YIELD

Makes about five gallons, which should fill 53 twelve-ounce bottles.

**INGREDIENTS**

* + 12 to 18 pounds of grade-A honey
  + 4 1/2 gallons of tap or bottled water
  + 8 grams (1/4 ounce) of freeze-dried wine, champagne, or dedicated mead yeast
  + 4 sticks Badia Ceylon cinnamon sticks

**PREPARATION**

1. **Note on equipment:**
   1. Making mead requires essentially the same basic kit necessary to brew beer at home: primary and secondary plastic-bucket fermenters with air locks and spigots, transfer hosing, a bottle-filler tube, heavy bottles, bottle caps, bottle capper, and a bottle brush and washer. You should be able to find these items for approximately $70 total (excluding the bottles) through a home-brewing supplier, such as The Home Brewery. Bottles cost from $6 to $20 per dozen, depending on style. You might instead buy a couple of cases of beer in returnable bottles, drink the beer, and  — after sanitizing them!  — reuse those bottles, for the cost of the deposit.
   2. All your equipment must be sanitized or sterilized before use. Ordinary unscented household bleach does the job fine. Put all the equipment (including the lid and stirring spoons) into the fermentation bucket, fill with water, and add 2 teaspoons of unscented bleach. Let it sit for 30 minutes. Drain the water through the spigot, rinse everything in hot water, and allow to air-dry.
   3. Bring the 4 1/2 gallons of water to a boil. Well water, by the way, should be avoided because of potentially high levels of strong tasting minerals like iron. Boiling should remove harsh chlorine from municipal tap water. If you don't own a pot large enough to hold five gallons of water, boil as much as possible. You will add the remaining water to the fermenter later.
   4. Once the water reaches a boil, remove it from the heat and stir in all of the honey. Do not boil the honey, as it reduces the aromatic quality of the finished mead.
   5. While the honey dissolves in the water, put a cup of lukewarm (90 to 100°F) water into a clean bowl. Sprinkle in the yeast and cover the bowl with plastic wrap. When the honey has been fully dissolved in the water and the pot is cool to the touch (not over 80°F), pour the honey-water into the fermentation bucket and stir in the yeast mixture. Note: Cooling the honey-water should take about half an hour. This process can be accelerated with a so-called sink bath, that is, repeatedly immersing the pot in cold water in a sink or basin.
   6. If you have not already added the full 4 1/2 gallons of water, top it off with the balance in bottled water (or tap water if you're confident of its quality).
   7. Seal the bucket and allow the mixture to ferment for two weeks to one month. The progress of fermentation can judged by monitoring the carbon-dioxide bubbles escaping from the air lock: When they drop to one bubble every sixty seconds, fermentation has nearly concluded. Note that is only an issue during this primary fermentation; secondary fermentation has more to do with aging and mellowing and hence is more flexible. When primary fermentation has subsided, siphon the mead over to your secondary fermentation bucket and seal it. Allow one to four months aging time. Do not open the fermenter, as this risks contaminating the mead.
   8. When you decide it has matured enough (and the mead has cleared), you will want to siphon it into sterilized bottles and cap them. Follow the same procedure as you would for home-brewed beer. My book Beer for Dummies has a detailed guide in its Chapter Ten, or consult the web site of the American Homebrewers Association.
   9. Keep in mind that this is a recipe for still (i.e., non-carbonated) mead.
   10. Mead typically improves with age, so the longer you can wait to open the bottles, the better.

# **Traditional Mead**

06 January 2013 by [meadist](https://meadist.com/author/meadist/) in [Making Mead](https://meadist.com/category/making-mead/) [Mead Recipes](https://meadist.com/category/making-mead/mead-recipes/) - [31 Comments](https://meadist.com/making-mead/mead-recipes/traditional-mead/#comments)



The simplest Mead to make, often called a Show Mead, contains nothing more than Honey, water and yeast.

### **Ingredients**

* 18 Cups Honey (13.5 lbs)
* 5 Gallons of Water
* 5 g [Lalvin D-47 Yeast](http://www.amazon.com/gp/product/B0080XSES4/ref=as_li_qf_sp_asin_il_tl?ie=UTF8&camp=1789&creative=9325&creativeASIN=B0080XSES4&linkCode=as2&tag=meadist-20)

### **Directions**

1. Add 4 gallons of **80 degree water** to a 5 gallon carboy or food-grade plastic bucket.
2. Add the **honey** while stirring, swirling, or shaking until all honey is dissolved and the liquid is aerated.
3. Add the **yeast**to 2 cups of warm water to re-hydrate, then add to the fermenter.
4. Seal carboy with bung and airlock and store in a dark place at a temperature of about 70 degrees.
5. After about 2 weeks, when initial fermentation has stopped, add the remaining gallon of water to the carboy to limit the amount of headspace in the carboy to avoid oxidation.
6. After 4 weeks, re-rack to another 5 gallon carboy to clarify the mead.
7. Store in a dry, dark space at temperature of 59 to 68 degrees Fahrenheit.
8. Bottle after 8 months, then let age in the bottle for another 4 months.

