

A GUIDE  
TO MAKING

# ROOT BEER





## HISTORY OF ROOT BEER

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Though there is no single recipe for Root Beer, the signature sweet & spicy flavor we all know and love historically comes from the bark of the sassafras tree or the sarsaparilla vine. Ingredients in early versions were made with allspice, birch bark, coriander, juniper, ginger, dandelion root, vanilla beans, hops, molasses, licorice and more. Root Beer descends from a category of beverages called “small beers,” which also includes ginger beer & birch beer. Recipes varied regionally, using local herbs, roots, berries & barks in areas where barley and other beer ingredients weren't available.

In the 1800's, Root Beer was sold in confectionary stores and pharmacies, most often as an extract or syrup for making Root Beer at home. Eventually, it became popular to serve Root Beer in a frosty mug at soda shops, an image that most people associate with the tasty drink. Get ready to turn your kitchen into a soda shop and craft a batch of traditional Root Beer the old fashioned way!

## WHAT'S INCLUDED

**A. ROOT BEER BOTANICALS** This sweet & spicy blend features Sarsaparilla, Burdock Root, Birch Bark, Star Anise, Ginger Root, Cinnamon, Juniper Berries & more.

**B. STEEPING BAG**

**C. DEMERARA SUGAR**  
Perfect for making Root Beer thanks to its rich color and subtle molasses flavor.

**D. MALTODEXTRIN**

This mostly non-fermentable sugar helps give your Root Beer a full body & creamy mouthfeel.

**E. BOTTLING FUNNEL**

**F. BOTTLING KIT**

(2 specialty caps & yeast packet)



## WHAT YOU'LL NEED

- **STOCK POT WITH A LID** (at least 2 Quart capacity)
- **MEASURING SPOONS AND MEASURING CUPS**
- **SALT** ( $\frac{1}{2}$  Teaspoon)
- **VANILLA EXTRACT** (1 Tablespoon, use high quality for best results)

## OPTIONAL

- **SMALL SAUCEPAN WITH A LID** (if caramelizing, see page 3)
- **TWO PLASTIC 2L SODA BOTTLES** (if bottling, see page 5)
  - OR a soda carbonation machine like SodaStream®
  - OR store bought seltzer

# PHASE 1: MAKING YOUR ROOT BEER SYRUP

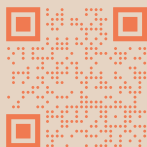
We recommend reviewing all the instructions before you begin. You'll notice that there are some optional steps and choices to make about how you'll carbonate.

Your Root Beer begins with a homemade syrup made with botanicals, demerara sugar, maltodextrin, salt & vanilla. There are two ways to make this syrup - each technique will yield a slightly different finished product. One approach involves caramelizing some of the included demerara sugar for a darker finished beverage. Caramelizing is an advanced technique that does require some patience, but the color of the final product will be a richer, darker brown color. Caramelization is NOT required. If you choose to skip this step, your Root Beer will still taste great, it will just look lighter in color and be lighter in flavor.

1. Bring 32 Oz (4 cups) of water to a boil in a stock pot that has a lid. While water heats, add the Root Beer Botanicals to the steeping bag & tie off the top in a knot.
2. Once you see the first boiling bubble remove the pot from heat. Add the bag to the pot. Dunk the bag & flatten with a spoon so the botanicals are submerged during the steep. Place a lid on the pot & set a timer for a 15 minute steep.
3. After a 15 minute steep, remove the botanicals from the pot and give the bag a good squeeze to release any liquid. Discard the bag & solids. You've just made Root Beer "tea."

IF YOU DO NOT WANT TO CARAMELIZE ANY SUGAR, SKIP AHEAD TO STEP 5

4. **OPTIONAL ADVANCED STEP - CARAMELIZATION:**  
If you'd like to caramelize some sugar for your Root Beer Syrup (for darker color & richer flavor), follow these steps. Scan this QR code for tips to help guide you through the caramelization process.
- Measure  $\frac{1}{3}$  Cup of the Demerara Sugar & pour into a small saucepan. Shimmy the pan to create an even layer. Reserve the rest of the Demerara Sugar for step 5.



- Add 1 Fluid Oz (2 Tablespoons) of water to the pan to cover the sugar. NOTE: This is just enough water to help with the caramelization reaction, so it may not wet all of the sugar.
- Heat the saucepan on medium heat until you reach a steady bubbling simmer. Once achieved, set a 5 minute timer. DO NOT stir or mix the sugar - you must avoid intervening with the natural reaction. There will be lots of bubbles, the color will gradually darken and you'll notice fragrant butterscotch & nutty aromas.
- After 5 minutes, the color should be quite dark, you'll smell caramel candy aroma & the bubbles will release puffs of steam. At this point, reduce heat to low. But if the color isn't dark enough yet, continue simmering 1-3 more minutes before reducing heat.
- Measure 3 Tablespoons (1.5 Oz) of water & have the saucepan's lid ready. Carefully add water to the pan & quickly cover the pan with the lid - there will be lots of steam. Keep the lid on & the pan on low heat for at least 3-5 minutes to simmer. Even if you see sugar crystals on the walls of the pan resist the urge to stir just yet - this trapped steam is necessary to help dissolve any lingering sugar crystals.
- Remove the lid & stir with a spoon. If clumps or crystals remain, increase heat slightly to help melt. You'll end up with a thin, dark brown syrup. Remove pan from heat, cover & set aside for step 5.

