

THE GOLDEN HOUSE BOOKS

Old Country Drinks

*Beer, kvass, mead, juices, wines and cordials after old household
recipes*



From the book «The New Golden House Book»
Riga, about 1905

BLUSABOOKS

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Beer, kvass, mead, juices, wines and cordials after old household recipes

Book 2 of the series «The Golden House Books».

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Please note. This book is a historical document. Some of the advice and some of the substances of that time are today known to be unsafe. The recipes are to be read as evidence of their age, not as instructions.

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How they lived then

Around 1900 every house was also its own brewery. Beer was brewed at home, kvass was set from bread, mead from honey, wine from berries and fruit, and in the cellar there stood bottles of juice and cordial for the winter. This is the smallest book of the series, but it is a whole chapter word for word: what went in, how much, how long it fermented and how it was kept.

HOW THIS BOOK WAS MADE

The text is *word for word* from the original. We have retold nothing, shortened nothing and “improved” nothing: the recipes, the figures, the measures and the advice are exactly as they were printed.

Only the letters have been changed — the gothic type and the old orthography have been put into modern letters, and from Latvian into English. The language itself is that of 1905, so some words and sentences sound unusual today. That is how it is meant to be.

Old, foreign and obscure words are explained at the end of each section, where they first appear. All of them together are in the glossary at the end of the book, along with the table of old measures.

Square brackets [like this] mark places where the scan was damaged or cut off and the word has been restored from the context; [...] means the word cannot be read.

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beer and malt

kvass

mead

berry and fruit wines

juices and syrups

cordials and spirits

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II

Various drinks



fresh bay leaves¹ and peppercorns, pour over good wine vinegar and bind the jars well over with a bladder². Such a mixture must stand at least 3 months before it is taken into use; it is to be handed with beef, deer and mutton roasts and with cold roasts, as also with boiled meat³.

*

¹ bay leaves (lozberlapas) — laurel leaves ² bladders, blains — blisters

³ to dry (meat) — to hang it in smoke or air until it is dry



The home brewery

188. Fruit¹ wines

In the making of fruit wines great care must be taken for the cleanliness of the vessels, and it is to be seen to that the content of sugar and of acids stands in the due proportion for the divers wines. We shall not here set forth any instructions upon the setting up of fruit wine manufactories, which asks much knowledge and much outlay, but shall give only a few counsels how to prepare for household needs divers savoury² drinks without any great appliances. In preparing fruit wine in a small quantity also it is to be heeded that the juice may not come together with metal.

¹ sauces (fruit) — sauces, gravies ² savoury — tasty, good to eat

189. Cider or apple wine

Juicy, peeled apples are grated, the juice is strained through a cloth and poured into an earthen pot¹, into which are thrown a few apples baked with the whole skin, that the fermentation may go forward. If after some days a film has arisen upon the juice, then the fermentation is ended; the film is taken off and the cider is filled into bottles, which are well corked and kept in a cool place. — In a greater quantity apple wine is prepared by grating or stamping the apples and pressing the juice out of the pulp² (in a special press), which is then filled into a small barrel wherein wine has been, and is let to ferment 14 days, whereby the filth thrust out through the bung³-hole must be wiped away daily; when the fermentation is ended, then the small barrel is filled quite full with cider which has beforehand been fermented in bottles, (or else with water), the bung is driven in tight and the wine is let to lie in the cellar 5—6 months, after which it is filled into another small barrel, where it is again laid down some months, and at last it is filled into bottles.

¹ glazed (pot) — covered with a glaze ² pulp — a mash, a soft mass ³ bung — the stopper of a barrel

190. Apple tea

is a very good remedy¹ against the cough², and it is prepared by peeling 8 (Borsdorf³) apples and cutting⁴ them into quarters; other eight are not peeled, only the seeds are taken out of them; then they are thrown with 5 lots of currants⁵ and 10 lots of brown sugar into a porcelain pot, a stof⁶ of boiling water is poured over them and it is set into the oven-pipe; it must not boil. — A good **lemonade** is prepared thus:

15 (Borsdorf) apples are boiled with a little lemon peel and 10 lots of sugar in a stof of water for one hour, the decoction is strained through a cloth and the drink is ready, which is the more serviceable for those sick of a fever. — One may also cut some 6 apples with the whole skin into pieces, pour over them a stof of boiling water, add 4 lots of honey and the juice of two lemons, and then let all stand an hour.

¹ indifferent (remedy) — neutral, without any working ² coughing, cough — the coughing, the cough

³ Reinette, Borsdorf — sorts of apple ⁴ cuttings — an unclear name of plants in the original

⁵ currants — the small dried grapes of Corinth ⁶ stof — a liquid measure of about 1.23 litres

191. Pear wine

is prepared even as apple wine, only the pears need not be peeled, but are to be grated as they are. The juice is filled into a small barrel, where it soon begins to ferment strongly, after which it is poured over into another small barrel, which is bunged up and laid down

6 weeks in the cellar, after which the wine is to be filled into bottles, which are to be corked and bound over with wire. After 3—4 weeks this strongly foaming wine may be used. If it be let to ferment out wholly and to lie a year, then it foams no more, but gets the taste of a good French wine. From wild pears and apples also a very good wine may be prepared.

192. Blackberry (brambleberry, *Rubus fruticosus*) wine

Well ripened, dry blackberries are poured into a large pot, boiling water is poured over them, they are set for the night in a half-cooled oven; on the second morning they are wholly crushed, rubbed through a fine sieve and the juice is let to ferment 14 days; then to every 4 stofs of juice there are added 2 pounds¹ of sugar and ¼ stof of cognac or of rum, the liquid is then filled into a small barrel, it is bunged up and set in the cellar to lie some months before it is used.

¹ pound (lb.) — the Russian pound, about 0.41 kg

193. Lemon wine

Of 5 pounds of sugar and 6 stofs of water a syrup is boiled, which is poured boiling upon the peels¹ of 5 lemons in a large clean pot; so soon as the syrup has cooled, the juice of 10 lemons is pressed into it, there is also thrown in a toasted slice of bread², which has been smeared with a tablespoonful of yeast³, and the liquid is left 1—2 days, until it begins to ferment. Then the peels are taken out, the liquid is poured into a small barrel, which must be full to the brim, the wine is let to ferment, and when the fermentation is ended the small barrel is bunged up; after three months this wine may be filled into bottles and drunk.

¹ peel — the wooden shovel for shooting bread into the oven

² sodden (of bread) — clammy, not baked through ³ yeast — barm, the leaven of beer

194. Strawberry wine

Crush 12 stofs of wild strawberries, pour over them 12 stofs of cold water and then let it stand 24 hours. Thereafter the juice is strained, there are added 10 pounds of sugar, 8 stofs of apple wine, the peel of one lemon and 1½ lots of crushed tartar¹, all is filled into a small barrel to ¾ parts, it is bunged up, but a small hole is bored in the bung and the small barrel is set 4 weeks in a moderately warm place, that the wine may ferment out thoroughly. Then there are added yet 4 lb. of sugar, which is dissolved in 2 stofs of warm water, the small barrel is well shaken about and bunged up well again. After some 6—8 weeks, when the fermentation has wholly ceased, the clear liquid is poured off from the dregs², the