Do you have a good easy mead recipe you like?

level 2

[**Moon\_Cake\_Factory**](https://www.reddit.com/user/Moon_Cake_Factory/)

11 points·[4 days ago](https://www.reddit.com/r/mead/comments/hfcon4/been_making_mead_for_a_few_years_but_recently/fvx1bnv/)

I keep my recipes simple with few ingredients; having studied science I like to modify one variable at a time.

For example this blueberry mead is 1kg frozen blueberries (mushed with a potato masher), 1kg generic honey and 0.5 kg white table sugar per gallon. D47 yeast. Leave lots of headspace, and rack off the blueberries after 1 month. Then usually I forget about it for 6 months, then rack and bottle.

For the ginger mead I followed a similar process, but this batch I used 6oz of chopped ginger. Will likely reduce to 4oz for next batch. Good with a fizz, so add some sugar at bottling.

Other go-to recipes are plain mead, apple juice mead, caspiscumel (favorite) and fig mead. Will try a rhubarb mead this summer, once our rhubarb plant allows another harvest.

level 3

[meddy12](https://www.reddit.com/user/meddy12/)

3 points·[4 days ago](https://www.reddit.com/r/mead/comments/hfcon4/been_making_mead_for_a_few_years_but_recently/fvx1oet/)

That makes a lot of sense.

To clarify, it’s those weights of ingredients, then add one gallon of water?

What is capsicumel? Sounds spicy lol

level 4

[Ravenhorde](https://www.reddit.com/user/Ravenhorde/)

Beginner

3 points·[4 days ago](https://www.reddit.com/r/mead/comments/hfcon4/been_making_mead_for_a_few_years_but_recently/fvxdfd1/)

Yea capsicumel is exactly that, a chilli mead. Depending on which peppers you use it can be quite spicy. Ken Schramm has a whole chapter dedicated to it which helped with my attempt at it.

level 4

[**Moon\_Cake\_Factory**](https://www.reddit.com/user/Moon_Cake_Factory/)

2 points·[4 days ago](https://www.reddit.com/r/mead/comments/hfcon4/been_making_mead_for_a_few_years_but_recently/fvy3d4p/)

Add the ingredients then fill to a gallon.

Yup capiscumel would be with chillis. Really interesting to taste a spicy yet sweet wine. Had to try a few batches with different proportions of chillis to figure out what's a good balance overall, because apparently different people have different tolerance to the spicy compound in chillis?

# **Improve Your Mead with Staggered Nutrient Additions**

July 29, 2014

**[](https://www.homebrewersassociation.org/how-to-brew/improve-mead-staggered-nutrient-additions/)**

The concept is simple: if yeast doesn’t provide the necessary tools and environment to conduct a healthy fermentation, the final mead or beer can be riddled with flaws.

In order to combat this problem, mead nutrient additions can be added to yeast during fermentation that will make for a fast, robust fermentation and lessen the chances of developing off-flavors.

## Why are Nutrients Important?

After yeast is pitched into mead must, it prepares for a period of growth followed by fermentation. Growth refers both to an individual cell and the overall cell population. It is particularly crucial for individual yeast cells to have the proper nutrients available to revitalize cell membranes in order to prepare them for the work ahead.

The presence of nutrients throughout the entire fermentation process is important, even after growth has concluded. If yeast aren’t kept healthy throughout fermentation, then the state of the yeast deteriorates and could cause fermentation to cease prematurely. When this happens, flaws and off-flavors in the final mead occur.

The trouble is that the simple mixture of honey and water is lacking nearly all the essential micronutrients for yeast to flourish. Even when additional ingredients like fruit or a small amount of malt are utilized in a mead recipe, nutrient levels are still generally insufficient to the yeast’s needs.

