

# **Absinthe Ebook- Making Absinthe at home (non-distilled)**

**Note:** Making your own absinthe using the methods indicated here are completely legal in the United States at the time of this writing and in most countries. I do not and will not ever advocate any action that is illegal.

## **Medical Advice:**

We have found and most research presents that absinthe is essentially harmless in the quantities normally enjoyed by absinthe patrons, but as with all of life, too much of a good thing can be bad. Enjoy all things in moderation. You should have no problems enjoying the occasional or even daily glass of absinthe following the directions here. However to CYA us and yourself, you had best consult a qualified medical professional before partaking of your first batch. You're more likely to get sick from that takeout last night (was that really chicken?) than your absinthe brew, but we cannot and will not be held responsible for your actions.

## **What is Absinthe:**

From: <http://absinthe.msjekyll.com/>

Absinthe is an alcoholic drink made with an extract from wormwood (*Artemisia absinthium*). It is an emerald green drink which is very bitter (due to the presence of absinthin) and is therefore traditionally poured over a perforated spoonful of sugar into a glass of water. The drink then turns into an opaque white as the essential oils precipitate out of the alcoholic solution (louche).

Absinthe was once popular among artists and writers and was drunk by Van Gogh, Baudelaire, and Verlaine, to name a few. It appears to have been believed to stimulate creativity. However, in the 1850's, there began to be concern about the results of chronic use. Chronic use of absinthe was believed to produce a syndrome, called absinthism, which was characterized by addiction, hyperexcitability, and hallucinations.

This concern over the health effects of absinthe was amplified by the prevailing belief in Lamarckian theories of heredity. In other words, it was believed that any traits acquired by absinthists would be passed on to their children. Absinthe's association with the bohemian lifestyle also worked to compound fears about its effects, much as has happened with marijuana in America. Absinthe was subsequently banned in many countries in the beginning of the 1900's.

## **A word on quality and purity:**

This is of the utmost importance. Really it is. We're talking about your health here. Do NOT trust your health to ingredients that you don't know the origin of. That goes doubly for anything found in any magic or metaphysical or "head" shops. These products are usually questionable at best, and I would not take them internally. You're usually ok with tobacco from those guys, but don't trust their herbs (no, not that kind of herb. That's a different book altogether).

Other considerations are how the herbs were harvested. Were the plants organically grown? Are they certified organic? Were pesticides used? Were they tested for purity? What was their processing procedure to ensure that the active chemicals in the herbs are still potent? These factors make HUGE differences in the quality of your end products. Pesticides cause disease and cancer (and worse) and improperly harvesting can destroy the delicate active chemicals in the oil. More on this later, I just wanted to make you aware of it now before you skim ahead, read the ingredients and pop down to your local head shop.

### **Supplies:**

Aside from the herbs we will talk about below you will most likely need the following tools to help in this process.

- 1 ½ or full gallon jar with lid
- 1 small non-dyed cotton cloth sack or reusable tea bag ( can usually be found at a health food store )
- 1 Brita water pitcher (optional)
- Sugar cubes – usually found in any decently stocked grocery store.
- Coffee Filters

### **Traditional Absinthe:**

The real deal super-duper honest to goodness genuine absinthe is very pricey (overly so), difficult to make (thus the price) and not really possible to get in the US currently. The FDA regulates the amount of active ingredient in absinthe that is available on the US market. We don't like that. We want lots of active ingredient and we don't want Uncle Sam telling us what's best for us now do we? I digress..

Traditional absinthe is a blend of herbs for color and flavor with the primary herb being wormwood. This special recipe is fermented into a wine, then distilled (like whiskey or any other spirits) and bottled as traditional commercial absinthe.

Distilling is a messy and very involved business, not to mention highly regulated in the US. It's not legal for common citizens to do this, and most of us don't want to because of the trouble involved in doing so. Though, if I ever move to Mexico I admit I'll probably do it just to be able to say I make my own moonshine. Bragging rights and all that...

### **Easy-to-make absinthe:**

This is what we want. We don't want to bother with all that complicated jazz involved in distilling and we want our absinthe ASAP. Therefore, we will skip the distilling process and buy distilled alcohol over the counter. A high quality vodka works great, or if you really want to get crazy just buy Everclear. Both work equally well. The Everclear has the advantage of also being used as flamethrower fuel if you're into that sort of thing.

### **A note on quality vodka:**

It's a little known secret that the only difference between gut-rock vodka and high quality vodka is the amount of filtration involved. You can take a bottle of very cheap vodka and run it through a carbon filter, like a Brita water pitcher, and make premium smooth vodka, I've done it many times, works great, and you can even continue to use the same pitcher for water again. If you're going to do this a lot, spend the \$20 on a Brita water pitcher (available in any dept store) and buy the cheap vodka.

### **Puff puff pass...**

I told you, we're not talking about that kind of herb. But, we do need to get the rest of the ingredients. Here's the rundown of commonly used ingredients. We'll give you some sample recipes and you can play with what you like.

