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Making Ginger Root Starter takes 7 days to make - starter is used to make all ginger fermented sodas. Sour dough bread starter forms in a similar way using wild bacteria and wild yeast.

Starter Equipment:

1. Half-Gallon glass jar (do not use metal)
2. Coffee filter or tightly woven cotton material to cover jar opening (do not use muslin, the weave is too loose, gnats can get into the jar, gnats contaminate the starter and lay eggs in the starter)
3. Rubber band
4. Stirrer (* use a clean plastic, bamboo or wooden spoon long enough to reach bottom of jar)

Starter Ingredients:

1. Fresh Ginger Root (organic if possible) clean ginger root under running water with veggie brush.
2. Granulated Cane Sugar
3. Filtered or spring water (tap water contains chlorine and other chemicals that can kill the probiotics)

Starter Procedure:

1. Fill glass jar about $\frac{3}{4}$ full with filtered water

Add:

2. 3 TBSP fresh chopped ginger root ($\frac{1}{4}$ " x $\frac{1}{4}$ ")
3. 3 TBSP sugar

Stir well *see equipment list - then cover and secure with rubber band.

Feed once a day - 3 TBSP fresh diced ($\frac{1}{4}$ " x $\frac{1}{4}$ ") ginger root - and - 3 TBSP sugar – stir well and cover.

Stir twice a day, once when feeding and another - 12 hours later. Repeat for 7 days – on the 7th day the starter is ready to make the ginger soda whatever flavor you desire.

Making the Soda

Ginger Root Fermented Soda takes 3 days to make - this recipe will make 2 gallons of soda.

Lactobacillus is friendly bacteria that naturally occur in ginger root, and all edible roots can be used to make fermented soda. Lactic acid is a byproduct of Lactobacillus as it ferments ginger root, it makes Co2 and morphs into probiotics. Lactic acid is not lactose, so no problem for those who are lactose intolerant. Lactose in dairy also generates lactic acid such as in yogurt which is also a probiotic.

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Soda Making Equipment:

1. Two Gallon Glass Jar (one with a serving spout at bottom side is ideal)
2. Coffee filter or cotton material (not muslin because the weave is too big and gnats can get into the jar)
3. Rubber band

Soda Ingredients:

1. Half gallon ginger root starter liquid (strain out the chopped ginger - save to flavor Kombucha or candied ginger)
2. 1 gallon Welch's White Grape-Cherry 100% juice no sugar added - or any pure fruit juice.
3. Granulated Cane Sugar 1 cup - this is food for the friendly bacteria in the starter, as they consume the sugar they make Co2 and morph into probiotics.
4. 1 gallon filtered or spring water

Maggie's Recipe for Ginger Root Fermented Soda: A probiotic drink

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Soda Procedure:

1. Heat 2 cups of the water to about 100° and add the sugar, stir to dissolve, remove from heat, set aside to cool. Cool to about 90°
2. Add the ginger root starter to the 2 gallon jar
3. Add the gallon of juice to the 2 gallon jar
4. Add the cooled sugar water to the 2 gallon jar
5. Add the filtered water to the 2 gallon jar to within about 3 inches from the top of the jar
6. Stir well with plastic or wooden spoon then cover with coffee filter and secure with rubber band
7. Stir several times a day – it hastens the growth of probiotics.

The first day ends 24 hours after the soda is started, by the end of the first day you should notice small bubbles or foam congregating in patches on the surface of the liquid.

The second day ends 48 hours after the soda was started, by the end of the 2nd day the foam on top of liquid should be getting thicker and when stirred will rise.

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On the third day the foam will rise and may overflow the jar when stirring. It is best to bottle on the 3rd day because the Co2 is at the perfect stage to carbonate the soda in the bottle.

Bottling Procedure:

Clean and sanitize bottles for soda. You can use flip-top bottles, or bottles that you cap with bottle capper. Using 12 oz bottles, you will need about 18 to 20 bottles.

If you have a glass jar with serving spout at bottom side of jar it is easy to fill the bottles, otherwise use a funnel to fill bottles. Be sure everything is clean and sanitized.

Cap each bottle as you fill it. After all of the bottles are capped, clean the bottles well and set aside on counter for one day – this allows the Co2 to build up in the bottle - and then refrigerate. The soda will keep in refrigerator for several months (if it lasts that long,) and the longer it sits in refrigerator the less sweet it will become because the fermentation continues in the bottle at a slower rate but it is still fermenting.

I use a pH test kit to check the pH of all of my fermented drinks and foods.

Ginger root soda should be about 3.0 pH same as Kombucha.

Heat kills probiotics, heat kills the good bacteria, don't pour hot water liquid in with the starter or you will kill the probiotics.

Any edible root contains lactobacillus and will ferment similar to ginger root but their flavor may not be as desirable. Smilax root can be used to make Sarsaparilla Soda.