Milk Kefir Unleashed

An Instructional Guide with Tips, Tricks & Recipes

By Thomas Egbert of Fusion Teas

Edited by Linda Davis-Kyle, author of *Organic Fun Foods for Kids & Grownups*

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Contents

About the Author

So you probably are asking, "What does this guy know about kefir? Doesn't he run a tea business?" The answer is "Yes." Having the tea business, though, played an important role in my discovery of kefir. Our mission statement at Fusion Teas is "To share our passion for tea and herbal tea and to promote a healthier society through tea." Naturally, I always have been a health-minded person. I didn't have a digestive disease, but I did need help with my digestion and began looking for answers. In my reading, I first came across kombucha, a fermented probiotic tea beverage much like kefir and learned that it had health benefits. Some of my customers told me about their experiences with kombucha and how it had helped them. So, I began researching about what kombucha was and how it was made. It seemed perfect. I owned a tea business, and I could make kombucha easily and cost effectively. Then, while researching further, I stumbled across kefir and immediately was fascinated. I compared the two. I read everything I could find, and what I found was that milk kefir is an even more beneficial fermented probiotic beverage. I always have liked dairy products like yogurt, sour cream, and cheese, so I was eager to give kefir a try. I purchased my kefir grains just as you have, and the rest is history. I tell you all of this so that you can relate. I do not have a doctorate or a fancy education. I am just a small business owner with experience. All of the tips, tricks, and pointers I give in this eBook are from my own trial and error and experience. Kefir really isn't hard to make, and by following the instructions I have outlined for you in the next few pages, you soon will be making kefir successfully, too. Making kefir is actually one of the simplest culturing processes in fermenting foods, especially in the dairy category. There are just a few nuances that will help you along the way and set you up for success.

About the Editor

Linda Davis-Kyle, of writingnow.com is the author of the Kindle book, *Organic Fun Foods for Kids & Grownups*, and, like me, she is a kombucha lover and a kefir lover. Her health and fitness and general interest articles have appeared in more than a dozen countries North America, Europe, Asia, Africa, and Australia in professional journals and popular magazines, and she is the author of several books. She also loves editing and teaching workshops for beginning writers of all ages, and she is a speaker who champions parents as they teach their youngsters to make wise food choices. ♥

Introduction

What Are Milk Kefir Grains?

So what are Milk Kefir Grains? The short answer is that they are made up of good bacteria and yeast. To understand what kefir is we must first understand the grains that are used to make kefir from the milk. According to *Real Food Fermentation* by Alex Lewin, "Kefir grains are combinations of yeasts and bacteria living on a substrate made up of a variety of dairy components." These live kefir grains look a bit like cauliflower, but they can come in many different shapes and have a somewhat rubbery gelatinous texture. Despite the name, "Kefir Grains," they are not a grain like wheat or rice. Kefir grains cannot be made or manufactured. No other milk culture forms grains, so kefir is unique.

Robust Organic Milk Kefir Grains.

Where Did Kefir Originate?

Kefir originated in the Caucasus Mountains more than 2000 years ago and were considered a gift from God. Traditionally, Kefir was made by mixing Kefir grains with fresh, raw, cow or goat or sheep milk and was poured into goatskin leather bags to ferment. It was customary to leave the bag outside the door and let anyone entering, kick or shake the bag. This occasional motion assisted the culturing process. Kefir grains have been passed down for generations.

What Is Milk Kefir?

To understand how milk is transformed into Kefir it is beneficial to understand the culturing (or fermenting) process. Adding bacteria in the form of lactic acid and yeast to cow's milk or goat's milk can begin the fermentation process. The bacteria then consume the sugar in the milk, and, in turn, the bacteria grow and reproduce. Yeast, a microscopic fungus that reproduces by budding, is capable of converting sugar into alcohol and carbon dioxide. The fermentation process increases the shelf life of the product, enhances the taste, and improves the digestibility.

During this transformation, kefir becomes a friend even to many who may be lactose intolerant because the good bacteria and yeast living in a symbiotic relationship held together in a rubbery gelatinous texture consume the lactose (milk sugar) when added to animal milk. As these living grains actively consume the lactose, they begin to grow and reproduce. This process breaks down the milk so it is easier to digest. As the yeast assists the bacteria it releases carbon dioxide giving the milk an effervescent characteristic. This process takes from **12** to **24** hours. The end result is a refreshing near lactose-free milk kefir with an abundance of beneficial bacteria. The milk thickens somewhat during the process as the lactose is consumed. It should be creamy, like a drinkable yogurt. The higher the fat content of the milk the creamier the kefir will be. After pouring the kefir through a plastic strainer into a clean transparent glass jar or clean, clear food-safe plastic container and collecting the kefir grains in the strainer, you can start the process over again with fresh milk and put it in a quiet, happy place. The kefir you have made can be consumed plain right away, or you might like to chill it to thicken it a bit. Your kefir also can be added to a smoothie or to any number of recipes you plan to prepare.

What Are the Health Benefits of Kefir? Let's Review a Few

Milk kefir has been a popular beverage in Eastern Europe for quite a long time. Currently, people in the United States and other countries are interested in kefir especially as more and more people are recognizing the benefits from Mother Nature's wholesome foods and some of the smart health habits our ancestors appreciated. In my opinion, homemade kefir is one of the healthiest foods we can add to our diets because—for some people—it can be a miracle and can change lives for the better.

At the core of our health is our digestive system. I believe that "Good health begins in the gut." If we do not have an optimum digestive system, we are more prone to a whole host of health problems. Almost 80% of our immune system resides in the walls of the intestines. Gut flora plays a key role in absorbing vital nutrients, as well. Many of today's food choices are nutrient deficient. So, some people turn to food supplements for nutrients, but unless your gut is working optimally, the nutrients needed may not be absorbed.

Balances Gut Flora for Better Overall Health and Helps Halt Sugar Cravings

Even if your digestive system is working well, antibiotics can disturb the delicate balance. So, keep in mind that if you ever must take antibiotics, milk kefir can help your body get back into balance. Because antibiotics can wreak havoc on the gut flora, it is crucial to repopulate the gut flora to prevent the overgrowth of *Candida albicans* yeast that normally is present but in small amounts when the body is balanced. Kefir helps to keep your microbiome happy. Kefir reduces sugar cravings because the healthy milk kefir bacteria consumes sugar and keeps *Candida* in check. With sugar load reduced, the feast is over, and the cravings for sugar and carbs can be conquered.

Appears to Foster Optimum Digestion, Calm Allergies, and More

Kefir helps to break down food so it is much easier to digest. Kefir can be the strongest natural remedy against allergies, particularly food sensitivities. Food sensitivities are believed by some to occur when the body has a hard time digesting a particularly offending food. Logically, if you can digest your properly combined foods well, then the gut can use the foods you eat with much more ease. Nutrients are bioavailable. So, the first issue that comes to mind is that kefir can be enormously helpful to those who cannot drink milk, even wholesome grassfed dairy, because the kefir itself consumes the lactose (milk sugar) and transforms the milk into kefir. Especially, when kefir helps to get the gut flora better balanced, then potentially you can get better and better, and if you consume kefir on a regular basis you maintain a healthy balance of gut flora happily working to help keep you healthy.

