

Joe's Ancient Orange Mead

It is so simple to make and you can make it without much equipment and with a multitude of variations. This could be a first Mead for the novice as it is almost fool proof. It is a bit unorthodox but it has never failed me or the friends I have shared it with.

1 gallon batch
3 1/2 lbs Clover or your choice honey or blend (will finish sweet)
1 Large orange (later cut in eights or smaller rind and all)
1 small handful of raisins (25 if you count but more or less ok)
1 stick of cinnamon
1 whole clove (or 2 if you like - these are potent critters)
optional (a pinch of nutmeg and allspice)(very small)
1 teaspoon of Fleischmann's bread yeast (now don't get holy on me--- after all this is an ancient mead and that's all we had back then)
Balance water to one gallon

Process:

Use a clean 1 gallon carboy

Dissolve honey in some warm water and put in carboy

Wash orange well to remove any pesticides and slice in eights --add orange (you can push em through opening big boy -- rinds included -- its ok for this mead -- take my word for it -- ignore the experts)

Put in raisins, clove, cinnamon stick, any optional ingredients and fill to 3 inches from the top with cold water. (need room for some foam -- you can top off with more water after the first few day frenzy)

Shake the heck out of the jug with top on, of course. This is your sophisticated aeration process.

When at room temperature in your kitchen, put in 1 teaspoon of bread yeast. (No you don't have to rehydrate it first-- the ancients didn't even have that word in their vocabulary-- just put it in and give it a gentle swirl or not)(The yeast can fight for their own territory)

Install water airlock. Put in dark place. It will start working immediately or in an hour. (Don't use grandma's bread yeast she bought years before she passed away in the 90's)(Wait 3 hours before you panic or call me) After major foaming stops in a few days add some water and then keep your hands off of it. (Don't shake it! Don't mess with them yeastes! Let them alone except its okay to open your cabinet to smell every once in a while.

Racking --- Don't you dare
Additional feeding --- NO NO
More stirring or shaking -- Your (sic) not listening, don't touch

After 2 months and maybe a few days it will slow down to a stop and clear all by itself. (How about that) (You are not so important after all) Then you can put a hose in with a small cloth filter on the end into the clear part and siphon off the golden nectar. If you wait long enough even the oranges will sink to the bottom but I never waited that long. If it is clear it is ready. You don't need a cold basement. It does better in a kitchen in the dark. (Like in a cabinet) likes a little heat (70-80). If it didn't work out... you screwed up and didn't read my instructions (or used grandma's bread yeast she bought years before she passed away) . If it didn't work out then take up another hobby. Mead is not for you. It is too complicated.

If you were successful, which I am 99% certain you will be, then enjoy your mead. When you get ready to make different mead you will probably have to unlearn some of these practices I have taught you, but hey--- This recipe and procedure works with these ingredients so don't knock it. It was your first mead. It was my tenth. Sometimes, even the experts can forget all they know and make good ancient mead.

Enjoy, Joe