

Hi there, Food Fans!

With the warm weather at its peak for the year, there's nothing better than sitting on the porch, drinking a cold cocktail.

One of my favorite things to do when making a cocktail is to use my own, homemade

Liquor infusions

You can infuse any kind of liquor with just about any flavor, but today I'm going to tell you about a few that are a little easier, and some of my favorites!

Infusing is easiest with clear liquors, like gin and vodka. You'll probably want a medium quality liquor.

Too low, and your flavors will be fighting with that distinct rubbing alcohol flavor that cheap liquor has, too high of a quality and you'll be spending way more than you need to.

Grapefruit vodka

Infusion is the process of pulling alcohol-soluble flavors from one thing and imparting them into your base liquor. For grapefruit vodka, all you need is:

The zest of 1 large grapefruit

375 ml (12.5 oz) vodka

A storage container with a lid large enough to hold the vodka

Simply put the zest into the vodka and let it sit for a few days.

After 3 days, take a small sip of the vodka to see how much flavor has been absorbed. Taste every day until the flavor is to your liking.

Once you're happy with the flavor, strain the vodka through a fine mesh sieve with cheesecloth into another container.

The vodka will keep in a sealed container indefinitely.

Now, what to make with this new citrusy vodka? How about

Grapefruit Moscow Mule

Mix together:

3 oz grapefruit infused vodka

juice from a lime

12 oz (a bottle) ginger beer

½ cup ice

If gin is more up your alley, why not try making

Black Pepper Infused Gin

I can hear you know, “Black pepper gin?!”, but trust me, it's great.

In a storage container with a lid, place:

12 whole peppercorns
2 tablespoons freshly ground pepper
375 ml (12.5 oz) gin

Again, let the mixture sit for a few days, tasting periodically until the flavor reaches your personal preference.

Strain through a sieve lined with cheesecloth onto a sealable storage container.

With the pepper gin, you can make a lovely

Pepper Martini

Mix together:

3 oz chilled pepper gin
1 ½ oz chilled sweet vermouth

Serve in a martini glass with two cocktail olives.

Try making other flavorful infusions! Basil gin, ginger vodka, earl gray gin, the list goes on!

If you're feeling bold and want to try infusing dark liquor, remember that it takes much longer for dark alcohol to pick up flavors, usually several weeks.

Also, if you want to infuse the flavors of fruits without zest, like apple or raspberry, switch out the fruit every few days to keep it from starting to spoil and adding that flavor to your infusions.

Happy drinking!