In their study, "Kefir improves lactose digestion and tolerance in adults with lactose maldigestion," in the May 2003 issue of *Journal of the American Dietetic Association*, Steven R. Hertzler and Shannon M. Clancy concluded that kefir enhanced lactose digestion and tolerance so that perhaps it can play a role in conquering "lactose intolerance," but they advised that other studies are warranted.

In "Milk kefir: nutritional, microbiological and health benefits," that appeared in *Nutrition Research Review*, February 2017, Damania D. Rosa and team not only speak of kefir as having been "reported historically" for its "great potential" to promote health, but also as being "safe" and "inexpensive" and made with ease in home kitchens. They point out that when kefir has been consumed regularly, milk kefir has helped improve digestion.

Rosa and team also note—antibacterial activity, antioxidant support, "anti-carcinogenic activity," anti-inflammatory boost, the good effect on blood sugar and on blood pressure—additional purported stellar qualities of kefir. This research team points out that a large number of kefir studies have been done on animals or in vitro. To understand more fully the

beauty of milk kefir when consumed consistently, they look into how it supports "human and animal health." Read their materials to learn more.

Plays a Role in Boosting the Healing of Wounds, Supporting the Immune System, and More

Similarly, in May 2016, in their article, "The Microbiota and Health Promoting Characteristics of the Fermented Beverage Kefir," presented in *Frontiers in Microbiology*, Benjamin C.T. Bourrie, Benjamin P. Willing, and Paul D. Cotter noted that kefir has been credited with creating a cascade of health benefits. For example, they purport that it soothes allergy and asthma, helps metabolize cholesterol, fights microbes, suppresses tumors, and speeds the healing of injuries.

In the September 2014 issue of *Probiotics and Antimicrobial Proteins*, Barbara Nielsen, G. Candan Gürakan, and Gülhan Unlü also noted that the role kefir plays in "wound therapy" shows promise among other health issues.

Appears To Be Beneficial in Preventing or Treating Cancer

In *Archives of Iranian Medicine* in their December 2015 article, "Kefir and Cancer: A Systematic Review of Literatures," Nahid Rafie, Sahar Golpour Hamedani, Reza Ghiasvand, and Marya Miraghajani report that "kefir may be associated with cancer prevention and … has beneficial effects in cancer treatment." They explain that "peptides, polysaccharides, and sphingolipids" may afford the protection.

Detoxifies the Body, Enhances Immunity and More

On his website, in his "**7 Kefir Nutrition Facts & Benefits**," Joshua Axe, MD, presents a graphic summary of the enormous number of medicinal benefits that kefir gives to those who consume kefir on a daily basis. Axe enumerates that kefir helps correct lactose intolerance, helps detoxify the body, enhances immunity, works to correct IBS and IBD, and soothes asthma and allergies to name just a few, and he gives attribution to 11 sources, only one overlapping with the sources included in this book—showing the high interest in kefir as a research subject.

Makes You Wonder What Else Kefir Can Do

Sounds too good to be true. Right? Well, here is my simple explanation to all these proposed health benefits. Our bodies are amazing masterpieces designed to protect and heal themselves given the right environment. In our world today, though, we are being bombarded with toxins, and free radicals are accumulating causing damage to our health. Probably, our digestive system—the digestive tract, the liver, gall bladder, and pancreas—may be the most overworked organs.

Like I said in the Introduction regarding the health benefits of kefir, "Good health begins in the gut." Nourishing the gut microbiome with nutrient-packed foods from Mother Nature helps keep a healthy gut that produces vitamins, maintains a strong immune system, nurtures and balances its flora, and even bolsters emotional resilience.

Fortified and more balanced, our bodies can begin to work to heal other areas of the body, as well. Some propose that it's a little like peeling an onion. Sometimes the most recent health problem that has arisen will be attended to first. Then other health problems will be addressed as if in queue—one by one—until the one that first manifested finally is resolved.

Makes perfect sense. Right? So when folks claim that kefir has helped them heal quicker from wounds or cleared up their skin problems it seems perfectly logical now. Helping one area of the body heal can help another area and another. So drink up and spread the word! You can find other health benefits of particular interest to you with just a few moments of searching the web.

Instructions: So How Do I Make Milk Kefir?

If this is your first experience with making Milk Kefir, this book will help you to prepare delicious, nutritious Milk Kefir to suit your taste. If you are a kefir-making expert, then the information shared in this book can remind you of why your milk kefir making works so well for you. Caring for your hardworking milk kefir grains is not hard, but there are a few aspects you need to be aware of to make sure you keep your grains happy and healthy. Not only will I outline your steps to successful kefir making, but also I will explain why. Knowing the "Why?" will help you understand and make sense of the process. Understanding more fully will prevent you from overlooking important steps and crucial precautions. Keep in mind, though, these instructions and tips are from my years of experience. I certainly do *not* claim to be all knowing. My goal is to help your kefir-making experience to be not only successful but also beneficial because milk kefir just may turn out to be a best friend for your better health.

Truly, culturing milk with kefir grains and keeping the grains happy is not difficult. All the grains need is lactose (milk sugar), and they, potentially, will live and multiply forever. What I find people have difficulty with is fine-tuning the process to meet their expectations or liking. I provide two sets of instructions. The first will be simple and straightforward. Mainly, the first set includes rules that must be adhered to if you want your milk kefir-making experience to be pleasant. The second set featuring in-depth instructions explains why the outlined steps help with your success to make great tasting kefir with a smooth, creamy consistency and a pleasant flavor.

Important Precautions to Keep Your Kefir Grains Healthy

>>>>> FOLLOWING THESE HINTS CAN KEEP YOUR KEFIR GRAINS HEALTHY! <<<<<

- ☐ Always use only clean and clear glass or transparent plastic containers, clean plastic or wooden spoons, and clean plastic or Nylon strainers.
- ☐ Always keep all the utensils clean and dry them well.
- ☐ Never let the kefir grains come in contact with chlorinated water.
- ☐ Never subject the milk kefir grains to freezing temperatures unless storing them properly. If you would like to take a break you may place them in the fridge, but be certain to put them in plenty of milk during that time. Also, *set a reminder to give them fresh milk again in about seven days.*
- Never subject the grains to temperatures above 120°F.
- ☐ Never let the kefir grains come in contact with metal *except for stainless steel.*
- ☐ Never put the kefir grains in direct sunlight.

>>> FAILURE TO FOLLOW THESE INSTRUCTIONS MAY HARM THE GRAINS! <<<

Pampered Organic Milk Kefir Grains from Thomas Egbert. Photo by Linda Davis-Kyle © 2017.

