



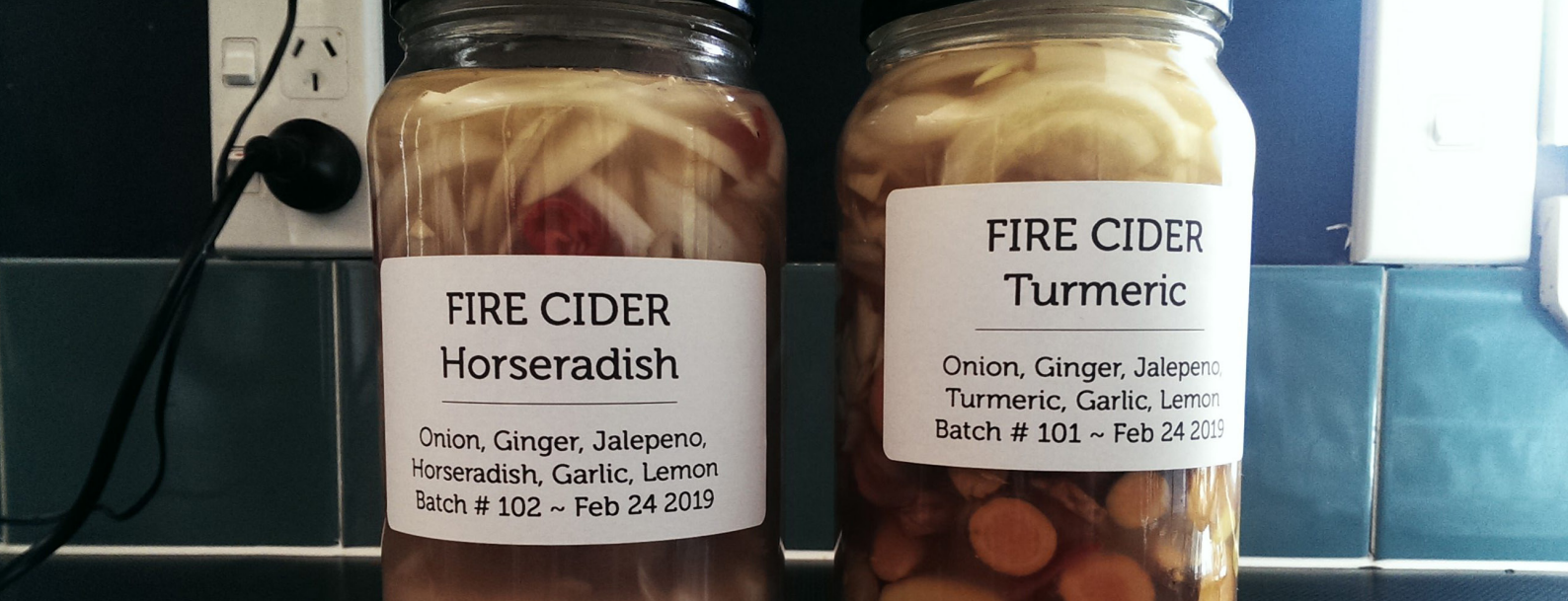
AN E-BOOK GUIDE  
BY

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## HERBAL VINEGARS

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Apple Cider Vinegar is a healthy ingredient in many savoury dishes, salad dressings and also as a stand alone taken as a health supplement, usually in glass of water. Over the next few pages we explore ways that you can incorporate the benefits of apple cider vinegar with the delicious health giving properties of herbs into your daily life.

### Herbal Medicine Making Basics

Human beings have come up with many ingenious ways to effectively extract the medicinal attributes of plants into a form that we can incorporate easily into our daily lives. Hence nowadays we can choose fresh herbs as well as teas, tinctures, powders, capsules and even wine and beer and of course herbal vinegars!

The maceration or steeping method is often used, which involves placing the herb (later to become the 'marc') into a liquid known as the 'menstruum' to release its properties. Commonly used menstruums are water, alcohol, fixed oils such as olive oil or vinegar. The menstruum acts as a 'solvent' which draws out the natural chemicals into the liquid. Each menstruum has its own particular virtues, and the type of menstruum selected depends largely on what you are wanting to use the end product for.

Vinegar is a useful solvent which tends to be good at extracting minerals from the herbs. On top of this, as a digestive aid it promotes the absorption of important nutrients when taken with food. Vinegar is also a preservative so it keeps well (unlike a tea or water based extraction). A vinegar that is stored well can easily keep for a couple of years. Vinegar is good for those who want something that keeps well, but for whatever reason cannot take alcohol.

### Buying Vinegar

When shopping for apple cider vinegar, choose an organic one if possible because commercial apple orchards use a *lot* of questionable chemical sprays. I prefer to buy New Zealand made to support local growers and manufacturers. For health benefits you must select an unrefined naturally fermented apple cider vinegar that has been made with the 'Mother' – a colony of beneficial bacteria similar to a 'scooby'.

### Notes on making vinegars:

The tougher leaves of herbs do work well for this e.g. thyme, rosemary, sage etc. Delicate flowers such as nasturtium flowers tend to just collapse into the vinegar. You can use them if you really want to - just put them in the top of your herb mix, and fish them out after a couple of days.

