock. Swill the liquid in the container occasionally to aerate the mixture. When it



starts to fizz, usually after about 3 days, your ginger beer is ready for bottling. Since this process can take a longer or shorter time, depending on the temperature, let your taste buds help you decide when to bottle.

4. Pour the ginger beer into glass bottles and seal them. Leave the bottles at room temperature for a day or two so that the drinks can become carbonated, but put the bottles in the fridge before the pressure in the bottles increases too much.