



Eight Hard Cider Recipes



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BASIC HARD CIDER

(5 gallons, 19 L)
Estimated OG = 1.060
Estimated FG = 1.000
ABV = 7–9%

Ingredients

5 gallons (19 L) fresh-pressed cider (free of sorbate)
5 Campden tablets
½ oz. (14 g) pectinase powder
table sugar (optional)
tartaric acid (optional)
2.5 Campden tablets (secondary)
Yeast (of cider maker's choosing)

Step by Step

Remove a sample of the juice to test for total acidity (TA). You can do this using an acid testing kit. Follow the instructions in your acid testing kit. If the acidity is less than 0.65%, add tartaric acid to bring it to this level. If you cannot do the test right away, refrigerate the juice and run the test later. Now test the sugar content of the juice with a hydrometer. Correct any deficiencies by adding enough sugar to bring the reading up to 14–15 °Brix (1.057–1.061 SG).

When tests and corrections have been completed, add one Campden tablet per gallon of crushed fruit right away (65 parts per million SO₂). Stir in the pectinase powder. Wait 2–4 hours before pressing the pulp in the cider press for the pectinase to break down the pulp, which increases the amount of juice that can be extracted. It will also aid in clarifying the cider to achieve a clear, bright cider.

Funnel the juice into a sanitized fermenter with an airlock. If you pressed the cider yourself, wait a total of 8–12 hours after crushing and adding the Campden tablets for the sulfite to dissipate. Pitch your yeast. Attach an airlock to your fermenter and allow fermentation to proceed. After a day or two of fermentation, sprinkle in 1 tsp. of yeast food or yeast nutrient. Agitate to disperse. Allow the cider to ferment to dryness, usually less than a month. When visible signs of fermentation end the cider should be removed from the sediment. Use a siphon to transfer the cider to a secondary fermenter. Fill your container all the way into the narrow part of the neck without touching the stopper (no airspace). Close the top with a stopper and replace the airlock. During the racking at the end of fermentation, add ½ Campden tablet per gallon (3.8 L) (32 parts per million SO₂).

Store for two or three months. Carefully rack the cider away from the sediment, making an effort to avoid exposure to oxygen. If your cider is going into extended bottle storage, add another half Campden tablet per gallon (32 parts per million SO₂). Beverages such as this may often be enjoyed within two months of bottling. If you plan to drink some that soon, don't add additional sulfite to that portion at bottling time. If you wish to sweeten, add to taste, a syrup made by boiling two parts sugar with one part water, and add ½ tsp. potassium sorbate per gallon to prevent re-fermentation in the bottles.

Siphon into bottles, cork or cap them, and set them aside for whatever bottle aging is needed.

RED FLANNEL CIDER

(5 gallons/19 L)
OG = 1.095 FG = 0.998
ABV = ~12%

A classic New England barrel-style hard cider.

Ingredients

5.5 gallons (20 L) of fresh apple cider, pasteurized or not*
5 lbs. (2.3 kg) sugar: a combination of white sugar, brown sugar, a bit of molasses, honey, raw sugar
2.5 tsp. yeast nutrient
2.5 tsp. pectic enzyme
2 packages of dry wine yeast or Wyeast 4767 (Port Wine™) yeast
1 oz. toasted or untoasted oak chips (optional: soak in rum, bourbon, calvados, etc.)
1 lb. (0.45 kg) raisins

*If your cider is not pasteurized you might want to add one Campden tablet per gallon (3.8 L) to the cider, wait 24–36 hours, then add the sugars, other additives and yeast. Do not try to ferment cider that has been treated with sorbates.

Step by Step

Dissolve the sugars in a small part of the cider and then mix that back into the main volume of cider. Stir well. Add the yeast nutrient and pectic enzyme and stir again. Record the starting gravity. Add the yeast and keep the fermenter sealed with an airlock at 60–75 °F (15–24 °C) until fermentation is complete. Siphon the cider into a 5-gallon (19-L) carboy. Keep the cider under an airlock until it clears. Add the raisins. When the raisins have settled out, cover the oak chips with boiling water, strain off the water and add the chips to the carboy. A typical fermentation can last three to six weeks depending on the temperature in your homebrewery and another two to six months to clarify. Once the cider is clear you can bottle it with or without carbonation. If you want to carbonate the cider you can add a scant teaspoon of corn sugar (dextrose) per 22-ounce bottle or add two or three organic raisins per bottle. For 5 gallons (19 L) of hard cider you can also boil ½ cup of dextrose in some water and add it to the cider before bottling.