The Simple Instructions

When you receive your batch of milk kefir grains, **(1)** simply open the pouch, **(2)** remove the milk kefir grains from their protective container, **(3)** put the kefir grains into a transparent glass jar, and **(4)** cover them with about a cup of milk. **(5)** Let them soak in the milk for about **24** hours. **(6)** Then strain the kefir grains out, discard the milk, and give the kefir grains a fresh cup of milk. **(7)** Let them sit undisturbed for around **24** hours. **(8)** As the **24** hour approaches, check to see if the milk has been cultured. When swirled gently, the kefir will appear thicker than milk.

This batch may be ok to consume, but it may or may not be to your liking just yet. Use common sense before consuming. As the grains grow and get stronger, you will need to add more milk or take some grains away. Their strength and the season will determine the ratio of grains to milk. Start with one cup of milk and adjust from there. As long as you feed them lactose they will be happy campers.

Your living milk kefir grains ready to team up for your good health.
Photo by Linda Davis-Kyle © 2017.

Comprehensive Milk Kefir Instructions

Kitchen Tools You Will Need

There are a few tools that are necessary for you to give the best environment to the milk kefir grains and to produce great tasting kefir. You already may have these in your kitchen. If not, your local super market will have them. It is up to you if you would like to modify the list as long as you are abiding by the above precautions. An image of the kind of tools I use follows.

1. A Good Strainer: I like to use a fine plastic or Nylon mesh strainer. Stainless steel will work, *but other metals should be avoided*. Other metals can change the balance of the bacteria and yeast. I prefer a fine plastic or Nylon mesh strainer because sometimes you need to break up the curds and push them through the strainer with a plastic or wooden spoon. Doing this with a stainless steel strainer can be a little rough on the kefir grains.

2. A Large Bowl with Easy Pouring: It always works best when you have an easy transfer method to help avoid messy spills. Remember, the **goal** is to develop an easy routine that you can implement. The easier your routine, the more likely you will continue to enjoy making nutritious fresh milk kefir.

3. A Transparent Glass Mason Jar: In addition to taste testing for completion, it is good to be able to see the progress of the culture to prevent over fermenting. A transparent food-safe plastic container can work, too, but I prefer glass.

4. A Breathable Lid: Many people like to cover the jar with a coffee filter that allows the gas that is produced during fermentation to escape and to secure the filter with a rubber band. I like to use a plastic Mason jar lid instead. I just *do not tighten* the lid. I *do close the jar well enough* to keep any fruit flies or other insect intruders from entering. You can purchase plastic Mason lids at your local store or online. I *never* use the metal lids that come with the jars because they can rust.

Some tools you will need are a strainer, a transparent glass jar, a lid that allows the culture to breathe, a bowl with pouring spout, and a slotted spoon. Photo by Linda Davis-Kyle © 2017.

An Important Food for Milk Kefir Grains

Regular Pasteurized Whole Milk: This recommendation relates specifically for the reviving period. You may use other milks after several fermentations, but for the first couple of batches I have found that pasteurized whole milk works best and maximizes the strength of the kefir grains. It works best for reviving the grains. If you have only raw milk that is ok, but raw milk does have naturally occurring bacteria that can compete with the kefir grains for the their food—the milk sugar.

Detailed Steps with Illustrations

1. When you receive your milk kefir grains, open their little thermal pouch, take the milk kefir grains out of their protective container, and put the kefir grains into a transparent glassjar.

2. Cover the milk kefir grains with about one cup of regular pasteurized whole milk. They are accustomed to whole milk because that is what I have been feeding them. It has plenty of lactose (milk sugar) that they will consume to gain their strength. Raw milk is not recommended, but isn't forbidden, during this time. To reiterate, raw milk already has friendly bacteria and can compete with the grains for the lactose while reactivating. Plus, the first few batches may not turn out the best so we do not want to waste the good expensive raw milk during this time. After the kefir grains have regained their strength, you may use any other milk that you like that contains lactose. Later I will talk about using nondairy milks.

Welcoming your robust milk kefir grains with fresh milk into a clean transparent glass jar.
Photo by Linda Davis-Kyle © 2017.

3. Keep the grains in the cup of milk for about **24** hours.

4. When Step 3 is finished, strain the kefir from the grains, and start the process over by adding the grains to a new supply of fresh milk in a clean glass jar. It typically takes 1 to 3 days of this routine to get a good consistency with the kefir and to get the grains back to normal strength. You do not need to rinse the grains, and rarely do, which I will go over later on in this eBook. However, you do not want too much kefir that sticks to the grains to transfer to your next ferment. Some mistakenly think the formed curds are grains, they are not.

Milk kefir grains showing curds while straining indicating the grains are activating.
Photo by Thomas Egbert © 2013.

5. When the grains have regained their strength (usually within a week's time) you will be able to make two to six cups of kefir a day depending on your ferment time and your preference. Culturing kefir is a matter of balance. Depending on the strength, activity of the grains, and temperature, a ratio of 1/8 (one part grains to eight parts milk) or 1/50 (one part grains to 50 parts milk) is typical. I know that is a big range, so experiment to find what works best for you. Regardless of the quantity of kefir grains you purchased, the same applies. Start with one cup of milk. As you reactivate them, and as they grow and gain strength, adjust from there. If you ordered more than one tablespoonful, just keep in mind you may have to adjust the milk sooner.

Important Tip: If your kefir is separating with the curds on top and the clear whey on the bottom *before* the **24**-hour mark, *then you need to use more milk the next ferment*. If all of the milk has *not cultured by* the **24**-hour mark, *then you need to use less milk during the next ferment*. We invite you to watch our helpful two-and- one-half minute **video** "Milk Kefir Time-Lapse 36 Hours" that shows you the different stages the milk goes through and when the kefir is ready.

Soon your Organic Milk Kefir Grains will double their population.
Photo by Linda Davis-Kyle © 2017.

In their article, "Kefir and health: a contemporary perspective," in *Critical Review in Food Science and Nutrition*, 2013, Zaheer Ahmed et al. succinctly suggest that "… kefir begins a new dawn of food…."

Pictured here, you can see plastic lids on a first fermentation jar and a second fermentation jar, but the lids are *not* tightened firmly to allow gas to escape. It is good to get into the habit of putting lids on with a gentle twist to close ***lightly*** but ***not tightly***. But to prevent a problem, just ***remember to pick up the jar by the body of the jar next time***, **not by the lid.**

You even can do a second fermentation, if you like.
Photo by Linda Davis-Kyle © 2017.

