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Herbal Project

# How to make root beer




**John & Kimberly Gallagher**

## PLEASE READ

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**Screen reading for this book is recommended.** This book is short and simple. We encourage saving paper and ink by reading this on your computer. However, you may certainly print it if you wish.

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**You can also go there anytime on your web browser by visiting our web site at [www.LearningHerbs.com/supplies](http://www.LearningHerbs.com/supplies)**

Our "Herbal Projects" are simple experiences to help further your herbal education in a fun, simple, inspiring and informative way. We encourage you to sign up for the Herbal Branches newsletter at [www.LearningHerbs.com](http://www.LearningHerbs.com). Experiences much like this e-report are sent to your in-box monthly at no charge. If you registered your Kit, you will automatically be added to this list.

**Feel free to share this Herbal Project with others.**

**We suggest that you do not work on this project until after you complete the Herbal Medicine Making Kit and the Roots and Branches Herbal Home Study Course.** The kit and course help you understand our underlying philosophy in herbal education. Therefore, you will get more out of this experience.

However, you will certainly get a lot out of the experience if you do not yet own the *Herbal Medicine Making Kit*. This project may help you decide if our comprehensive herbal learning system is for you.

*How to Make Root Beer, a LearningHerbs.com Herbal Project*

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*Thanks to Rachel Nolan for helping with the bath salts. Thanks to EagleSong for her Root Beer tips*

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# Welcome



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## Remember soda counters at the local drug store?

**A**s a child of the 70's I witnessed the last of the local corner drug stores. It was a time before Rite Aid, Walgreen's and such. One of my favorite things to do when I went to the drug store with my mom was to get a Coke at the soda fountain in the drug store. Sometimes we would even have lunch there.

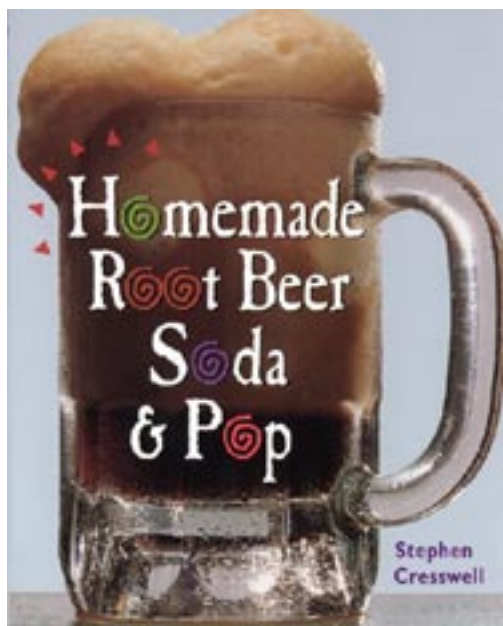
By the end of the 1970's that lunch counter at the Village Pharmacy in Holmdel, NJ was taken out. Of course, as a child I never thought about the origins of the soda fountain at the drug store. Little did I know that those sugary, artificially flavored drinks had their origin in tonics made with herbs.

Root beer is just that. A tonic made with roots. In fact, medicinal root preparations using sassafras and sarsaparilla originate with the native peoples of North America. Naturally, these native plants of this continent made their way into the



Charles Hires first sold root beer kits, containing most of the same ingredients you will use here. Though they sold well, he found he could sell more if he pre-brewed it for people.

Below: *Homemade Root Beer, Soda and Pop*



US Pharmacopeia, which in the late 19th century mostly consisted of herbs.

Soda fountains at the time were all the rage. A pharmacist would come up with a syrup by brewing up herbs with sugar. All they had to do was add carbonated water and presto, you have the first soda pop. Hires, Canada Dry, Coca-cola, Dr. Pepper...they all had their "roots" in herbs. Whether you drank at the drug store or local soda fountain, you were enjoying a fashionable, herbal beverage.

I encourage you to read *Homemade Root Beer, Soda and Pop*, by Stephen Cresswell. It contains an extended history of soda pop as well as lots of great recipes.

### **Are you really stuck drinking these chemical based, sugary shadows of their former selves?**

**Of course not!** But, like most things involving food these days, if you want the "Real Thing," you got to make it yourself. This is why it is so important to learn about herbs, growing gardens, preserving food, and so on. You can't even trust the "organic" label as much as you used to be able to.

I know it can seem overwhelming, but like I say over and over in the *Herbal Medicine Making Kit, Roots and Branches* as well as on LearningHerbs.com, you learn best little by little, one experience at a time. So let's have an herbal experience and make some root beer.