1 gallon (3.8-L) option: Scale down to 1.25 gallons of fresh apple cider, 1 lb. (0.45 kg) sugar (combination listed in ingredients above), 0.5 tsp. each of yeast nutrient and pectic enzyme, 1 package of dry wine yeast or Wyeast 4767 (Port Wine™) yeast, 0.25 oz. (7 g) toasted or untoasted oak chips (optional: soak in rum, bourbon, calvados, etc.), 4 oz. (113 g) organic raisins (brown or red flame).

AUTUMN SPARKLE

(5 gallons/19 L)
OG = 1.060 FG = 0.998
ABV = ~8%

A crisp, dry cider.

Ingredients

5.5 gallons (20 L) of fresh apple cider, pasteurized or not*
1.5–2 lbs. (0.7–0.9 kg) sugar or raw unfiltered honey
2.5 tsp. yeast nutrient
2.5 tsp. pectic enzyme
2 packages of dry wine yeast

*If not pasteurized you might want to add one Campden tablet per gallon (3.8 L) to the cider, wait 24–36 hours, then add the sugars, other additives and yeast. Do not try to ferment cider that has been treated with sorbates.

Step by Step

Take a hydrometer reading of the cider. You will need to add enough sugar to get 8% potential alcohol. Dissolve the honey/sugar in a small part of the cider and then mix it back into the main volume of cider. Stir well. Record the starting gravity. Add the yeast nutrient and pectic enzyme and stir again. Add the yeast and keep the fermenter sealed, with an airlock at 60–75 °F (15–24 °C) until fermentation is complete. Siphon the cider into a 5-gallon (19-L) carboy and keep it under an airlock until it clears. Once it is clear you can bottle with or without carbonation. If you want to carbonate the cider you can add a scant teaspoon of corn sugar (dextrose) per 22-oz. bottle or boil ½ cup of dextrose in some water for 5 gallons (19 L) of carbonated cider. A typical fermentation can last three to six weeks depending on the temperature and another two to four months to clarify.

1 gallon (3.8-L) option: Scale down to 1.25 gallons (4.7 L) of fresh apple cider, 4–5 oz. (113–141 oz.) sugar or raw unfiltered honey, 0.5 tsp. each of yeast nutrient and pectic enzyme and 1 package of dry wine yeast.

AUTUMN GOLD APPLE CYSER

(5 gallons/19 L)
OG = 1.080 FG = 0.998
ABV = ~10.5%

A cider-mead hybrid.

Ingredients

5.5 gallons (20 L) of fresh apple cider
5 lbs. (2.3 kg) raw, unfiltered honey
2.5 tsp. yeast nutrient
2.5 tsp. pectic enzyme
2 packages of dried wine yeast

Step by Step

Dissolve the honey into a small part of the cider and mix it back into the main volume of cider. Stir well. Add the yeast nutrient and pectic enzyme and stir again. Record the starting gravity. Add the yeast and keep the fermenter sealed with an airlock at 60–75 °F (15–24 °C) until fermentation is complete. Siphon the cyser into a 5-gallon (19-L) carboy and keep it sealed with an airlock until it clears. Once clear, you can bottle the cyser with or without carbonation. If you carbonate, you can add a scant teaspoon of corn sugar (dextrose) per 22-ounce bottle or boil ½ cup of dextrose in some water for 5 gallons (19 L) of carbonated cyser. A typical fermentation can last three to six weeks depending on the temperature in your homebrewery and another two to six months to clarify.

1 gallon (3.8-L) option: Scale down to 1.25 gallons (4.7 L) of fresh apple cider, 1 lb. (0.45 kg) raw unfiltered honey, 0.5 tsp. each of yeast nutrient and pectic enzyme and 1 package of dried wine yeast.