Dictionaries refer to "secondary fermentations" as adding sweetener to wine or champagne to make it bubbly. Whether you use the dictionary term or call it a "second fermentation" or a "second ferment," with kefir, the process is simple. You merely add the kefir produced from a first fermentation or first ferment to a clean glass jar and add a tiny piece of fruit or other food of your choice and let it culture for a few hours making it more nutrient-filled. Some kefir lovers find it even more delicious. Watch to make sure not to over ferment it. In fact, you may want to *put your Secondary Ferment in the fridge* instead of out on the counter to prevent the separation of the curds and whey, unless that is the result you desire. Because of the separation risk we always chill our kefir in the fridge. Even without the grains the kefir will continue to ferment and become more pungent and cause separation issues. For that reason we always like to chill our finished kefir in the fridge so slow that continued fermentation and prevent the mass separation issue. If the kefir separates it is still perfectly fine to consume but the texture will become a little gritty or soupy.

Meanwhile, you put your robust and hungry organic milk kefir grains that you collected from the first ferment into their own clean glass jar with their anticipated fare of fresh milk to start their daily chores happily.

Tips, Tricks & FAQs

I use whole milk. You may use reduced fat 2% milk, if you choose, but I recommend whole milk because it will give you a much creamier consistency, and it is loaded with beneficial nutrients for you and the grains. You don't need to worry about the higher fat content of whole milk. The kefir grains will break down the milk and make it very easy to digest. As the grains grow, curds will start to form very quickly. This phenomenon is perfectly natural. Before straining your kefir you can give it a vigorous stir to help break up the curds. When straining the kefir you also can work your spoon around the Nylon strainer to homogenize the fresh milk kefir a bit, then put it in the fridge to chill and thicken more.

The Most Commonly Asked Questions I Receive

Can I take a break from making kefir?

There are many reasons you may want to take a break. You may want to rest from the routine or maybe travel. The easiest way to take a short break is to put the grains in a fair amount of milk and store them in the refrigerator. When the temperature drops, the grains will consume the lactose at a much slower rate. I would give them plenty of milk and store them in the fridge for only about a week. I have been able to store milk kefir grains in spring water in the fridge for about a month. You would want to rinse and clean them carefully before soaking them in spring water. A Mason jar with a plastic lid keeps them well in the fridge until you are ready to use them again. Another way to store them is to dry and freeze them. I do *not* recommend freezing them, but it is possible. You need to rinse the grains and dry them on a towel. Then you can put them in a freezer bag and add some powdered milk to them. I have read that frozen milk kefir grains can be stored for a year or more. Reviving them can be difficult. I would much rather just order some new ones than to go through the hassle, but to each his own.

Which other milks can I use?

There is only one hard rule. Milk Kefir Grains must have lactose (milk sugar) to survive. As long as you give them lactose, they will be happy. They can consume other sugars, but they need lactose to stay alive. Milk Kefir Grains can be used repeatedly in coconut milk, but *they should be returned to cow's or goat's milk after a few batches to revitalize them*. Canned coconut milk should be used. Most coconut milks in cartons are too highly processed. I also would stay away from other nut milks and soymilk. If you want to use nut milks, it's a one-time ferment. The grains do *not* do well after they have been in almond milk or any other nut milks.

As far as cow's milk you may use any kind you like. I would stay away from non-fat, though. It certainly won't hurt the grains, but the consistency or thickness will not be great. I also would stay away from organic milk unless you can find one that is not ultra-pasteurized. I refer to "ultra-pasteurized milk" as "ultra-dead." Many grocery stores do not sell organic milk as quickly so they prefer to sell ultra-pasteurized because it has a longer shelf life. Raw milk is certainly one of the best to use. It has naturally good bacteria in it already, so if you have access to raw milk and you can afford it, it's a very good choice after the reviving period.

Tip: When transitioning to other milks it may take a couple batches for the grains to get acclimated to their new environment. So patience is the key.

If there are bubbles, is the kefir ok?

When fermenting anything CO_2 is produced that needs to be released. That is the reason it is advisable *not* to tighten a lid too tightly when fermenting the milk. For the initial ferment that is definitely what I recommend. After straining the milk kefir, though, I do like to tighten the lid before putting it in the refrigerator to chill. As the kefir continues to ferment, the CO_2 that cannot be released creates a slightly effervescent effect that I enjoy as do many others.

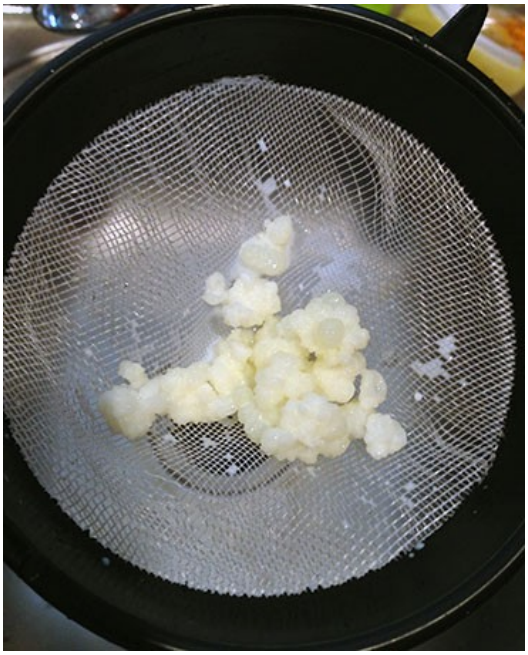
If slime is present, is it a problem?

It is good if the kefir grains are slimy. The slime is called "Kefiran." It is the friendly, thriving bacteria. However, if they do not appear to be very slimy you do not need to be worried. The slime likes to hide inside the grains. But if you feel you need to correct this there is a very easy way to do it. Double the amount of milk you are using, and let it ferment a little longer. This simple change will allow the friendly bacteria to build up. Using raw milk can help, too, because it already has the good bacteria in it. The longer the kefir ferments, the more alcohol will also be present. Don't be alarmed. Kefir has only about 2% alcohol or less. It is important for the kefir grains to have alcohol to produce more kefiran, and the best temperature to produce more kefiran is between 71-76°F.

How can I tell if my grains are living or if they have died?

During Step 3 of the reactivation and the 24-hour culturing process, when you strain the kefir from the grains there should be thicker milk or curds that is sticking to them. Forming curds is a good sign and a key indicator that the milk kefir grains are living. On the other hand, when you strain the milk and the milk just runs through and your grains are completely clean then this is cause for concern. If this still is happening after the third or fourth batch, then it is probably safe to assume the milk kefir grains have gone to kefir heaven. The photos on the next page will help to illustrate.

I have personally revived grains that have spent more than eight weeks in the postal system. Patience is important. All you need to see is the "curds clue" that something is going on with them to keep you trying to revive them.



Grains on the left are alive and active. The grains on the right side are dead.
Photos by Thomas Egbert © 2013.

Another way to tell if your grains are doing anything is to see if the milk has changed at all at the end of the **24**-hour culturing process. If there is any change to the milk ***visually***, then they are working. If you put a jar of just plain milk on the counter and leave it for 24 hours, then check it, the milk would be visually the same. It may smell a little, but it will have the same consistency and the same look. I have personally done this experiment to see a comparison.

