

Elderberry glycerite

This recipe was given to me, along with some beautiful umbels (umbrella-shaped clusters) of ripe black elderberries, *Sambucus nigra*, by my friend Lori von der Heydt, ND. Elderberry has long traditional use backed by modern research as a remedy for preventing and treating colds and flu. Its rich purple-black color represents the anthocyanins which have antioxidant and anti-inflammatory qualities. Enjoy it by the tablespoonful, straight off the spoon or mixed into tea, cooked breakfast cereals, yogurt or on toast. In the summer I add it to a refreshing glass of sparkling water after a day in the garden.

Ingredients

5 pounds black elderberry fruit, small stems included

4 cups vegetable glycerine, more or less

Method

Harvest black elderberries when fully ripe, near Labor Day usually in Portland. Remove large stems but small stems are fine. Wash and place in colander to shake off excess water.

Place berries in large soup pot and put on medium heat. No additional water is needed as berries will juice as they start to cook. Cook in covered pot on low simmer for about 30 minutes, stirring occasionally. Let cool a bit.

Dump berries and juice through large fine sieve lined with cheesecloth. Let it drain for several minutes. If cool enough to handle, wrap cheesecloth around wet mass of berry pulp and squeeze and wring the cheesecloth gently through sieve until most of the moisture has left the pulp, catching the juice into a 2 quart or larger bowl.

Let the juice cool a bit more and measure the juice. Add glycerine in amount equal to the measured juice. Stir. Once cool, pour into sterile glass jars (amber glass bottles are ideal as they prevent light from oxidizing the contents) and store in refrigerator for up to 12 months.

Source: as told by Lori von der Heydt, ND to Mary Scott (Yield: roughly 16 four ounce bottles)