5. Bring the pot containing your Root Beer "tea" up to medium-high heat. After a few minutes, stir in ½ Teaspoon of Salt, the Maltodextrin and the Demerara Sugar. Stir to dissolve. If you followed step 4 and caramelized any Demerara Sugar, add it to the pot now. If the caramel sticks to the saucepan, pour some of the hot Root Beer "tea" into the pan to help loosen it.
6. Let simmer 3-5 minutes, stirring occasionally to ensure all ingredients are dissolved and well mixed. Then remove the pot from heat.
7. Allow the pot contents to cool to room temperature (without lid), this will take 30+ minutes. There shouldn't be any visible steaming and the tea should feel luke-warm to the touch. Once cool, add 1 Tablespoon of Vanilla Extract & stir.
8. You've just made your own Root Beer Syrup! If not using right away store in a sealed container in the fridge.

## PHASE 2: CARBONATING YOUR ROOT BEER

Now that you've crafted your syrup there are a few options for carbonating, bottling & enjoying your Root Beer.

### OPTION 1 - ADD SYRUP TO SELTZER WATER

Create an instant glass of Root Beer by combining 1 part Root Beer Syrup with 3 parts seltzer. Feel free to use store bought seltzer water or a SodaStream® machine. Adjust the syrup to seltzer ratio depending your personal tastes. Syrup can be stored for 6 weeks in the fridge.

### OPTION 2 - CARBONATE NATURALLY

Using two 2 Liter plastic soda bottles and the included Bottling Kit, you can naturally carbonate your own Root Beer. **DO NOT** use glass bottles or beer bottles. Carbonating this way will take 12-24 hours & requires frequent monitoring during that time. Yeast is a living organism that converts sugars into CO<sub>2</sub> through fermentation. If bottles are left unattended, the yeast will continue to create carbonation indefinitely & bottles can explode. If you don't have time to monitor your bottles just yet, you can refrigerate your Root Beer Syrup in a sealed container until you're ready to bottle. Bottles can be stored for 1 week in the fridge.

## A NOTE ON ALCOHOL

If you don't want any trace of alcohol in your finished Root Beer, use option 1.

As yeast convert sugar into CO<sub>2</sub>, they'll also create some alcohol (a natural byproduct of fermentation). The alcohol content will remain very low (around 0.5%) as long as you carbonate per the timeline outlined on page 6.



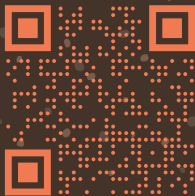
*This kit is NOT intended or designed to craft an alcoholic Root Beer. Doing so poses risk of bottles exploding.*

## CARBONATING IN 2 LITER BOTTLES:

1. Clean your soda bottles and rinse well. Remove the tamper resistant cap rings that may have been left behind. Discard the caps that came on the bottles - you'll be using the specialty caps included with this kit instead.
2. Using the included funnel, divide your Root Beer Syrup evenly between the two bottles. Top off each bottle with cool filtered water to about 3 inches below the top. Gently swirl to combine.
3. Sprinkle  $\frac{1}{4}$  Teaspoon of Yeast into each bottle. There will be plenty of leftover yeast in the packet, which you can discard.
4. Use the Bottle Caps included in this kit to seal the bottles. Push and twist, but **do not over tighten**, this can lead to the seal bunching and carbonation escaping. These caps are specially designed to ensure your bottles do not over-carbonate and explode.
5. Store the sealed bottles at room temperature (65-75°F) to allow them to carbonate - this process usually takes 12-24 hours. Roughly 12 hours after adding the yeast, check the bottles to see if they are hardening. Continue to check on the bottles every 6 or so hours to monitor their progress, keeping them at room temperature until they are hard like a new bottle of soda from the store. Once hardened, immediately place the bottles in the fridge and let chill for at least 12 hours before enjoying. Do not leave bottles stored at room temperature, otherwise bottles can explode.
6. Refrigeration will slow, but not completely stop the yeast from creating CO<sub>2</sub> in the bottles. To prevent over-carbonation of your Root Beer, please enjoy your bottles within 1 week of placing in the fridge. Excess CO<sub>2</sub> and alcohol will begin to develop beyond this point, making bottles more dangerous to handle and making the flavor more bitter.



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