



JAO Twins, 1 Clove and 2 Clove, a few days after pitching yeast.

This recipe is designed for beginners. Everyone else with an opinion can just bugar off!

For a 5 litre demijohn

1.6kg honey (never boiled or lose the taste and aromas) (if I meant 1.5kg I would have written it)

1 large orange (at most cut into eight pieces -- rind and all)

1 small handful of raisins (25 if you can count)

1 stick of cinnamon (its brown, its wood, its good)

1 whole clove (or 2 if you like high potency)

optional (a pinch of nutmeg and allspice)(very small mind you)

1 tsp of bread yeast (now don't get holy on me about bread yeast -- after all this recipe is DESIGNED for it)

Balance water to bring batch out to 3.8 litres (did you know, there are 3.785411 litres per US gallon)

Process:

Use a clean 5 litre demijohn.

Dissolve honey in some warm water and put in demijohn

Wash orange well to remove any pesticides and slice into eights (may wish to zest slightly, just shove them through the demijohn's hole)

Put in raisins, clove, cinnamon stick, any optional ingredients and fill demijohn with water to about 3.8 litres with cold water (need some room for some foam -- you can top off with more water after the first few days foaming frenzy). (You did remember to pour in a measured 3.8 litres and mark off the level on the outside of the glass demijohn beforehand right?)

Shake the hell out of the demijohn with the top on or bung in (of course). This is your sophisticated oxygenation process.

When liquid is at room temperature, put in 1 tsp of bread yeast (no you don't have to rehydrate it first -- the ancients did not even have that word in their vocabulary -- just put it in and give it a gentle swirl or not)(The yeast can fight for their own territory)

Install water airlock. Put in dark place. It will start working immediately or in an hour. (Don't use grandma's bread yeast she bought years before she passed away in the 90's -- use the fresh stuff) (Wait 3 hours before you panic or call me) After major foaming stops in a few days add some water and then keep your hands off of it. (Don't shake it! Don't mess with them yeastes! Leave them alone except its okay to open your cabinet to inhale deeply the smell every once in a while.)

Racking -- Don't you dare!

Additional feeding -- No! NO!

More stirring or shaking -- You are not listening, do not touch!

After 2 months and maybe a few days it will slow down to a stop and clear all by itself. (How about that) (You are not so important after all) Then you can put a hose in with a small cloth filter on the end into the clear part and siphon off the golden nectar. If you wait long enough even the oranges will sink to the bottom but I never waited that long. If it is clear it is ready. You don't need a cold basement. It does better in a kitchen in the dark. (Like in a cabinet) likes a little heat (20C-25C). If it didn't work out... you screwed up and didn't read my instructions (or used grandma's bread yeast she bought years before she passed away). If it didn't work out then take up another hobby. Mead is not for you. It is too complicated.

If you were successful, which I am 99% certain you will be, and then enjoy your mead. When you get ready to make different types of mead you will probably have

to unlearn some of these practices I have taught you, but hey -- This recipe and procedure works with these ingredients so don't knock it. It was your first mead. It was my tenth. Sometimes, even the experts can forget all they know and make good ancient mead.

This mead should finish quite sweet, if it finished dry, most likely your bread yeast has higher alcohol tolerance than Fleischmann's Bread Yeast (original recipe USA brand of dry yeast -- 12% alc tol. and high flocculation). In Australia for the past few years all the dry yeast sold is imported from China. So add more honey in the next batch and so on until it finishes sweet instead of dry or switch brands (but then again all the Australian brands today are probably from the same barrel of imported China dry yeast). Don't like it sweet? Add less honey next time.

Keep in mind, that will completely void the "warranty" of Ancient Orange recipe if you randomly use a different yeast. Different yeasts have different alcohol tolerance, and it just so happens that the Fleischman's active dry bread yeast is perfect for this recipe in regards to alcohol tolerance. Using another yeast would probably give better results *IF* the honey was re-balanced to suit the yeast. Again, this recipe is all about **BALANCE**. The bitterness from the orange and the sweetness of the honey balance perfectly with the alcohol level. I don't know if I just don't have a well enough educated palate or what, but I can't discern any yeast flavour in my Ancient Orange. It is young even by this recipe's standard; the batch cleared at about 4 weeks and is currently in bottles. Even at such an extremely young age, it turned out incredibly smooth with a wonderful flavour of the varietal honey that I used. The spices are "just right" and everything comes together perfectly. If it is not clear, just wait longer as one day it will magically turn from cloudy to clear and the fruit will drop meaning it's time to bottle. Like any mead if you leave this one to age (although only need 6 months) then it just keeps tasting better. Foaming and clearing times are dependent upon yeast and temperature conditions.