How resilient are kefir grains?

Many have come to believe that the kefir grains are very fragile and I have found the opposite to be true. Think about it this way. Even though the kefir grains are made up of *good* bacteria and yeasts they are still bacteria and yeast. If you want to sterilize something what would you do? You would either use a chemical like bleach or boil it. The same applies to kefir grains. We have tested them in a blender, in 120°F water, in the freezer without properly drying them, rinsing them with tap water and without food (lactose) for 8 weeks and each time the grains have sprung back to life when giving fresh milk. This is not to say they are invincible or that you should not try and take great care of them. Doing any of these things may alter their balance and they may not always revive. This is just to give you piece of mind if you accidently get some tap water on them or drop them on the floor. ☺

My kefir is not very thick. What can I do? Making good kefir is a matter of balance. The problem is the milk to grain ratio. As the culturing advances, the curds start to form on the top, and the whey begins to make its way to the bottom. You do *not* want complete separation before the 24-hour mark. The image to the right shows milk that has been over cultured. Think of curds and whey somewhat like oil and water. They cannot be mixed back together once they separate. The kefir will be chunky, grainy, and appear to be thin. It also is hard to strain the curds away from the grains. So if you are getting separation before the 24-hour mark, **then for your next fermentation**, you ***either*** need to add more milk ***or*** remove some grains. If your milk is not cultured fully before the 24-hour mark, you need to use less milk.

Tip: Before you begin to strain off the kefir grains, give the solution a vigorous stir. This action will help to break up the curds, and they will be easier to strain. Using a fine plastic or Nylon mesh strainer also helps to break up the curds as you work your spoon around, and it creates a homogenizing effect. Chilling your kefir also will help it thicken. Keep in mind, your milk kefir never will be as thick as yogurt. It will be more like a drinkable yogurt. If your kefir separates, just shake it up. This separation is a natural occurrence. Shaking it before consuming or making a smoothie is all you need to do. Using whole milk is best to achieve creamy kefir. You can **potentially** culture a quart of milk with just a teaspoon of grains. If you are getting complete separation before **24** hours, then try using more milk the next round. I like to increase or decrease the amount of milk I use by 1 cup at a time. If it has not cultured in **24** hours, try fermenting the milk for **36** hours. You may get the results you would like. Just make sure that however long you culture your milk that it does *not* separate before you decide to strain it, or you will *not* get the thick consistency you desire. Just know that over fermentation doesn't necessarily cause harm to the grains, but the consistency is *not* very creamy, and the kefir becomes more pungent. We invite you to watch our helpful 10-minute **video** "How to Make Thick Milk Kefir." Important Tip: To keep from over activating the yeast in the milk kefir grains and **to help make your milk kefir thick and creamy**, ***stir*** your whole milk and kefir grains ***only at the startup*** of the fermenting process **and** ***at the end*** when you are about to separate your grains from the kefir.

How long will my kefir be good?

In theory the kefir can last as long as you want. In my personal experience, I have kept my kefir for up to two weeks in the fridge. I have only do it for at most two weeks. Remember that the long you keep it the stronger it will become. Use your own discretion.

What can be done about the unpleasant yeast taste or sour taste?

The preferences of kefir lovers vary when it comes to culturing. That is the beauty of making kefir. You can make it exactly as you desire. When using a small number of grains to milk the kefir will be tart and have a clean sourness. When you add a large number of grains to milk your ferment will be shorter and may be milder, but the yeast can be stronger, as well. Most people like to have a balance between the two. Friendly bacteria need more time to multiply. I recommend fermenting the full 24 hours. However, this is entirely up to you. I want to emphasize, though, that *it is important to avoid repeated over culturing*. Don't be upset if it happens every once in a while, but you will see a change with repeated offense. When over culturing, the kefir becomes more acidic, and over acidity isn't optimal for the grains and certain microbes can be harmed. When some of the microbes are harmed, the yeast can become too strong and produce an undesirable kefir. Many people do not like the presence of the yeast, but it's part of what makes up kefir grains. What you can do is chill the finished kefir in the fridge for an additional day. The yeast will dissipate, and the kefir will be more pleasant. Even though making kefir is a very simple process, there also is an art to it. Be patient, enjoy the process, and have fun learning how to make the type of kefir you enjoy.

All of a sudden my kefir isn't turning out as it did in the past. What can I do?

Sometimes the curds that stick to the grains and or the whey can become much too acidic and disrupt the culturing process. A simple wash may be in order. Take a clean bowl and pour in some fresh filtered water. Never use tap water! Then dump your grains into the bowl. Then gently swish them around to clean them. You even may need to gently rub them with your fingers to remove any leftover milk crust that sometimes builds up on them. Finally, strain off the water and start the culturing process again. It's that simple. This wash up does not need to be done frequently, though. In fact, I would do this wash only as a last resort. Repeated rinsing can disrupt the balance of the yeast and bacteria.

What are the normal shapes and sizes of kefir grains?

Kefir grains come in many shapes and sizes. Many look like small, gelatinous cauliflower balls, but as they grow they can become all sorts of shapes and sizes. They can be stringy or flat even. As the seasons change and the temperature changes so do the grains. I have seen flat kefir grains over a foot long. So don't be alarmed. It's all natural.

How much should I consume?

I recommend, in the beginning, to drink it every day. Enjoy milk kefir in the morning and at night, if possible, for a week, or two weeks, if you can. One to two cups is fine. This amount will help begin the cleansing process, and it will help the good bacteria begin to colonize in your system and to improve your microenvironment. Then, two to three times a week could be sufficient, but consuming it every day is optimal.

What is the probiotic count of kefir?

A recent University of Florida microbiology class studied this and came up with some really awesome results. They found that 1 tablespoon of kefir had 150 billion CFU. No probiotic pill on the market can even compete.

Can I drink too much?

Generally, no. One smart rule, of course, is "Everything in moderation."

What can I do with my extra grains?

I suggest eating them or adding them to a smoothie. The grains are very beneficial for you. You can also give them to your pets or friends and family.

How fast do the kefir grains grow?

The perfect media that will maximize their growth is whole milk and an environment temperature of about 71-77°F. Their growth can range from 5-10% each day. There are many variables that can play into their growth, so don't be alarmed if they take longer. Not all grains will grow the same as well. Some grow bigger; some grow flat, some stay small and produce offspring. If you want to stimulate more growth you may want to rinse them and pull the bigger grains apart with your fingers.

If there are floating grains are they ok?

It is very natural for the grains to float. Remember they are giving off CO_2 and many times air pockets form around them before releasing the gas. Some stay at the bottom, as well. It just all depends. Just think of the ones that are floating as over achievers. ☺

29 Simple Milk Kefir Recipes

FusionTeas.com

Thickened Kefir Cream

Ingredients:

- Milk Kefir
- White cotton, linen, or silk cloth with a tight weave

Pour the Milk Kefir into the clean tight-weave towel. Avoid cheesecloth for this recipe. Cheesecloth is not woven tightly enough to work properly. Hang above a bowl or jar and allow the whey to drain off for **2-4** hours depending on the thickness desired (generally the consistency of yogurt or sour cream).