- **Wormwood:** Essential in all recipes as it has the active ingredient thujone. (see: <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Thujone> ) Also responsible for absinthe's trademark green color.
- **Star Anise:** Just about in all recipes. Has a licorice flavor and is used in many forms of brewing. Acts to offset the bitterness of the wormwood.
- **Fennel Seed:** also offsets the bitterness and is part of the traditional absinthe flavoring
- **Angelica:** Traditional flavoring ingredient
- **Hyssop:** Gives a crisp note (flavor) to the finished product and helps give the traditional green color.
- **Other common ingredients** in some recipes include Licorice, Peppermint, Coriander, Lemon Balm, Dittany and Juniper. Anything that gives a potent and sweet flavor will work.

### **My personal favorite recipe is as follows:**

½ cup of dried organic Wormwood  
3 tablespoons of dried organic Hyssop  
1 tablespoon of dried organic Angelica root  
1 teaspoon of Fennel Seed (easily found in grocery stores)

However, I should note, that I don't particularly care for licorice flavor so a more traditional recipe might look like this:

**A more traditional recipe:**

½ cup dried organic Wormwood  
¼ cup dried organic Hyssop  
3 tablespoons dried organic Star Anise  
3 tablespoons dried organic Hyssop  
1 tablespoon Fennel Seed  
1 tablespoon of dried organic Angelica root  
1 teaspoon of Fennel Seed (easily found in grocery stores)

**Mix it up!**

Ok, so now we have our high quality distilled spirits and we've got our herbs measured in the right proportions.... How do we make absinthe?

Well, we need to get the flavors and chemicals from the herbs into the alcohol. Stuff all of your herbs into the little cotton bag we mentioned earlier, you can get that at just about any health food store. In a pinch, I've also stapled two coffee filters together and made a little pocket. You're basically making a large tea bag.

Put your herbs in the tea bag, put the bag in the jar mentioned earlier and drown them in 1 large bottle of vodka or Everclear. You can also use ½ a bottle of Everclear and ½ vodka. Makes no difference.

Put the lid on the jar and give it a good shake to get the bag totally saturated. Then reach in and squeeze out the bag, dip it again and re-squeeze.

Put the lid on the jar and store in a COOL DARK PLACE (not in your garage behind the heater) or on your window sill.

Every day come back and give it a good shake, squeeze the bag and shake again.

Do this for 21 days. (you don't have to wait 21 days, you're probably good after 12 days or so, but I find you get better results after 20 days. )

**Filter it!**

After 21 days (or 12 if you just couldn't wait) you'll need to give the bag one last good squeeze to get all the goddness out of it.

Remove the bag and discard or wash out for re-use. (don't re-use the herbs... put fresh ones in, obviously)

Strain the whole mixture through 2-3 coffee filters stacked together. I usually just put the filters in the bottom of a funnel and pour the stuff back into the vodka bottle.

Your absinthe (and it's now absinthe) should be a very pretty green color and fairly clear.

If you want to do some super filtration you can find a 1-micron filter to use instead of coffee filters. Not sure where to buy them but I'm sure an internet search would turn them up. I've always been very happy with the results from coffee filters.

Congratulations! Have a beer and celebrate. You've just made your first bottle of absinthe!

### **Absinthe Kits:**

There are several vendors that sell kits with herbs already pre-measured in bags with other goodies like slotted spoons and the like. These kits are usually cheaper to get if you just want to make 1-2 batches. The little toys and add-ons they come with are especially cool. My favorite vendor for these kind of kits are



There are other kits on the market but these seem to be the best quality and I just love the goodies they throw in. You also get a traditional slotted absinthe spoon, a cool absinthe glass and they throw in some sugar cubes too. All you need is the alcohol.

### **Where to buy quality herbs:**

Now if you're going to be making this stuff regularly, you'll want to buy your own high quality organic herbs. If you can buy them fresh from a local grocer and they can GUARANTEE they are organic that is absolutely the best way to go. However, I highly doubt you're going to find organic wormwood anywhere. I don't do this often, but I have to pimp this company out. I've ordered from them many many times and they have nothing but the best quality herbs that are certified organic and pesticide free and they package properly so that the herbs are

as potent as possible. I just can't say enough about these guys. You'd think I owned stock or something ( I don't ). They just really know their business. I also use their herbs for cooking and medicinal uses. They're also reasonably priced.



### **Serving / Drinking Absinthe:**

Great website with more drinking ideas than you probably have absinthe!

[http://www.originalabsinthe.com/absinthe\\_drinks.php?azx=1048](http://www.originalabsinthe.com/absinthe_drinks.php?azx=1048)

Great youtube demonstration of traditional absinthe preparation:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8tWyDxiOz70>

Nice youtube review of absinthe:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Frr-o6chrnE>

Cool little documentary on absinthe, but some info is out-dated. Absinthe is no longer illegal in the US:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AZa5eZt2ojI>

These youtube videos may come and go, I can almost guarantee that they will never go away entirely. If these links stop working for some reason just search for "absinthe" on youtube and you'll find plenty.

### **About the author:**

I'm just your average long haired wanna-be tree-humping techno-hippy. Lots of free information on Brewing, herbalism, etc available on my website at

<http://www.linesofthedragon.com>.

### **Absinthe Recipes:**

<http://www.a1b2c3.com/drugs/abs03.htm>

### **Absinthe Buyer's Guide:**

<http://www.absinthebuyersguide.com/guide.html>

### **Cool Website about Absinthe:**

<http://absinthe.msjekyll.com/>

### **Wikipedia Absinthe:**

<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Absinthe>