

---

## Wine Recipes

---

The following three recipes are taken from *The Closet of Sir Kenelm Digbie Kt. Opened...* Please note that all three of these are non-grape wines made from other fruits. Note, also, that two of them call for the addition of sugar. The use of sugar in cooking and winemaking had been in practice for 300 years or more by the writing *The Closet...* as evidenced by the mention of both 'powdered sugar' and 'crystallized sugar' in a cookbook written in 1392, mentioned by Leechdom, and the following quote written in a letter only one century later in the Paston Letters, '...send me an other sugar loff, for my old one is do.'<sup>56</sup>

---

### The Countess of Newport's Cherry Wine

---

Pick the best cherries free from rotten, and pick the stalks from them; put them into an earthen Pan. Bruise them, by griping and straining them in your hands, and let them stand all night; on the next day strain them out (through a Napkin, which if it be a course and thin one, let the juyce run through a Hippocras or gelly bag, upon a pound of fine pure Sugar in powder, to every Gallon of juyce) and to every gallon put a pound of Sugar, and put it into a vessel. Be sure your vessel be full, or your wine will be spoiled; and in every bottle you must put a lump (a piece as big as a Nutmeg) of Sugar. The vessel must not be stopt until it hath done working.

---

### Strawberry Wine

---

Bruise the Strawberries, and put them into a Linnen-bag which hath been a little used, that so the Liquor may run through more easily. You hang in the bag at the bung into the vessel, before you do put in your Strawberries. The quantity of the fruit is left to your discretion; for you will judge to be there enough of them, when the color of the wine is high enough. During the working, you leave the bung open. The working being over, you stop your vessel. Cherry-wine is made after the same fashion. But it is a lttle more troublesome to break the Cherry-stones. But it is necessary, that if your Cherries be of the black soure Cherries, you put to it a little Cinnamon, and a few Cloves.

---

### To Make Wine of Cherries Alone

---

Take one hundred pounds weight, or what quantity you please, of ripe, but sound, pure, dry and well gathered Cherries. Bruise and mash them with your hands to press out all their juyce, which strain through a boulter cloth, into a deep narrow Wooden tub, and cover it close with clothes. It will begin to work and ferment within three or four hours, and a thick foul scum will rise to the top. Skim it off as it riseth to any good head, and presently cover it again. Do this till no more great quantity of scum arise, which will be four or five times, or more. And by this means the Liquor will become clear, all the gross muddy parts rising up in a scum to the top. When you find that the height of the working is past, and that it

begins to go less, tun it into a barrel, letting it run again through a boulter, to keep out all the gross feculant substance. If you should let it stay before you tun it up, till the working were too much deaded, the wine would prove dead. Let it remain in the barrel close stopped, a month or five weeks. Then draw it into bottles, into each of which put a lump of fine Sugar, before you draw the wine into it, and stop them very close, and set them in a cold Cellar. You may drink them after three or four months. This wine is exceeding pleasant, strong, spiritful and comfortable.

The following is a selection on the making of hippocras (a spiced and sweetened wine, often served steaming hot).<sup>57</sup>

To make Ypocrasse for lords with gynger, synamon, and graines, sugour, and turnesol: and for comyn pepul, gynger, canell, longe peper, and clarified hony.

---

## Mead Recipes

---

A list of herbs and spices used in the making of Metheglin can be found in the following excerpt from 'A Receipt to make a Tun of Metheglyn' in The Closet of Sir Kenelm Digbie Kt. Opened, Whereby is Discovered Several ways of making of Metheglin, Sider, Cherry Wine, &c.<sup>58</sup>

Take two handfules of Dock (alias wild carrot) a reasonable burthen of Saxifrage, Wild-Sage, Blew-button, Scabious, Bettony, Agrimony, Wildmarjoram, of each a reasonable burthen; Wild thyme a Peck, Roots and all. The Garden-herbs are these; Bayleaves, and Rosemary, or each two handfules; A Sieveful of Avens, and as much Violet-leaves: A handful of Sage; and three handfules of Sweet-Marjoram. Three Roots of young Borrage, leaves and all; Two handfules of Parsley-roots; Two Roots of Elecampane: Two handfules of Fennel: a peck of Thyme; wash and pick all your herbs from filth and grass.

The following recipe is also taken from The Closet of Sir Kenelme Digbie... on page 5:

A RECEIPT TO MAKE METHEGLIN AS IT IS  
MADE AT LIEGE, COMMUNICATED BY MR.  
MASILLON

Take one Measure of Honey, and three Measures of Water, and let it boil till one measure be boiled away, so that there be left three measures in all; as for Example, take to one Pot of Honey, three Pots of Water, and let it boil so long, till it come to three Pots. During which time you must Skim it very well as soon as any scum riseth; which you are to continue till there rise no scum more. You may, if you please, put to it some spice, to wit, Cloves and Ginger; the quantity of which is to be proportioned according as you will have your Meath, strong or weak. But this you do befor it begin to boil. There are some that put either Yeast of Beer, or Leaven of Bread into it, to make it work. But this is not necessary at all; and much less to set it into the Sun. Mr. Masillon doth neither the one nor the other. Afterwards for to tun it, you must let it grow Luke-warm, for to advance it. And if you do intend to keep your Meathe for a long time, you may put into it some hops on this fashion. Take to every Barrel of Meathe a Pound of Hops without leaves, that

is, Ordinary Hops used for Beer, but well cleansed, taking only the Flowers, without the Green-leaves and stalks. Boil this Pound of Hops in a Pot and a half of fair water, till it come to one Pot, and this quantity is sufficient for a Barrel of Meathe... When you Tun your Meathe, you must not fill your Barrel by half a foot, that so it may have room to work. Then let it stand six weeks slightly stopped; which being expired, if the Meath do not work, stop it up very close. Yet must you not fill the Barrel to the very brim. After six Months you draw off the clear into another Barrel, or strong Bottles, leaving the dregs, and filling up your new Barrel, or Bottles, and stopping it or them very close.

The Meath that is made this way, (Viz. In the Spring, in the Month of April or May, which is the proper time for making of it,) will keep for many a year.

---

This next mead recipe is taken from The Country Housewife:

Take eight Gallons of Water, and as much Honey as will make it bear an egg; add to this the Rinds of six Lemmons, and boil it well, scumming it carefully as it rises. When 'tis off the Fire, put to it the Juice of the six Lemmons, and pour it into a clean Tub, or earthen Vessel, if you have one large enough, to work three days, then scum it well, and pour off the clear into the Cask, and let it stand open till it has done making a hissing Noise; after which stop it up close, and in three months time it will be fine, and fit for bottling.



[Return to the Table of Contents](#)



[Return to The Meadery](#)