Kefir Cheese

Ingredients:

- Milk Kefir
- White cotton, linen, or silk cloth with a tight weave
- Fresh or Dried Herbs (optional)

Pour the Milk Kefir into the tight-weave towel. Hang above a bowl or jar and allow the whey to drain off from **6-12** hours depending upon the kind of cheese you are making.

Soft Spreadable Cheese: Drain for **6-12** hours depending on the consistency desired.

Herbed Kefir Cheese: Combine the herbs and soft cheese. Serve as a cream cheese and spread on crackers, bread, or dip chips of your choice.

Kefir Cream Cheese: Drain for **12** hours or more depending on the consistency desired.

Hard Cheese: Drain for **12** hours or more. Then wrap the cheese in cheesecloth (it works for hard cheese) and place in a colander. Weight the cheese down to press out more whey. Use a clean plate with canned food on top as weights. Start with minimal weight increasing the amount of weight every few hours until the cheese stops dripping.

Kefir Whey

Using the draining method used for making **Thickened Kefir Cream** or **Kefir Cheese**, collect the Whey from the bottom of the receiving bowl or jar. You can drain it for up to **24** hours. The longer the milk kefir drains the more whey it will produce and the thicker the kefir will become. Use the resulting kefir instead of yogurt, spreadable cheese, or cream cheese in recipes depending on the finished consistency.

Kefir Whey also works well for soaking grains or when culturing vegetables to make sauerkraut or kimchis, pickles, or when making lacto-fermented condiments and salad dressings.

Kefir Sour Cream

Make Kefir Cream with Heavy Whipping Cream. Kefir Sour Cream is a great probiotic substitute for Crème Fraiche or conventional Sour Cream.

Kefir Butter

Ingredients:

- Kefir Cream

Remove the cream from the fridge and allow it to come to room temperature. If using a Kitchen Aid Mixer, place the bowl in the freezer for 10-15 minutes prior to making the butter. Place the cream in the bowl and turn the mixer on as high as you can without splattering the cream. Watch the mixture carefully. Within a minute or two, the cream will have thickened a bit, and you should be able to increase the mixer speed. Continue to watch the cream carefully because a cold bowl and room temperature cream should set to butter quickly. Once this happens, it is very easy to spray the remaining liquid (traditional buttermilk) all over the kitchen ***so be sure to turn down the mixer when needed.*** Once chunks of butter form, slow the mixture down to allow the chunks to come together.

If making butter by hand, simply pour the pint of cream into a quart size jar with a lid. Shake the cream vigorously until small balls of butter form. Then slow down the shaking so the balls of butter can clump together.

Remove the butter to a small bowl (or just place it in your clean hands). Wash the butter with filtered water, pressing out any remaining buttermilk with a spoon. When the water runs clear, the butter should be free of buttermilk. This portion of the process is very important because ***leaving buttermilk in the butter will cause the butter to spoil quickly.***
Add Salt to the butter, and add herbs, if desired.
Add the butter to a plastic container or wax paper. Store in the fridge or on the countertop. (Remember, though, butter will spoil at room temperature within a few days, ***so use it quickly***).

Sweet Milk Kefir

Ingredients:

- 1 cup Milk Kefir
- Sweetener of your choice (Organic Sugar, Raw Honey or Agave, Maple Syrup, Lo Han) I like Maple Syrup the best.
- Blend together all the Coconut Milk
- Milk Kefir Grains

Coconut Milk Kefir

Ingredients:

Add the Milk Kefir Grains to the coconut milk and allow the milk to culture for **12-36** hours until the desired consistency and taste is achieved. Remove the kefir grains and place the kefir grains in fresh milk. Milk Kefir Grains can be used repeatedly in coconut milk, but *they should be returned to cow's or goat's milk after a few batches to revitalize them.*

Chocolate or Vanilla Kefir

Ingredients:

- 1 cup Kefir
- ¼ teaspoon Vanilla Extract or 1 Tablespoon Chocolate Syrup
- If using Vanilla Extract, sweetener may be desired

Blend together and serve cold.

Chai Kefir

Ingredients:

- ¼ cup Liquid Chai
- ¾ cup Kefir
- Sweetener, if desired

Blend together and serve over ice.

Creamy Fruit Juice Kefir

Ingredients:

- 1 Tablespoon Grape Juice Concentrate or ¼ cup Grape Juice
- 1 cup Kefir
- Dash of Vanilla Extract (optional)
- Sweetener, if desired

Blend together serve cold.

Apple Compote Kefir Smoothie

Ingredients:

- ¾ cup Apple Compote
- 2 cups Kefir
- Dash of Vanilla Extract
- Dash of Nutmeg
- ¼ Whole Grain Oats

Soak oats in milk to soften. Add all ingredients to a blender and process until smooth. Serve chilled.

Banana Kefir Smoothie

Ingredients:

- 1 cup Kefir
- 1 Banana
- 1 teaspoon Vanilla
- Sweetener (Honey Works Best)

Add ingredients to a blender and process until smooth. Serve chilled or at room temperature. Makes one serving.

PB & B Breakfast Smoothie

Ingredients:

- 1 cup Kefir
- ½ Banana
- 2 Tablespoons Peanut Butter
- Dash of Vanilla
- Sweetener (preferably honey or maple syrup)

Add all ingredients to a blender and process until smooth. Serve chilled. Makes one serving.

Fruit Kefir Smoothie

Ingredients:

- 1 cup Kefir
- ½ cup Frozen Fruit (berries work well)
- ½ Banana
- Frozen Kefir Cubes, if desired

Kefir cubes work well if your fruit is not frozen. Otherwise you may omit. Add all ingredients to a blender and process until smooth. Serve chilled. Makes one serving.

Super Fruit Kefir Smoothie

Ingredients:

- ½ cup Frozen Cranberries
- 2 Tablespoons Frozen Blueberries
- 1-2 teaspoon Lemon Juice (fresh is best)
- ¼ cup Cranberry Juice
- ½ cup Kefir

Add fruit, juice and vanilla to a blender and process until smooth. Blend in kefir and serve chilled or at room temperature. Makes one serving.

Tropical Fruit Kefir Smoothie

Ingredients:

- 1 Frozen Banana
- 1 cup Fresh Pineapple
- 2 Tablespoons Coconut Milk
- ¾ cup Kefir
- Sweetener (preferably Organic Honey)

Add all ingredients to a blender and process until smooth. Best served chilled. Makes 2 servings.

