

Homemade Dandelion Wine Recipe

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Proper Job

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There is something very special about making a great bottle of booze from weeds. Whether it is Dandelion Wine, [Nettle Beer](#) or [Elderflower Fizz](#) the sense of satisfaction is almost as good as the wobbly feeling you get when you reach the end of the bottle and realise you have quietly got yourself good and trousered.

Of all the homemade 'country wines' Dandelion is acknowledged as probably the most consistently excellent, loved by generations of home brewers.

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Ingredients for dandelion wine:

- Three litres of dandelion flowers (yellow bits only, No green at all)
- 3lb sugar
- 1 lemon
- 1 orange
- White wine yeast
- 1/2 lb golden raisins
- 1 gallon boiling water

Instructions:

First you need to collect dandelion flowers. Every recipe says to do it in the morning and that is what we have always done, so for the sake of tradition if nothing else, get out early to pick your dandelions. Luckily you only need to pop out into the back garden and start pulling up yellow flower heads. Only use perfect open heads and make sure you remove **all** the green stuff from the bottom. Now sterilise the flower heads by boiling up a few kettles of water and pour a whole gallon over the flowers. Give it a stir and cover and leave for a couple of days to let the flavour come out. You might want to add a half a campden tablet at this point if you are at all worried about contamination.

Now strain and put the liquid into a large saucepan. You can discard the dandelion heads now that you have extracted their flavour. Add 3lbs of sugar and the zest of both an orange and lemon to the juice and bring to the boil and simmer for fifteen to 20 minutes. Allow to cool. Once it is down to body heat add a sachet of white wine yeast yeast. Chop the raisins and tie them into a square of muslin to make a 'teabag'. Drop it into the juice. The raisins add body to what will otherwise be a light and colourless wine.

Now pour into a fermentation bucket and leave for 3 days. Remove the raisin teabag and leave for a further 2 days. The yeast will get to work and eat the sugars, turning them into alcohol and carbox dioxide.

Once the vigorous fermentation is over (3 days to a week, depending mostly on temperature) you can then transfer your dandelion wine to a demijohn with an airlock.

It will carry on fermenting for a further week or so at a much lower rate. Eventually the airlock will stop bubbling altogether. Once this secondary fermentation has stopped, siphon off your wine to a clean demijohn and put a bung in. Leave to mature for a couple of months and you will have a really terrific tasting wine.

Buckets and Demijohns have served home brewers well for a century or so, but many of us are switching over to the practicality of conical fermentation vessels. These allow us to tap off the 'lees' (the dead yeast that over time can harm the flavour of your wine) without the time consuming, messy process of siphoning. If you are just starting out with wine or beer making then I strongly urge you to get a conical fermenting vessel. It leads to less effort and better results.