Using a plastic lid stops the vinegar from corroding a metal lid - which then gets stuck and you'll never get the lid off! If you don't have a plastic lid, you can just stick a bit of old bread bag or some greaseproof paper between the lid and jar to stop the vinegar eating away the metal and causing issues.

If you drink ACV regularly with water, *use a straw to protect your teeth!* You can buy stainless steel ones now so you don't have to use plastic polluting throw away ones.



# Salad Vinegar

## Ingredients

300 g jam jar  
Real apple cider vinegar  
Fresh garlic

Fresh thyme  
Fresh rosemary (optional)

1. Peel 3-5 cloves of garlic and place in the bottom of a jar. Pick (or buy) a generous sized fresh sprig of thyme, rub briskly between the hands and place in jar. Add some rosemary as well. Also black pepper if you wish. The jar should be loosely packed about 1/3 full of herbs.
2. Now fill the jar with your vinegar and allow it to macerate for up to 4 weeks. Giving it a shake every day or two will help it to release its goodies into the vinegar. You can start using it before the month is up if you can't wait!
3. Once you've completed the maceration process strain and store in a glass bottle with a label that includes date and ingredients.

## How to Serve

To use mix with a healthy oil of your choice, olive oil tastes particularly good with this blend of herbs. Pour liberally on salads, brassica's (which contain lots of calcium) and cooked vegies.

## Benefits

Improves digestion and **absorption of nutrients** including calcium. The herbs garlic and thyme contain anti-microbial actions and thus supports a **healthy immune system**, if you're feeling a bit under the weather, try a tablespoon in a tall glass of hot water, with honey and some fresh chilli! Thyme and garlic also have an affinity with the lungs, this is useful if you do catch a cold or are suffering from respiratory congestion.



## Mineral Rich Vinegar

You can make a mineral rich vinegar by incorporating nutrient-dense herbs into the vinegar. You can use fresh or dried herbs, **nettle leaf** is particularly rich in minerals, but also explore garden runaways and wild greens such as:

Parsley	Chickweed
Nasturtium leaves	Puha
Dandelion leaves	Fat hen

### Method

1. 3/4 fill a jar with a blend of nutrient dense herbs, as well as some tasty ones!
2. If you eat organic eggs, keep the eggshells aside, then bake off a few in the oven to dry them. Crush them into the top of the jar, and the vinegar will dissolve them in a couple of weeks. They don't taste of anything, but it's a great way to get absorbable calcium, and just seems more wholesome than the ground up cows bones that many supplements are made from.
3. Fill the jar with vinegar and put the lid on.
4. Give a shake every day or two, macerate for a month or more.
5. Strain, label and bottle.

Take a tablespoon a day for a mineral rich tonic, you can also use this in your diet by mixing into salad dressings.

## Fire Cider

I just can't write an article on vinegars and not include a fire cider recipe! Fire cider is a traditional folk remedy from the US with the name coined by herbalist Rosemary Gladstar in the late 1970s. Rosemary taught hundreds of students how to make it from 1978 – 1987 and it was also published in a couple of her books. There are now untold varieties of Fire Cider, it is a flexible recipe designed to be adapted to taste and season, using what you have on hand. Below is the original recipe from an article from Rosemary Gladstar which is available freely on the internet.

### Medicinal Benefits

Fire Cider is an 'oxymel', that is, a blend of vinegar and honey (yum). The addition of honey adds further medicinal benefits to the vinegar and herbs. In New Zealand we are spoilt for choice with a wide range of lovely raw medicinally active honeys available, manuka being the most well-known. When we mix honey with hot spices and vinegar, the result is an incredibly delicious, sweet, spicy, hot concoction that is taken at the very first sign of a cold, many times stopping it in its tracks. This oxymel remedy has become a very popular and well-loved medicine that is made and shared by thousands of people in the US and beyond.





# Original Fire Cider Recipe

- ½ cup grated fresh horseradish root
  - ½ cup or more fresh chopped onions
  - ¼ cup or more chopped garlic
  - ¼ cup or more grated ginger
  - Chopped fresh or dried cayenne pepper ‘to taste’. Can be whole or powdered. ‘To Taste’ means should be hot, but not so hot you can’t tolerate it. Better to make it a little milder than too hot; you can always add more pepper later if necessary.
  - Optional ingredients; Turmeric, Echinacea, cinnamon, etc.
1. Place herbs in a preserving jar and cover with enough raw unpasteurized apple cider vinegar to cover the herbs by at least three to four inches. Cover tightly with a tight fitting lid.
  2. Place jar in a warm place and let for three to four weeks. Best to shake every day to help in the maceration process.
  3. After three to four weeks, strain out the herbs, and reserve the liquid.
  4. Add honey ‘to taste’. Warm the honey first so it mixes in well. “To Taste’ means your Fire Cider should taste hot, spicy, and sweet. “A little bit of honey helps the medicine go down.....”
  5. Rebottle and enjoy! Fire Cider will keep for several months unrefrigerated if stored in a cool pantry. But it’s better to store in the refrigerator if you’ve room.

(Ref: <http://freefirecider.com/rosemarys-story/>)

I hope you get a chance to find yourself some delicious herbal ingredients and spend some time making healthy kitchen medicines!



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 **THANK YOU!** 

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We hope this introduction to kitchen medicine has been  
inspiring and enjoyable for you.

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