Kefir Ranch Dip

Ingredients:

- ½ cup Strained Kefir (consistency of sour cream or slightly thicker)
- ½ cup Mayonnaise
- 1 teaspoon Dill
- 2 teaspoons Parsley
- ¼ teaspoon Garlic Salt
- ¼ teaspoon Onion Salt
- ¼ teaspoon Pepper, freshly ground

Mix together the strained kefir and mayonnaise. Combine with the other ingredients and mix well. Cover and refrigerate for several hours prior to serving to allow the flavors to meld.

Creamy Kefir Horseradish

Ingredients:

- 1 cup Strained Kefir (consistency of sour cream)
- 8 ounces Cream Cheese, or Kefir Cream Cheese
- 3 Tablespoons Salsa (non-chunky variety)
- 2 Tablespoons Prepared Horseradish
- ½ teaspoon Garlic Salt

Mix together the strained kefir and cream cheese. Combine with the other ingredients and mix well. Cover and refrigerate for several hours prior to serving to allow the flavors to meld.

Kefir Banana Bread

Ingredients:

- 2 cups Organic Sugar
- 2 Eggs
- ½ cup Butter
- 2 cups Whole Wheat Flour
- 3 ½ cups soft ripe Bananas, mashed
- 1 ½ cups Kefir
- 1 ½ teaspoon Baking Soda
- ½ cup Walnuts or Pecans, chopped (optional)

About **12** to **24** hours prior to making bread, mix the flour and kefir together. Cover and allow the flour to soak. Preheat oven to 350°F (176°C). In a large bowl, mix together the sugar, butter, flour, bananas, and nuts. Add the kefir and flour mixture and mix just until blended. Add the baking soda and mix just until blended. Pour into a greased bread pan (generally there will be enough batter for one large bread pan, two medium bread pans, or three small bread pans). Bake until a toothpick inserted comes out clean. (The exact time will vary depending on size of pan and number of pans baking at once).

Kefir Biscuits

Ingredients:

- 2 cups Flour
- ¼ teaspoon Baking Soda
- 1 Tablespoon Baking Powder
- 1 teaspoon Salt
- 6 Tablespoons Butter (very cold)
- ¾ cup Kefir (approximate)

About **12** to **24** hours prior to making biscuits, mix the flour and kefir together. Cover and allow the flour to soak. Preheat the oven to 450°F. Cut the butter into chunks and then work it into the flour/kefir mixture along with the baking soda, baking powder, and salt. Do not over mix. If the mixture is too dry, add a bit more kefir. Turn the dough onto a lightly floured board.

Gently pat the dough to ½-inch thick. Gently patting the dough will yield lighter biscuits than using a rolling pin. Use a round cutter to cut out the biscuits. Place the biscuits on a cookie sheet. If you want biscuits with soft edges (and a higher rise), place the rounds touching each other. If you want biscuits with crusty sides, place the rounds about 1 inch apart. Bake for 10-12 minutes until golden brown. Makes 10 biscuits.

Kefir Sourdough Pizza Crust or Kefir Bread

Ingredients:

- 5 cups All-Purpose Flour
- 1 Tablespoon Organic Sugar or Organic Honey
- 2 teaspoons Salt (or 2 teaspoons Sea Salt)
- 2 Tablespoons Olive Oil
- 1 ¾ to 2 cups Kefir

The Dough: *Makes two to three 13-inch pizzas or two loaves of bread*

Combine all of the dry ingredients in a large mixing bowl and stir vigorously with a wooden spoon. Make a well in the center and add all the liquid ingredients. Combine all dry and wet ingredients in a large mixing bowl and stir vigorously with a wooden spoon (or if using a stand mixer, process in the stir setting for 5 minutes). The dough should be wetter and stickier than your typical bread dough. It should be dry enough that it holds together and pulls away from the side of the bowl when you mix it.

Sourdough Pizza

Divide the dough into three portions for thinner crust or two portions for a thicker crust. Grease two or three pizza pans or baking sheets. On a lightly floured surface, roll each dough portion into a 13-inch circle. Transfer to pans. Cover completely with plastic wrap. Leave undisturbed in a warm place free of drafts for **24** to **48** hours. Leaving it for more than 48 hours makes a more sour pizza.

After **24** to **48** hours, very carefully remove the plastic wrap. Then bake at 275°F (135°C) for 15 minutes. Remove from the oven and spread pizza sauce onto the hot crust. Top with cheese and toppings of your choice. Bake at 375°F (190°C) for 15 minutes more or until bubbly.

Sourdough Bread

Lightly grease and flour 2 loaf pans. Divide the dough into 2 portions. Place the dough in the oiled pans. Cover completely with plastic wrap. Leave undisturbed in a warm place free of drafts for **24** to **48** hours. Leaving it for more than **48** hours makes a more sour bread.

After **24** to **48** hours, very carefully remove the plastic wrap. Bake at 275°F (135°C) for 30 minutes. Cover loosely with foil and bake for 20 more minutes at 375°F (190°C) or until the top is golden brown. Immediately remove bread from pans. Cool on wire racks.

Kefir Blueberry Muffins

Ingredients:

- 2 cups Sifted Flour: White Flour, Whole Wheat Pastry Flour or combination
- ½ cup Organic Sugar
- 1 teaspoon Salt
- ¼ teaspoon Baking Soda
- 2 ¼ teaspoons Baking Powder
- ¼ cup Melted Butter or Coconut Oil
- 1 Egg, beaten
- 1 cup Kefir
- 1 cup Blueberries (frozen or fresh)

About 12 hours prior to baking, combine the flour and kefir. Cover the bowl and allow the flour to soak. When ready to bake muffins, preheat the oven to 425°F. ***Except for the blueberries***, add together all the other ingredients and stir to combine. *Do not over mix.* **Now *gently fold in* the blueberries**. Fill muffin tins 2/3 full. Bake 20 to 25 minutes. Makes 12 muffins.

Kefir Pancakes

Ingredients:

- 2/3 cup Whole Wheat Flour
- ¼ cup Oat Bran
- 1 Tablespoon Cornmeal
- 1 Tablespoon Brown Sugar
- 1 ½ teaspoons Baking Powder
- ¼ teaspoon Baking Soda
- ¼ teaspoon Salt
- 1 cup Kefir
- 2 large eggs, separated
- 2 Tablespoons Oil

About **12** to **24** hours prior to making pancakes, mix the flour and kefir together. Cover and allow the flour to soak. When you are ready to make the pancakes, separate the egg yolks from the egg whites. Mix the egg yolks and oil together. In a separate bowl, beat the egg whites until stiff peaks form. Mix the oat bran, cornmeal, brown sugar, baking powder, and baking soda into the flour and kefir mixture. Stir in the egg yolks and oil mixture. Fold in the egg whites that have been beaten into stiff peaks. Lightly coat a skillet with butter or coconut oil and set over medium heat. When the skillet is hot, cook the pancakes using about ¼ cup batter for each. Cook for about 2 minutes until bubbles start to form. Flip. Cook each side for about 2 minutes until golden brown. Serve with butter, fruit and/or real organic maple syrup. Makes 12 pancakes.