## Nitrogen & Other Micronutrients

There are a wide array of vitamins, minerals and other nutrients that yeast constantly need in order to stay healthy, grow and metabolize sugars. Without these nutrients, meadmakers run the risk of failed fermentations, under attenuation and off-flavors. Researchers have determined optimal amounts for various chemicals, which you can learn more about in Ken Schramm’s article “[**Optimizing Honey Fermentation**](https://www.homebrewersassociation.org/magazine/ezymurgy/).”

Nitrogen is particularly important throughout the fermentation process, and worth mentioning specifically. It is utilized in the growth stage while the yeast is fortifying its cell membranes, and during the metabolic stage when yeast is converting sugars into alcohol and CO2. Without appropriate levels of nitrogen, fermentation can be prolonged and incomplete.

While nitrogen levels in honey vary from one varietal to the next, it is rare to see more than 150 mg/L of nitrogen in honey, with levels often times coming in much below that. It is said that yeast need nitrogen levels in the range of 300-500 mg/l for quality fermentation, which must be supplemented through nutrient additions.

## Energizers, Nutrients and Blends

The list of nutrients desired by yeast during mead fermentation is rather lengthy, but homebrew suppliers and shops have made it relatively easy to provide yeast with the essentials by offering pre-made blends.

First, if using dry yeast, it is highly recommended to include some sort of nutritional rehydration agent. Dry yeast membranes are typically lacking many of the nutrients needed for fermentation, especially if when pitched into a high-gravity mead must, so it is a good idea to give them some of the essentials right off the bat. Products like Go-Ferm will give the yeast a nice boost during the rehydration process.

Once pitched into the must, the yeast gets right to work on growing before metabolizing sugars, and as mentioned above, nitrogen is extremely important in both these processes. Nitrogen can be purchased in the form of diammonium phosphate (DAP), which not only provides the nitrogen, but also phosphorus that the yeast utilizes.

The miscellaneous nutrients that can be added in addition to nitrogen are typically labeled as “yeast nutrient blends” or “yeast energizer blends.” Fermaid-K is an example of one of these blends. It is important to note that the terms “nutrient” and “energizer” are often used interchangeably in the industry, so be sure to pay close attention to what comprises the blend before purchasing. Using too much of one component, or nutrient can cause its own detectable off-flavor. It is also always recommended to follow the manufacturer’s instructions.

**[](https://www.homebrewersassociation.org/homebrew-recipes/?winners_only=true&utm_source=Internal&utm_medium=banner&utm_campaign=internal_web_banners&utm_content=NHC-V1)**

## Staggered Nutrient Additions

Some recipes will call for all the nutrients to be added at the time when the yeast is first pitched into the must. This will undoubtedly provide the yeast with the essentials from the get-go, but the key to keeping yeast happy is providing them with all the desired nutrients throughout the entirety of the fermentation process. If adding all the nutrients at the beginning, it is very likely that a lot of the nutrients won’t even be utilized before flocculating out. For this reason, it is suggested to stagger the additions of nutrients during fermentation.

The technique of providing nutrients in increments is popularly known as staggered nutrient additions (SNA). The process consists of nutrient doses with periods of off-gassing in between.

Generally speaking, to put together an SNA schedule, determine the total amount of nutrients you want to provide the yeast and then divide it up into multiple additions. Some meadmakers do multiple equal additions every other day, while others add gradually smaller amounts at various intervals depending on the progress of the fermentation. It will all depend on what you prefer.

Here is an example staggered nutrient addition schedule that can be used for your standard 5-gallon batch of mead:

* **Day 0:** After re-hdyrating the yeast with Go-Ferm and pitching, add 4.5g of Fermaid-K and 2g Diammonium Phosphate (DAP)
* **Day 1, 3, 5, 7, 8:** Degas mead by gently stirring, twirling the carboy carefully, or using a wine de-gasser
* **Day 2, 4, 6:** Gently stir and add 4.5g Fermaid-K and 2g of DAP
* **NOTE:** When degassing and/or adding nutrients, do so very slowly to avoid foaming.

Visit our Let’s Brew section for [***mead making tutorials***](https://www.homebrewersassociation.org/how-to-brew/mead/making-mead/), [***mead recipes***](https://www.homebrewersassociation.org/how-to-brew/mead/mead-recipes/) and tips on [***making better mead***](https://www.homebrewersassociation.org/how-to-brew/mead/mead-making-tips/).

