

# Traditional Homemade Drinks:

## Elderflower Champagne

You will need (to make 10-12 litres):

a really clean container big enough for the mix (large bucket, bin, brewing tub etc)

a clean cloth (muslin is best) to cover said container

strong bottles which will need to be sterilised at bottling time (the ones with spring closures are best, but screw capped fizzy drinks bottles work well)

syphon tube (one with a clip or tap on the end is preferable)

35 elderflower heads - pick the ones with the strongest scent

2.5kg granulated sugar

2 proper tablespoons of white wine vinegar

5 litres boiling water & some cold water

Juice and grated skin (zest) of 5 lemons - unwaxed if possible

Juice and grated skin (zest) of 1 lime - also unwaxed

### Picking Elderflowers

Elderflowers smell of bananas in the morning and cats pee in the afternoon/evening, so choose which scent you prefer. After picking, shake the flowers to remove insects, but **DO NOT** wash, or you will remove the natural yeasts that help the drink ferment. For this reason it is probably best to avoid picking flowers growing alongside busy roads.

### Method

1. Dissolve the sugar in the boiling water then put in the large container and add cold water to make a total volume of between 7 and 8 litres.
2. Mix in the elderflowers, the white wine vinegar, the lemon and lime juice and their zests and stir the brew.
3. Cover the whole thing with the clean cloth (or use an airlock if you are a brewer) and put it in a cool place to ferment for two days. If, after a couple of days it has not started fermenting (easy to tell as there will be a foamy sort of scum on top) then add a pinch of dried yeast to get it going. Generally you will find that enough wild yeasts came in with the elderflowers for this not to be necessary.
4. Keep the container covered/airlocked and let the champagne carry on fermenting for another 4-5 days.
5. Using a winemakers sieve or the muslin you covered it with, strain the champagne into another container, let it settle for a couple of hours and siphon it into the sterilised bottles. Do make sure they can take a LOT of pressure - this is not known as Gonga's Pop for nothing. Seal the bottles tightly. N.B. If you are using plastic drinks bottles keep an eye out for ones that start bulging - if they do, loosen the cap to let some carbon dioxide out and then tighten again.
6. Leave it to ferment for at least another week after which it is delicious although it gets better with age. In nearly a hundred years the family has never found out how long it keeps - however much was made never lasted more than a year...
7. Enjoy ice cold

Read more: <http://www.ashridgetrees.co.uk/blog/elderflower-champagne-recipe/#ixzz0gf65lwwq>

### Swipes (A traditional homemade beer)

Simmer hops, yeast and a lemon/orange in water for one hour.

Strain over sugar into stone jar

Keep for one month before drinking



## Eggless fruit cake

Cooking time: 1 1/4 hours

10oz self-raising flour or plain flour with 3 teaspoons

baking powder

1 level teaspoon mixed spice

1 level teaspoon bicarbonate of soda

Pinch of salt

1/2 pint well-strained weak tea

3oz margarine or cooking fat

3oz sugar

3oz dried fruit

### Method

Grease and flour a 7-inch cake tin.

Sift flour, mixed spice, bicarbonate of soda and salt

together. Pour the tea into a saucepan, add the margarine or cooking fat, sugar and dried fruit.

Heat until the fat and sugar melt, then boil for 2-3 minutes.

Allow to cool slightly, pour on to the flour mixture, beat well and spoon into the tin.

Bake in the centre of a moderate oven for 1 1/4 hours.

From Feeding the Nation: Nostalgic Recipes and Facts from 1940-1954 (Hamlyn)