Kefir Chocolate Chip Cookies

Ingredients:

- 2 cups Organic Sugar
- 1 cup Coconut Oil, Palm Shortening or Butter
- 2 Eggs
- 1 ½ cups Kefir
- 2 teaspoons Vanilla Extract
- 4 cups Flour
- 1 teaspoon Salt
- 1 teaspoon Baking Soda
- 1+ cup Chocolate Chips or Chocolate Chunks

About **12** to **24** hours prior to making the cookies, mix the flour and kefir together. Cover and allow the flour to soak. Preheat oven to 375°F (190°C). Cream together the coconut oil, shortening, or butter with the sugar until fluffy. Add the eggs and vanilla. Mix well. Add the flour and kefir mixture. Add the salt and baking soda. Mix just until combined. Stir in the chocolate chips or chocolate chunks. Drop dough onto a greased cookie sheet and bake for about 8 to 10 minutes.

Kefir Chocolate Cake

Ingredients:

- 2½ cups Whole Wheat Flour
- 2 teaspoons Baking Soda - Mix Flour and Baking Soda together in a small bowl.
- 1 cup Vegetable Oil
- 2 cups room temperature Liquid Kefir
- ½ cup Unsweetened Cocoa
- 2¼ cups Raw Sugar
- 3 Eggs
- 1 teaspoon Vanilla
- 1 cup chopped Walnuts

In a large bowl mix well the oil, kefir, cocoa, sugar, eggs, and vanilla. Add the flour mixture just to combine. Do not over mix. The batter will be thin. Add walnuts. Divide into halves. Place each half on its own pan. Preheat oven to 350°F (176°C) and bake about 35 minutes or until cake springs back when lightly touched with your fingertips or when a new toothpick inserted comes out clean. Cool. When **cold,** turn out of pans. Frost with the Kefir Chocolate Frosting recipe that follows. If you freeze your Kefir Brownie Cake, wait until you plan to serve it. Thaw well on clean wire cake racks. Then make the frosting fresh and spread it onto the cake just before serving.

Kefir Chocolate Frosting

Ingredients:

- ¼ cup soft Kefir Cream Cheese
- 3 Tablespoons Cocoa Powder
- 3 Tablespoons Liquid Kefir
- 1 cup Powdered Raw Sugar*
- ½ teaspoon Vanilla

To make powdered

* Raw sugar, place raw sugar in blender and turn on high until white and powdery.

Combine cream cheese, cocoa powder, kefir, and powdered sugar. Beat until smooth. Add vanilla. When your cake has cooled, place one layer on a serving plate and spread with frosting. Top with the remaining layer and spread the frosting on the top and around the sides of your cake. Voilá! Now you have delicious and nutritious Kefir Brownie Cake with Kefir Chocolate Frosting for chocolate lovers and kefir lovers, too.

Coconut Milk Kefir Ice Cream

Ingredients:

- 3 cups Coconut Milk Kefir
- 3-6+ Tablespoons Raw Honey
- 1-3 teaspoons Vanilla Extract

Combine **Coconut Milk Kefir**, raw honey, and vanilla extract and blend well. Place in an ice cream maker and follow the manufacturer's instructions.

Start with a conservative amount of honey and increase the amount to taste. Remember that once the ice cream is frozen, it will be a bit less sweet than the original mixture.

Vanilla or Fruit Kefir Ice Cream

Ingredients:

- 1 cup Milk, well chilled (or half and half, or heavy cream for a smoother texture)
- ¾ cup Organic Sugar or ½ cup Agave or ½ cup or less Lo Han Sweetener (Monk Fruit)
- 2 cups Kefir Cream Cheese, well chilled
- 1-2 teaspoons pure Vanilla extract, to taste
- Fruit of your preference, Cantaloupe or Mango work surprisingly well

In a medium bowl, use a hand mixer or a whisk to combine the milk and sweetener until dissolved. Stir in the **Kefir Cream Cheese** and Vanilla on low speed for 1-2 minutes, until smooth. Pour the mixture into ice cream machine and follow the ice cream machine directions. Or place in the refrigerator freezer for about two hours. The serve and enjoy.

If you are making **Fruit Kefir Ice Cream**, place all the ingredients in a blender first. Blend until smooth. Pour mixture into an ice cream machine and follow the ice cream machine directions. Or place in the freezer for about two hours. Then serve and enjoy!

Cold Avocado and Kefir Soup

Ingredients:

- Avocado — 1 small
- Red Onion — 1 Tablespoon, chopped (¼ small onion)
- Lemon Juice — 1 to 2 Tablespoons
- Cilantro — 2 Tablespoons, chopped
- Kefir — 7 ounces (or more)
- Red Pepper Flakes — ½ teaspoon
- Salt and Pepper to taste

Combine all the ingredients in a food processor.
Process until smooth.
Add more kefir if the soup is too thick.
Add more lemon juice if the kefir is not tart tasting enough.

I hope you enjoy these **Milk Kefir Recipes** and that my recipes motivate and inspire you to experiment and to create your own wonderful recipes for fun and good health.

Conclusion

So now what? It is hoped that if you weren't already excited about making kefir that you are now. Making kefir is all self-motivated. If you decide to go on a kefir-making adventure, then make sure you set yourself up for success. Determine a routine that is easy to follow so that this process is a rewarding pleasure. Enjoy this inexpensive investment in your health and your family's health. Don't fret over your kefir-making practice. You always can take a break and store your healthy kefir grains in the fridge for a bit. Cover them with plenty of milk, and be sure to give them fresh milk every seven days or so. Don't forget them because grains can be your good health's best friend.

Be creative and come up with your own recipes or modify the ones I have shared to suit your taste. If you still have questions, read this eBook again. You just may find your answer. ☺

No. Seriously, if you need to get in touch, please do. I love the fact that I am helping you gain better health and a better quality of life by making sure you have robust kefir grains that can serve you and your family for as long as you give them a happy home. I am grateful not only to be able to supply you with vigorous kefir grains but also to offer useful instructions to help insure your success with your milk kefir grains. Remember, if you do have questions or just need some clarification, you have my business card and you are welcome to call or email me anytime. Cheers!

Another E-Book You Might Enjoy

If you enjoyed my ***Milk Kefir Unleashed***, I think you will enjoy my editor's book, too. She and my family and I send our gratitude and all good wishes for your kefir-making success, your good health, and your happiness.

Organic Fun Foods for Kids & Grownups: *Making Every Day a Celebration with Adventure Foods & Fostering Self-Reliance with Thoughtful Family Activities* (2017), a Kindle book, introduces fun food adventures for bright beginnings, kitchen safety reminders, preventing choking tips, and hints to keep children healthy and trim. It also enumerates some stellar books and movies for families and highlights an abundance of websites focused on organic farmers, organic foods marketers, and others dedicated to bringing Mother Nature's food to you, as well.

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