Sources: [***The Compleat Meadmaker***](https://www.brewerspublications.com/products/the-compleat-meadmaker-home-production-of-honey-wine-from-your-first-batch-to-award-winning-fruit-and-herb-variations?_pos=1&_sid=7dbe7322f&_ss=r) by Ken Schramm; “Optimizing Honey Fermentation” by Ken Schramm (November/December 2005 [***Zymurgy***](https://www.homebrewersassociation.org/magazine/)); [***Yeast: The Practical Guide to Fermentation***](https://www.brewerspublications.com/products/yeast-the-practical-guide-to-beer-fermentation?_pos=1&_sid=497a68be6&_ss=r) by Chris White and Jamil Zainasheff.

<https://beerandbrewing.com/mad-for-mead-part-2/>

# **Mad for Mead, Part 2**

In part 2 of his mead series, Kyle Byerly covers the process of making mead.

[**KYLE BYERLY**](https://beerandbrewing.com/author/kyle-byerly) Aug 5, 2017 - 11 min read

In [part 1 of this series](http://beerandbrewing.com/VZQL5C0AAPwAnJgH/article/mad-for-mead-part-1), we provided information about honey—the primary ingredient in mead. Here, we look at the process of making mead, which is a bit simpler than that of brewing beer, and the mead brew day can be quite short—maybe an hour by yourself.

You basically mix the honey and water together, add the mixture to a carboy, and add yeast. If your honey is crystallized, the best practice is to warm it up. The trick is not to warm the honey above 110°F (43°C) because then you start losing aromatics. An electric blanket around the carboy works well, or anything else you can set for a temperature and hold it. If you can’t get all the honey mixed in, don’t worry. Just take a gravity reading and write it down, then take a gravity reading the next day. The gravity the next day will likely be higher as the honey will dissolve as it sits in solution.

### **Yeast for Mead Makers**

As a mead maker, you have a wide selection of yeasts. The most popular ones are wine (both white and red) and champagne yeasts. However, an important difference between beer brewing and mead brewing is that almost all available yeasts are dry yeasts. For the mead maker, more so than for the beer brewer, proper yeast rehydration is very important. Without it, you can end up with malformed yeast cells with up to 50 percent of the cells becoming useless for fermentation.

Fortunately, rehydration aids for dry yeast, such as Go-Ferm and Go-Ferm Protect Evolution (for difficult or stuck fermentations) from Scott Laboratories, make it easy to properly rehydrate your yeast. Just follow the instructions on the package and then make sure not to throw the mixture into your must (must is to mead what wort is to beer) too hot. Generally, there should be no more than a 20°F/11°C temperature difference between the rehydration aid and the must, but only 15°F/8°C is better.

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One of the biggest differences between fermenting beer and fermenting mead is the naturally occurring level of yeast assimilable nitrogen (YAN). Wort generally has enough YAN for the yeast while honey has effectively none.

There are three ways to deal with this nutrient deficit: you can add no nutrients, you can add them all up front, or you can stagger the nutrient additions. I’ve made good mead—in fact, award-winning mead—with all three methods. Before we look more closely at the three methods, let’s look first at the nutrients themselves.

### **Yeast Nutrients**

Because honey lacks YAN, there are various yeast nutrients you can use to help your yeast during fermentation. These nutrients provide either organic nitrogen, inorganic nitrogen, or both.

As its name suggests, organic nitrogen comes from organic sources (e.g., fruits and malt). Yeast is generally conditioned to use nitrogen from organic sources, and a yeast nutrient that supplies organic nitrogen usually creates few off-flavors if the fermentation is done well. These types of nutrients can be added at almost any stage of fermentation.

Nitrogen from inorganic sources (generally ammonia salts) lets the yeast use a faster pathway to produce ethanol, and this faster pathway can produce harsh alcohols if you use too much. I generally try to keep this nutrient source under 40 percent of my nutrients. Adding inorganic nitrogen during yeast hydration is harmful and can kill some of your yeast. Added after 50–66 percent sugar break will result in urea-like off-flavors.

#### **DAP**

Diammonium phosphate is an inorganic source of nutrients. It provides 210 parts per million (ppm) of YAN per gram per liter of must. Thus, 1 gram (0.3 oz) of DAP in a liter (1.06 qt) of must will give you 210 ppm of YAN. DAP is available at homebrew-supply shops and online and is generally very cheap. Just be careful not to use too much.

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#### **Fermaid-O**

This product from Scott Laboratories is a 100 percent organic nutrient. It also has some other good micro-nutrients that yeast needs. It provides 65 ppm of YAN per gram per liter of must; thus, 1 gram (0.3 oz) of Fermaid-O in 1 liter (1.06 qt) of must provides 65 ppm of YAN.