Now, I could spend lots of time giving you more information on the history of soda, entire chapters on all the herbs in this recipe, and provide several soda recipes here. BUT, as you may know by now, that is not my style.

I want to get right to the recipe here, giving you a simple herbal experience. Once you have success here, I am sure you will be inspired to research other recipes and



learn about all the herbs included in the recipe. My job is not to be the scholar, but the person who “gets you going.” I hope that making your own Root Beer will show you how simple and exciting it is to make your own herbal medicine. To me, my food is my medicine, so a true herbal root beer is as much herbal medicine as an Echinacea tincture. I actually have used my own ginger ale for medicinal purposes as well as a delicious, refreshing drink on a hot day.



*Sassafras leaves. Notice they are the same leaves on the “Snapple” Root Beer bottle. If you scratch and sniff a twig on this tree, you will no doubt smell root beer.*

### How to make you own root beer

Before I get going, I wanted to let you know about a valuable resource for learning how to make not only root beer, but also how to preserve food, make wine, cheese, pickles, and lots of healthful creations with food and herbs. These are becoming lost arts. Check out Raven Croft Garden at [www.RavenCroftGarden.com](http://www.RavenCroftGarden.com). They were my mentors, and they run an awesome summer program called “Food Camp.” They are classes worth flying in for.

**RavenCroft Garden**  
Education Connecting People, Plants and the Earth

[www.ravencroftgarden.com](http://www.ravencroftgarden.com)

What I am giving you here is a simple recipe. For more information, such as variations in bottling methods, check out *Homemade Root Beer, Soda and Pop*, by Stephen Cresswell. The following recipe was inspired by this book along with some of information based on my personal brewing experiences.

**First, make your “Root Mix”....**



**Order the following by clicking on the icon below...**



(You can also go to LearningHerbs.com and click on "Herbs and Supplies" on the left hand navigation bar. Doing so supports our family run business. If you have a local herb shop, please support them.)



**Order 4 ounce packs of the following from the Bulk Herbs section. There are photos on the order web site. Make sure they are cut and sifted root pieces, not powdered root.**

- Sassafras root
- Sarsaparilla root
- Licorice Root
- Dandelion Root
- Burdock Root
- Juniper berries



Take ONE OUNCE of the Sassafras and Sarsaparilla roots, and A HALF OUNCE of all the others and mix them all together.

This is your "**Root Beer Mix,**" and will last for two batches. Keep the rest of the herbs for future batches OR use them in other herbal preparations.



Please take the time at some point to read about these herbs. Then you'll truly realize the difference between your AMAZING root beer and modern day Hires.

By the way, you can use other roots, such as dried ginger or ginseng. You could also add cinnamon, nutmeg, cloves or other herbs and spices.

You will also need a 1-ounce bottle of **Sweet birch/ birch bark essential oil (*Betula lenta*)**. This is a modification made by EagleSong at RavenCroft Garden that makes a big difference in the recipe.

**So, order an ounce of this while you are ordering the herbs.**



### **What else you'll need...**

- A gallon of water
- A sauce pan that will fit at least a gallon
- A container that you can fit at least 2 gallons in
- 1 1/2 cups of brown sugar. You can also use a pound of honey.
- A small packet of ale yeast (You can get this from a home brew supplier, either on-line or at a local home brew store if you have one. You might as well buy a few packets while you are there and store them in your freezer.) You can use bread yeast, but let me tell you, it is not as good. Try it if you are stuck, but please get the ale yeast if you can.
- Vanilla extract (just a teaspoon)
- Get a dozen of those "Grolsch style" bale top bottles. You can get them at home brew suppliers as well. They are the easiest and are re-usable. You can even get new gaskets for them when needed. They are a good investment.

You'll end up with a gallon of root beer, so make sure you have enough to cover it. The ginger ale recipe on [LearningHerbs.com](http://LearningHerbs.com) has information on using regular plastic soda bottles. You'll also find this on [FamilyHerbalRemedies.com](http://FamilyHerbalRemedies.com).





**OK! You have your supplies. Next...**

1. Put 2 ounces of your mix into the sauce pan.



2. Add 2 quarts of water into the pan.
3. Simmer 15 minutes, covered.
4. Then, Take off heat
5. Steep the herbs for at least an hour. Honestly, four hours would be the best. Many books just say 30 minutes, but I feel the longer the better.



