

Tom's wild Persimmon wine recipe Nov 1, 2022

This recipe is based on wild persimmons. Persimmons may require a close watch for time of ripening. In my area of central Oklahoma they ripen soon after the first frost and near Thanksgiving. Persimmons can be very bitter if picked too soon but at the peak of ripeness they have a taste to me that is like a cross between honey and a fig with a hint of pumpkin. The biggest challenge to harvesting persimmons is beating the local critters to them. In my area deer can be seen on their hind legs stretched up close to eight feet to reach them to eat. Other critters eat them too even before they ripen and my experience has been once they ripen they don't last but a day or two and they are all gone as coons and possums will crawl all through the trees getting every one. For this particular batch I kept an eye on the roadside persimmons every few days as I had in past years but were beat to them. They day (thanksgiving day 2020) I noticed them ripe, I dropped everything and got some buckets to start picking.

Once harvested I cut off the leaf like petals on them off, rinsed them and let them dry overnight on the counter and froze them for a month before starting the batch of wine. I originally planned to separate out the seeds but it was too time consuming so the seeds, skin and fruit flesh all went into the batch.

The following recipe is for a 4 gallon batch but there was much fall out sediment and a lot left behind in the racking so by the time of bottling it was just over 3 gallons or 13 bottles.

23 pounds of wild ripe persimmons that I mashed with a potato masher before placing them in a mesh bag.

½ gallon honey. I'm a beekeeper so i always have plenty of honey on hand and when mixing wine if i need to raise the specific gravity I will often grab some honey to add the the must weather I'm calling it wine or mead, if you don't have honey just add additional dissolved sugar to the amount below to reach close to 1.095 -1.100 SG/starting gravity.

5lb sugar

10 tsp acid blend

4.5 tsp yeast nutrient

4 ½ gallon water. I used Walmart blue label spring water.

2 tsp pectic enzyme

4 campden tablets

1 tsp hydrated bentonite

24 hours later I stirred the must and added 1 packet of Lalvin 71B yeast sprinkled on top. Must temp was 71 deg F. PH 4.0

Fermentation started within 24 hours and I squeezed the bag of fruit daily and stirred the must.

10 days later the airlock had slowed down considerably and I removed the bag of fruit and the gravity reading was .996. I like to let my must be undisturbed for 24-48 hours before the first racking after I removed the fruit for particles to settle, so two days after the fruit was removed I racked it for the first time to one 3 gallon carboy plus one 750 ml wine bottle. No backsweetening was made,

6 months later I racked for the 2nd time and the gravity reading was .994.

I sampled this wine from time to time and it had a very strong tannin taste that I presume was from leaving the many seeds in the batch for fermentation but at later samples I could tell it was getting more palatable and losing the strong tannin taste. I bottled it 23 months from the starting time and I was amazed how much it had changed to a light fruity taste over the nearly two years. Just as an experiment I placed a half of a stick of cinnamon in a couple of the bottles to see how that will taste.

I've made many batches of wine and most have been bottled closer to the one year mark but I could tell by allowing this to be in the carboy closer to two years it brings another level of clarity. This batch has definitely inspired me to make it once again.

Tom Hall, Yukon Oklahoma