#### **Fermaid-K**

This product, also from Scott Laboratories, is a blend of organic and inorganic nitrogen sources. It provides 65 ppm of each per gram per liter, so 130 ppm total per gram per liter. Adding 1 gram (0.3 oz) of Fermaid-K is adding the same amount of organic and inorganic nutrients as 1 gram of Fermaid-O and .31 gram of DAP.

#### **Generic Brand Nutrient**

You might see some nutrients called “Yeast Nutrient” or similar. Most of these don’t label what they provide, so it is a bit hard to use them precisely. I’ve just treated them as Fermaid-K and used my nose for fermentation off-flavors, but that is not ideal.

Now, on to the methods of adding the yeast nutrients.

### **No-Nutrient Method**

It probably goes without saying that the no-nutrient method takes the least amount of effort. However, the mead can take years to get really good. If you don’t add any nutrients, the mead can suffer from nutrient-deprivation-related effects, such as incomplete fermentation and fermentation-related off-flavors. In addition, long-term aging is required to settle the mead.

However, there are some tricks that you can use. One trick is to add a lot of fruit, particularly dried fruit, because fruit has decent amounts of YAN and dried fruit much more by weight. Another trick is to keep the sugar content and alcohol low, below 10 percent ABV. This makes the mead drinkable earlier, but you still risk the nutrient-deprivation issues.

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The advantage most people see with the no-nutrient method is simplicity: you mix up the mead and then leave it alone. You can make good mead with this method, but it takes a couple of years to mature and requires the absolute best honey. If everything works and ages well, you will have only minor off-flavors.

### **All Up Front Method**

The second method of dealing with the nutrient deficit is adding all the nutrients up front—or at the end of the lag phase. This method isn’t much more work than the no-nutrient method; it produces a better mead in easily half the time, and it produces fewer fermentation off-flavors than the no-nutrient method.

The biggest problem with adding all the nutrients up front is a big biomass bloom. The greedy yeast cells consume the nutrients quickly and reproduce fast. This adds a lot of heat to the system, which can cause hot-fermentation issues—in particular the production of fusel alcohols. It also means that you have a high chance of a stuck fermentation, leaving the mead sweeter than intended as well as leaving intermediate yeast by-products. Meads made with this method tend to take quite some time to lose their yeast characteristics and become honey dominated.

### **Staggered Nutrient Addition**

The method I use currently—and the one widely regarded as the best method to make good mead quickly—is staggered nutrient addition (SNA). When done well, SNA gives the best mead the quickest . . . and is, of course, the most work. To me, it is the equivalent of an all-grain brewer using water salts, yeast starter, and fermentation temperature control. But easier.

If you’ve homebrewed big beers, you may be familiar with the SNA concept. With SNA, the yeast cells don’t gorge on one big meal, but rather have a few smaller meals. The yeast cells still get the same amount of food, just spread out over a longer period of time when they actually need it.

Yeast cells tend to need nutrients early in the fermentation, typically before 50 percent sugar break. There are quite a few different schedules you can follow for adding nutrients, and there is active research on the topic. Here are some general recommendations:

* Don’t add DAP during rehydration.
* Yeast cells use the nutrients best before about 30 percent sugar break, so add most of the nutrient then.
* The more you spread out the nutrient additions during the first 30–50 percent of fermentation, the more even the fermentation. You’ll get smaller biomass blooms and a steadier fermentation.
* Don’t add nutrients after 50 percent sugar break because the yeast can’t use them as well, and nutrient off-flavors are much more likely to develop.

### **Sugar Breaks**

Several times above, I’ve mentioned “sugar breaks.” The basic concept is that when you hit X percent sugar break, X percent of the sugars that the yeast will eat have been eaten. For example, at 20 percent sugar break, 20 percent of the sugars will have been consumed.

To calculate sugar breaks, you need both your starting gravity and estimated final gravity. In a dry mead, you can just use .997 as your final gravity. In sweeter meads, you have to make an educated guess. I often use the ABV calculator at[Brewers Friend](http://brewersfriend.com/abv-calculator) with the alternative equation and put in my starting gravity. Then I play with final gravity until it hits my potential alcohol for my yeast. Then I can calculate the spread and divide by ten. For example, 1.120 OG to 1.015 FG is 105 points, and every 10.5 points of gravity is 10 percent of the sugar break.

With the honey and the process under your belts, we’ll look at fermentation, aging, and bottling in [part 3 of the series](https://beerandbrewing.com/mad-for-mead-part-3/).