DRY-HOPPED HARD CIDER

(5 gallons/19 L)
OG = 1.060 FG = 0.998
ABV = ~8%

Ingredients

5.5 gallons (20 L) sweet apple cider
1.5–2 lbs. (0.7–0.9 kg) sugar
1 package dry Champagne yeast
Fermentation nutrients (e.g. Fermaid K, DAP)
Yeast rehydration nutrient (e.g. Fermaid Protect)
Potassium metabisulfate (KMS) or Campden tablets
Pectinase
Cascade hops (whole or pellets)
Potassium sorbate (optional)

Step by Step

As soon as the cider is pressed and in a sanitized carboy, stir in 0.6 grams (0.12 grams per gallon) of potassium metabisulfite (KMS) for a target of 30 ppm free sulfites. Alternatively, you can use crushed Campden tablets to achieve 30 ppm free sulfites in 5 gallons (19 L). Using your thermometer, rehydrate the dry yeast in 104 °F (40 °C) water with the yeast rehydration nutrient, following your yeast rehydration nutrient manufacturer's instructions. Do not let the yeast sit in the original water suspension for longer than 20 minutes. Now pitch the yeast/nutrient/cider combination into the main volume of cider. Add Diammonium Phosphate (DAP) or Fermaid K. Follow the directions on the package. Often cidemakers will add half of the total needed nitrogen at the beginning of the fermentation and the second half after ½ of the sugars have been depleted. Once your hydrometer readings have stabilized just below 0.000 units, the fermentation has finished. Siphon the dry cider into a clean, sanitized carboy. Add KMS or Campden tablets to bring the free sulfites up to 0.5–0.8 ppm molecular SO₂. Use an online sulfite calculator to calculate how many grams of KMS or Campden tablets you will need to reach your target SO₂ level (<http://www.winemakermag.com/guide/sulfite>). Do not make more than one KMS or Campden addition per day.

Allow the cider to age, settle and clarify. Rack the dry cider into a clean, sanitized carboy. Aging time can be two or more months. Maintain free/molecular SO₂ levels by adding KMS or Campden tablets as necessary. After the cider has aged, add around 1.4 oz. (40 grams) of Cascade hops to the carboy. Sparge the carboy with an inert gas to displace the oxygen in the fermenter. Carbon dioxide is a good choice. After four to seven days, rack the cider off of the settled hops. Continually taste the cider until you've reached the desired aroma/flavors. For an off-dry or sweet cider, add about 50 to 400 grams (1.5 to 14 oz.) of sugar to the cider in a Corny keg. This should be done to taste. For off-dry, it is recommended here to start around 15 grams (~5 oz.) To prevent refermentation, add 3.5 grams (0.05 oz.) of potassium sorbate to the cider and refrigerate it at around 35 °F (2 °C) or below overnight. This cooling step must be done since the yeast must be dormant to prevent refermentation. To carbonate, shake the keg under about 30–40 PSI of head pressure for about five to ten minutes while the keg is at refrigerator temperature (between 35–38 °F/1.7–3.3 °C).

SORACHI INDIA PALE CIDER (IPC)

(5 gallons/19 L)
Estimated OG = 1.060 Estimated FG = 1.000
ABV = 7–8%

Swap the Sorachi Ace hops for any other favorite hop. Citrusy, piney, and fruity hops all work well with cider.

Ingredients

5 gal. (19 L) apple juice blend
0.35 oz (10 g) Sorachi Ace pellet hops (dry hop)
5 Campden tablets (if juice is unpasteurized)
2.5 tsp. pectic enzyme powder
yeast nutrient, added according to manufacturer's instructions
2.5–5 tsp. acid blend (if needed)
0.75–2.5 tsp. tannin (if needed)
Safale US-05 or a favorite American ale yeast
1 cup corn sugar (if priming)

Step by Step

Pour the juice into a sanitized fermentation bucket. If using unpasteurized juice, crush the Campden tablets and whisk into the juice. Snap on the lid, attach an airlock, and wait 24 hours for the juice to sanitize. If using pasteurized juice or if you prefer not to use sulfites, skip this step.

Add the pectic enzyme, yeast nutrient, and yeast. Whisk vigorously until the ingredients are dissolved and the juice is frothy. Seal the bucket, attach the airlock, and place somewhere away from direct sunlight and at room temperature, 70–75 °F (21–24 °C) for primary fermentation.

Primary fermentation will take 1 to 2 weeks. Wait at least another 2 weeks (or up to 3 months) before bottling or kegging to give the cider time to clear and complete any remaining fermentation. If aging longer than 1 month, transfer the cider off the lees to a carboy.

One week before bottling or kegging, taste the cider; add the Sorachi Ace hops for dry-hopping, and add acid blend or tannin if needed. Taste periodically and adjust if needed.

