



Kombucha

Symbiotic Fermentation: Kombucha is a fermented, slightly sweetened and slightly tangy tea that has been around for centuries. It is thought to have a variety of health benefits and contains high levels of antioxidants, b-vitamins, and probiotics. SCOBY (**S**ymbiotic **C**olony of **B**acteria and **Y**east) is a mix of cultures of bacteria and yeast present when making kombucha, kefir and other foods made through symbiotic fermentation.

Ingredients: (Makes about 1 gallon)

- 1/4 cup green and/or black tea in mesh bag, or 4-8 tea bags
- 1 gallon of filtered water
- 1 cup cane sugar
- 1-2 cups Kombucha Starter Liquid (from a previous batch)
- 1 SCOBY

Directions:

1. Boil two quarts of water. Steep tea for 10 minutes.
2. Remove tea leaves or bags and stir in sugar until completely dissolved.
3. Add two quarts of cold water. Allow sweetened tea to completely cool to room temperature.
4. Once cooled to room temperature, pour tea into fermenting vessel/jar and add SCOBY and Kombucha Starter Liquid.
5. Cover with clean cloth or coffee filter. Secure with a rubber band to keep contaminants out but allow air flow. Record start date (tip: Sharpie marker works great on glass and can easily be washed off later).
6. Allow kombucha to ferment at room temperature (ideally 64-79°F/18-26°C) for 7-14 days. A new SCOBY will develop on the surface of the liquid, starting as a light haze that gradually turns whitish, then opaque and thicker as time progresses. Taste after a week. Stop fermenting when you like the flavor.
7. To stop the fermentation, pour kombucha into clean jars or bottles (sanitized by rinsing with boiling water or vinegar), retaining SCOBY and at least 1-2 cups for your next batch. Save at least 20%, if following continuous brew technique (see below).

8. If desired, flavor finished kombucha with 10-20% juice or clean fruit, and experiment with clean herbs and spices based on preference. Cap tightly. Leave at room temperature 1-3 days for additional carbonation or refrigerate immediately. CAUTION: Longer time capped at room temperature could result in carbon dioxide accumulation and even explosion of the contents. Note: An alternative to adding juice or fruit after the first ferment is to use a flavored tea, such as Chai Black tea, in step 1.

Repeat batches using continuous brew technique:

To minimize handling the SCOBY and reduce introduction of contaminants, it is better to leave the SCOBY and starter liquid in the vessel and not wash the vessel between uses, unless if it becomes built up with yeast. Gently pour in new sweetened, cooled tea along the inside of the jar to limit disturbing the SCOBY. SCOBY growth can be peeled apart and shared with others or stored for several weeks in a similar cloth covered vessel, covered by kombucha.

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