6. Get a strainer or cheesecloth in a strainer (even better) and pour your liquid into the larger container.





7. Add 1 1/2 cups of the brown sugar or the pound of honey. Also, add the teaspoon of vanilla.





8. BEFORE THE NEXT STEP, please be sure that your liquid is at room temperature. Not above 78 degrees.
9. Get 1/8 of a teaspoon of the ale yeast and put it into a 1/4 cup of the sweetened tea mixture (must be luke warm) and let sit for half an hour.
10. After 15 minutes, add the yeast mixture to your tea mixture. Once again, everything must be at room temperature or a LITTLE above. If it is too hot, you will kill the yeast.
11. Add 1 teaspoon of the Sweet birch or or birch bark oil (*Betula lenta*) and mix it really well.



12. Put the yeast solution in and mix it REALLY well and REALLY fast.



13. Pour into your bottles. You have to keep mixing it as you pour each bottle. If you don't, then the essential oil will not be in there evenly, and the yeast will go into bottle disproportionately. This can cause some bottles to be flat.



14. Cap your bottles



15. Keep in a warm spot for 24-48 hours. (This activates the yeast for carbonation)
16. I learned from RavenCroft that to test fermentation, put some in a small plastic bottle. When you can no longer squeeze the sides of the bottle, fermentation is complete.
17. At this point you need to **refrigerate immediately!** If you don't your bottles will explode. When you open your first bottle, do so over a sink and into a glass in case over carbonation occurred.

You need to store your root beer in the fridge. This keeps the yeast inactive. By the way, this is in no way alcoholic. It is so good that you will polish off your gallon of homebrew root beer in NO TIME!



*Notice the label above says with "roots, barks and herbs." It used to be the "Real Thing."*

### Why do we call it root beer?

Hires decided to call his herbal tea "root beer" at the suggestion of a friend who thought that, given the popularity of beer at the time, more people would buy it. Hires less-than-humbly touted Hires Root Beer as "The Temperance Drink" and "the Greatest Health-Giving Beverage in the World."

Well, I suggest you research the herbs you used in your tasty creation to see why Hires felt it was so health giving.

If you would like to bring herbs more into your day to day life, read the following pages about our Herbal Medicine Making Kit. Being that we sell an herbal kit as well, I feel a little like a modern-day Charles Hires. :)

**Have fun! Be sure to check out the next page...**



### Recap of supplies you'll need from the Herb shop:

4 ounce packets of:

- Sassafras root (not powder in ANY of these roots)
- Sarsaparilla root
- Licorice Root
- Dandelion Root
- Burdock Root
- Juniper berries
- 1-ounce bottle of **Sweet birch essential oil**

Optional: Ginseng, ginger

*Click on the graphic above to order.*

*Also visit our main herbal remedies site...*



# FamilyHerbalRemedies.com

*The following pages tell you about the Herbal Medicine Making Kit and more about us...*

“Wouldn't it be great if you could make your own herbal medicine?”



LearningHerbs.com



# Herbal Medicine Making Kit

Dear friend,

Thank you for reading our special report on making your own root beer.

Fifteen years ago I REALLY wanted to learn more about herbs and how to make remedies from plants. It was such an overwhelming subject that it took me years to get started. I found a great teacher, learned all I could, and in time I found myself teaching others.

I never forgot how hard it is for an aspiring herbalist to get started. That's why I created the *Herbal Medicine Making Kit*. It contains everything you need to make your own Echinacea tincture and herbal healing salve.

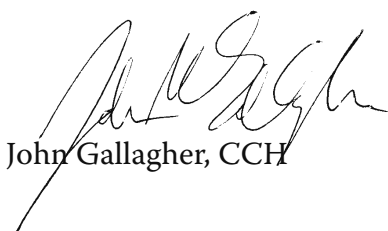
**It is a comprehensive herbal learning system for the aspiring herbalist and home medicine maker.**

What makes it comprehensive is that I include an **herbal home study course** on a cd-rom...for **FREE**. I even include a bonus pack of infusion herbs to get you started in the course.

You make over \$100 worth of medicine and get a course valued at \$79 for only **\$49.99!** This is a special offer you get by either mailing in the form on the back or going to [www.LearningHerbs.com](http://www.LearningHerbs.com).

**Start creating your OWN herbal pharmacy...**safely and SIMPLY with confidence. This is a high quality, hands-on learning experience. Making your own herbal remedies is incredibly simple and rewarding. Take your everyday healthcare into your own hands. Thanks again for your interest.