Learn how to make great mead from start to finish with Craft Beer & Brewing Magazine®’s online course, How to Make Great Mead. In this introductory course, you’ll learn everything from formulating your mead recipes to sourcing and selecting the right honey to fermenting and aging your mead. [**SIGN UP TODAY!**](https://learn.beerandbrewing.com/courses/how-to-make-great-mead?utm_source=cbb-website&utm_medium=in-article&utm_content=in-article-story&utm_campaign=online-education)

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# [**Mead: Simple**](https://www.beer-simple.com/brewing/2016/3/5/mead-simple)

[HOMEBREWING](https://www.beer-simple.com/brewing/category/Homebrewing)

One of the best things about the information age is that ignorance is no longer something that’s imposed on you by an inefficient world (just ourselves, if we’re not careful).  When I want to know something, I can easily and instantaneously search for the information myself, and even better, find someone to explain it to me!

Thus, I find myself sharing a great piece written by one of the best meadmakers in the world – that he also happens to be a wonderful person and a good friend is just icing on the cake.  Today’s guest blogger, Adam Crockett, is co-owner (along with his fellow-meadmaking-and-brewing-and-beer-judging wife Erin) of [**Haymaker Meadery**](http://www.haymakermeadery.com/)– and if you don’t immediately find a way to get your hands on some of their mead, then you’re really letting yourself down and you don’t even know it.

Today, I’m taking a back seat to let Adam talk us through the basics of mead.  I genuinely like mead (and my wife genuinely loves mead, especially Adam & Erin’s), but it’s something I’ve always found intimidating, for some reason.  After reading this, though, I’m quite confident that anyone (even me) can hit the ground running on making mead.

Take it away, Adam.

>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>

### **AN INTRO TO MEAD**

Mead is an amazing beverage.  It's neither beer nor wine, but somehow falls in the middle of both. It's an ancient beverage, too, and in fact some people believe it's actually the oldest fermented alcoholic beverage on Earth.  Fermented Honey dates back as early as 2000 BC based on chemical signatures found in Asian pottery.  The ancient Greeks also drank Ambrosia, a delicacy made of honey and believed to be the drink of the gods.  So what is mead exactly?

All alcohol is derived from the conversion of sugar by yeast. Whereas beer derives its alcohol from malted barley, and wine derives its alcohol from grape juice, mead is primarily made up of fermented honey.  Although mead hasn’t enjoyed the popularity that beer and cider has in the craft revolution, it finally seems to be getting some rightful attention, showing up in homebrew circles as well as being commercially produced. The best part about this resurgence is the quality of the mead being made: no longer is mead a cloyingly sweet beverage that takes years to mature.  A drinkable mead can be made in under two months with only a minimal amount of time, effort, and money. So, if you have been thinking about making your first batch of mead, this article will help you to take that leap.

### **PREP**

Mead making is a bit different then homebrewing. There is no boil involved and the attention and activity needed is spread out over a few weeks rather than a 6-hour brew day. [B:S editing note – Adam, you really need to let me take a look at your brew day.  We can cut that thing down substantially!] There is also less equipment involved, which means less to buy and less to clean.

The first thing you need to locate is honey. The better the quality of the honey, the better your final product will be, but really any honey will do. I prefer to use honey from a local apiary, and they can be found by searching sites like [honeylocator.com](http://honeylocator.com/).  Farmers markets are also great places to meet bee keepers from your area to score some good local honey.

If you have homebrewed before then no extra equipment is necessary. If, however, this will be your first time making mead then I would suggest speaking with your local homebrew shop about what you’ll need to get.

Once you have your honey and equipment it's time to get started. To start, combine the honey and the water to make “must” (the meadmaking equivalent of wort). I prefer not to boil my must. The non-boil method better preserves the delicate honey character in the final product, in my experience. Also, honey has antiseptic properties which will keep your mead from any bacterial or wild yeast infection, so there’s not much risk involved. Mix your honey using a wine whip or a large spoon, adding enough 80-90F water to bring your total volume to 5 gallons. Next, take a gravity reading. If you are happy with your gravity (mead comes in all strengths, so it’s up to you!) then it’s time to add your yeast nutrient. Yeast nutrients are necessary because, unlike beer, honey doesn’t have enough nutrients on its own for a healthy fermentation. For nutrients, I prefer Fermaid-K but any wine yeast nutrient will work. Sprinkle 4 grams of Fermaid -K into a water solution and stir it into your must.  Don’t worry about oxidation: whether you are using a wine whip or spoon, you want to introduce oxygen into your mead by splashing the must. The only thing left to do is add your yeast, so rehydrate it or sprinkle it on top (or, if you’re using a liquid yeast, just pour it in), then close up your fermenter.