Bottle with priming sugar or keg and set to 3 volumes CO₂.

CRANBERRY PERRY WIT

(5 gallons/19 L)

Estimated OG = 1.060 Estimated FG = 1.000

ABV = 7–8%

Perries tend to finish with a slight sweetness and a creamy mouthfeel, perfect for making a witbier-style cider to celebrate the winter holidays.

Ingredients

5 gal. (19 L) pear juice
20 oz. (0.56 kg) fresh or frozen cranberries (chopped)
3 medium oranges (zested)
3 cinnamon sticks
5 Campden tablets (if juice is unpasteurized)
2.5 tsp. pectic enzyme powder
yeast nutrient, added according to manufacturer's instructions
2.5–5 tsp. acid blend (if needed)
0.75–2.5 tsp. tannin (if needed)
Safbrew S-33 or a favorite Belgian ale yeast
1 cup corn sugar (if priming)

Step by Step

Pour the pear juice into a sanitized fermentation bucket. If using unpasteurized juice, crush the Campden tablets and whisk into the juice. Snap on the lid, attach an airlock, and wait 24 hours for the juice to sanitize. If using pasteurized juice, skip this step.

Add the pectic enzyme, yeast nutrient, and yeast to the juice. Whisk vigorously until the ingredients are dissolved and the juice is frothy. Seal the bucket, attach the airlock, and place somewhere away from direct sunlight and at room temperature, 70–75 °F (21–24 °C) for primary fermentation.

Primary fermentation will take 1 to 2 weeks. When active fermentation is complete, roughly chop the cranberries and strip the zest from the oranges with a vegetable peeler. Secure the cranberries, zest, and cinnamon sticks in a large sanitized mesh bag and add to the primary fermenter.

Wait at least another 2 weeks (or up to 3 months) before bottling or kegging to give the cider time to clear and complete any remaining fermentation. If aging longer than a month, transfer the cider off the lees and the fruit. One week before bottling, taste the cider; add acid blend or tannin if needed.

Bottle with priming sugar or keg and set to 3 volumes CO₂.

FUNKY CHERRY CIDER

(5 gallons/19 L)

Estimated OG = 1.070 Estimated FG = 1.000

ABV = 8–9%

If you have unpasteurized apple juice, you can also let this cider ferment on its own with whatever wild yeast strains are present in the juice. Skip sanitizing the cider with Campden tablets and do not add the Belgian yeast; add Lactobacillus culture during secondary fermentation if a stronger sour-tart flavor is desired.

Ingredients

5 gal. (19 L) apple juice blend
3.1 lbs. (1.4 kg) Vintner's Harvest cherry purée (more if needed)
5 Campden tablets (if juice is unpasteurized)
2.5 tsp. pectic enzyme powder
yeast nutrient, added according to manufacturer's instructions
2.5–5 tsp. acid blend (if needed)
0.75–2.5 tsp. tannin (if needed)
Safbrew S-33 or a favorite Belgian ale yeast
White Labs WLP653 (*Brettanomyces lambicus*) or Wyeast 5526 (*Brettanomyces lambicus*) yeast
Wyeast 5335 (*Lactobacillus*) or White Labs WLP677 (*Lactobacillus delbrueckii*) culture
1 cup corn sugar (if priming)
Champagne yeast (if priming)

Step by Step

Pour the juice into a sanitized fermentation bucket. If using unpasteurized juice, crush the Campden tablets and whisk into the juice. Seal the lid, attach an airlock, and wait 24 hours for the juice to sanitize. If using pasteurized juice, skip this step.

Add one 49 oz. (1.5 L) can of the cherry purée, the pectic enzyme, yeast nutrient, and Belgian yeast to the juice. Whisk vigorously until the ingredients are dissolved and the juice is frothy. Seal the fermenter, attach the water-filled airlock, and place somewhere away from direct sunlight and at room temperature, 70–75 °F (21–24 °C) for primary fermentation.

Primary fermentation will take 1 to 2 weeks. When active fermentation seems complete, transfer the cider to a carboy and add the *Brettanomyces* yeast and the *Lactobacillus*. Continue aging the cider for another three months (or even up to a few years) to develop the flavor, occasionally transferring off the lees. Add acid blend, tannin, or additional cherry purée for a stronger cherry flavor at any point during secondary fermentation.

Bottle with priming sugar and Champagne yeast, or keg and set to 3 volumes CO₂.