### **FERMENTATION**

Like beer yeast, mead yeast likes and needs oxygen during the adaptation and growth stages of fermentation, but unlike beer for the first three days you want to open up your fermenter and stir out the C02 and introduce more oxygen. This is because CO2 is toxic to yeast and can impart undesired flavors that take a while to age out. Degassing the CO2 will lead to a mead that is drinkable faster. To degas, simply take your spoon or stir whip and agitate the must. Be careful and make sure everything is cleaned properly, and be sure to avoid a volcano-effect overflow when you are stirring out the C02 (the off-gassing may cause a head to form!).

By day 3 you should have a good fermentation going and it's now time to add the second addition of your yeast nutrients.  Again, sprinkle 4 grams of Fermaid-K into your mead and stir. Once you have made this second nutrient addition, stirred out the C02, and introduced oxygen, it's time to leave your mead alone until it's done fermenting. Fermentation time can vary depending on honey variety, fermentation temp, and the original gravity, but a good average is about one month.

### **POST-FERMENTATION**

After a month, take a gravity reading then wait three days and take another gravity reading. If the gravity is the same, you’re done fermenting. Once Fermentation is complete you want to remove your mead from the inactive yeast, proteins, and heavy fats on the bottom of the fermenter and rack it into a new carboy. This will help you start the clearing process of your mead and start the bulk aging process as well. This is a great time to do a few minor flavor adjustments to your fermented mead.  You might like to adjust the acid levels with an acid blend, back sweeten if your mead is not sweet enough with more honey (be sure to add potassium sorbate so fermentation doesn’t restart) or add more spice or oak . I prefer to age my mead in a 5-gallon carboy rather than bottle right away, since I believe this gives the final product a more complete and rounded flavor. During the bulk aging process you will want to rack your mead at least one more time after about 2 months. If your mead cleared on its own after bulk aging consider yourself lucky: if not you will want to pick up a clarifying agent like Super-Kleer. Follow the directions and after it has cleared, rack it again into a clean carboy or your bottling bucket. Your mead is now ready to bottle. A 5 gallon batch will give you around 24 bottles (750ml) or two cases of mead.

### **THINKING OUTSIDE THE BOX**

Meads can be as simple as honey, water, yeast, and nutrient or as complicated as you can imagine. Don't be afraid to try something new like barrel aging, adding a funky or sour yeast, using the whey after making cheese instead of water, or even using an unconventional ingredient like peanuts. Also, meads don't always have to be 12% or more; I enjoy making low gravity meads in the 8% range. This way you can enjoy a few glasses with friends and not have to age your product for extended periods of time. Anything you can imagine for a beer is just as capable for mead, so go out there and get creative!

### **SOME RECIPES TO GET YOUR STARTED**

This is a recipe for a simple mead that will give you a good sense of what your selected honey variety tastes like – you can build future recipes off of this one and get as crazy as you like:

Traditional Mead (Follow directions given in article)  
15# Orange Blossom honey (or any variety you want to use)  
Add water to achieve 5 gallons  
Lalvin 71b yeast  
8 grams Fermaid-K yeast nutrient

Here is my recipe for a pyment (a mead-wine hybrid) that recently won a first place ribbon at a massive local competition (nearly 1,000 entries):

Petit Syrah Pyment  
36# Petit Syrah Grapes  
9# Wildflower honey  
Add water to achieve 5 gallons  
Lalvin D47 yeast  
8 grams Fermaid-K yeast nutrient

Have your local homebrew shop crush the grapes for you, add this must to your honey water solution. Stir and introduce oxygen for the first three days, after that punch down the grape skins everyday for a week. After a week remove the grape skins and matter from your mead and let fermentation complete.

>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>

Josh again:

And it’s just that simple.  To date, I’ve made two meads, but I’m giving serious thought to making more – specifically, I want to focus in on recipes (probably pyments or dry meads) that I can use as wine substitutes.  Then, once I’ve hooked them on the dry mead, I can tell them that they haven’t been drinking “wine” at all!

Whichever route you (or I) choose, keep in mind that, just like beer, mead can be as simple as you want or need it to be.  Care and craft don’t need to be complicated, and it’s usually that caring that yields a superior product.

Thanks again to Adam, and as always…

Keep it simple.

JJW

Vanilla Cinnamon Mead

This recipe comes from [The American Homebrewers Association](https://www.homebrewersassociation.org/homebrew-recipe/prairie-rose-meadery-vanilla-cinnamon-mead/). Read along to learn how to homebrew this mouthwatering beverage in a home microbrewery. And as always, you’re going to need the proper equipment and homebrewing systems to brew at home. So be sure to check out Brew Perfect for [quality digital hydrometers](https://www.brewperfect.com/order/) for your brewing process.

[](https://www.brewperfect.com/order/)

## SIZE OF BATCH

* Six gallons
* Original gravity: 1.128
* ABV: ~14 percent

## MEAD HOMEBREWING INGREDIENTS

* Clover honey – 20 lbs.
* Water (charcoal filtered) – 3 Gallons
* Lalvin, 71B-1122 yeast – 2 packages
* GoFerm – 12.5 grams
* Fermaid O – 10 grams
* Fermaid K – 10 grams
* Diammonium phosphate (DAP) – 6.6 grams
* One Madagascar vanilla bean
* Three Saigon or Vietnamese cinnamon sticks
* Fining/clarifying agent

## HOMEBREWING DIRECTIONS

* The first step is to heat the three gallons of water to 110° F. At this heat, the honey will mix in well. Add in as much honey as you can in order to reach a gravity of 1.128. Cool the unfermented mead, called “must,” to 67° F.
* In water heated at 115° F with the 12.5 grams of GoFerm, rehydrate two packages of Lalvin 71B-1122 yeast. Then, you’re going to let this sit for 20 minutes until it becomes foamy. After this, add it into the must — the unfermented mead.
* The next step is to oxygenate the word. You can do this one of two ways — either by stirring it quickly, or adding O2 for a few minutes so the must becomes foamy.

Now it is time to add in the dry nutrient ingredients. Before you do this, be sure to gently mix the must to get rid of any CO2. Do this every time before you add in a nutrient ingredient.

You add the following dry ingredients based on an hourly schedule. The hours on this schedule are the hours after the yeast was pitched.

* After 12 hours: Oxygenate the must once more.
* After 24 hours: Add the Fermaid O — five grams.
* After 48 hours: Add another five grams of Fermaid O.
* After 72 hours: Add in the Fermaid K — five grams; and the DAP — 3.3 grams.
* Watch for the gravity to drop around 1.086. When this has happened, you will add another five grams of Fermaid K and another 3.3 grams of DAP.

You homebrewed mead should be done fermenting in about three weeks. Be sure to check the pH. If it drops below 3.3, add a quarter to a half teaspoon of potassium carbonate. You want to bring the pH up to about 3.45.

After the fermentation is completed, it’s time for the best part — the vanilla and cinnamon! Add in one Madagascar vanilla bean and the three Saigon or Vietnamese cinnamon sticks. Let the vanilla bean and cinnamon sticks sit in there for about a week, and be sure to taste it throughout. Once you find the perfect taste, you can remove the vanilla bean and cinnamon sticks.

The last part of this homebrewing process is to rack it, and you can do this in a carboy. Use a fining agent during this step, as well.

As you can see, the process of homebrewing this Vanilla Cinnamon Mead recipe is simple and requires few pieces of homebrewing systems and equipment. We hope that you can sit back, snack on a delicious treat, and enjoy this semi-sweet beverage.

**Canelazo Mead 7/17/2020**

10 lbs honey

4 gal tap water

1 whole green lime diced

1 packet L-1118 yeast

Yeast nutrient-1 tsp bread yeast, 1 Tsp sugar , 1c tap water-mix let sit 2 hrs, boil 10 minutes

**1st pot-Heat 3 gallons tap water to boil, let cool to 100, add 5 lbs honey**

**2nd pot-Heat 1 gallon tap water to boil, add sliced whole lime with peel, simmer 5 minutes, let cool to 100 degrees, add 5lbs honey**

**Sanitize 5 gallon plastic carboy-1T bleach in 1 gal water for one hour, let sit 1 hour, drain, let drain overnight, rinse with cooled instant coffee and cool boiled water**

**Siphon water from 1st pot into carboy.**

**Pitch yeast**

**Siphon water and put lime pieces from 2nd pot into carboy.**

**Add cold boiled yeast. Put on airlock**

**After 24 hours**

**Bubble for 2 minutes**

**48 hours**

**Add same amount of boiled yeast, bubble for ½ hour**

**Wait for fermentation to complete in 3-4 weeks, Rack into another carboy, add 4 cinnamon sticks (8/16/2020) (Tasted like a watered down wine. Very dry. No flavor of honey.) Twist container to shake out yeast dregs. Let stabilize a day. take out after another week (8/25/2020)**