In health,



John Gallagher, CCH

• Everything you need to make your own healing salve and herbal tincture.



• Gain the skills & confidence to use herbs simply and safely.

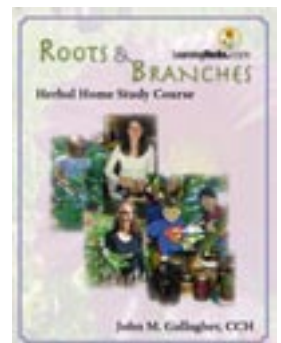
• Includes instruction on how to use your remedies as part of a **TRAVEL FIRST AID KIT**.



• Clear and easy instructions walk you through medicine making step by step.

• Includes a pack of nettles to make an herbal infusion!

• **Free** *Roots & Branches* herbal home study course sets the foundation for herbal learning.



• **Free** on-going herbal lessons via email.

• **Course covers** herbal nourishment, ethical wildcrafting, wild foods, herbal vinegar making, how to learn about the plants of your area, make a first aid kit... and much MORE!

• Uses 2 great herb books as required text.

(Kit can be done without doing this course)





“This kit and course are a great first entry into the world of medicinal herbs. It gets you immediately engaged with the hands-on work so important to developing the first-hand experience that true medical herbalism is always based on.”

–Paul Bergner, Director,  
North American Institute of Medical Herbalism

“What a blast! This is just the nudge I needed to get out there and start harvesting and utilizing native plants. Life will never be the same. Thanks John!”

–Robert Saxton, Bemidji, MN

“The kit was excellent. The experience of actually making the medicines made the whole subject of herbal medicine more intelligible in a way that just reading a book cannot match. And the stuff really works! When I made the salve my toe had been infected for more than a month and I just couldn’t shake the infection. The salve cleared it up in two days. It was amazing.”

–Mark Smythe, Esq., Tacoma, WA

“John makes the first steps of herbal medicine making simple and fun. Practical wisdom made accessible. Inspiring!”

–Sally King, Director, RavenCroft Garden

“I highly recommend the Roots and Branches course. It is inspirational and full of solid information. The novice can grasp the essences of herbalism. The skills taught in this course will serve you for years to come.”

–Kat Koch, Columbus, Ohio

A REALLY cool part of this course is that you make your own travel first aid kit! You use the remedies you make in the *Herbal Medicine Making Kit* and



add them to a first aid kit you assemble. This kit includes arnica homeopathic, Rescue Remedy, tea tree oil, and bandages. If you want, you can simply order this **Travel First Aid Kit** from us. We’ll even include a red nylon travel case for **FREE!**

Send me:

- The Herbal Medicine Making Kit (\$49.99, reg. \$54.99)
- The Herbal Medicine Making Kit with the Roots & Branches Book Pack (*Healing Wise* by Susun Weed & *From Earth to Herbalist* by Gregory Tilford) (\$81.99)
- Herbal Medicine Making Kit with the Travel First Aid Kit (\$81.99)
- Herbal Medicine Making Kit with the Book Pack AND The Travel First Aid Kit (\$113.98)

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Visit us on the web for lots of free information including our popular Herb Walk, Supermarket Herbalism, a free eCourse, and our remedies section featuring the “Eight Simple Secrets to Treating a Cold Naturally”



We are the Gallagher family: John, Kimberly, Rowan and Hailey. We live in the foothills of the Cascade Mountains in the Pacific Northwest.



*John, Kimberly, Hailey, and Rowan Gallagher*

Much of what we recommend on our web site are remedies and recipes we use ourselves. We believe it is so important in this day and age for families to be in control of their day-to-day healthcare. We want to spread knowledge that will help people stay healthy and empower them with skills to treat common illnesses naturally.

**John Gallagher, CCH** is a Community Centered Herbalist, trained at RavenCroft Garden in Monroe, WA. For 13 years he has worked at Wilderness Awareness School, where he teaches herbal medicine with the Wilderness Awareness Residential Program and teaches about wild plants in the Puget Sound region. He helped create the Kamana Naturalist Training Program, a home study program that has reached thousands worldwide. He continues to direct and instruct for the Kamana program. John is also intern at a five-element acupuncture school in Seattle.

In early 2004, John combined his knowledge of how to learn herbal medicine along with his expertise in distance learning to create *The Herbal Medicine Making Kit and the Roots and Branches Herbal Home Study Course*. While designing these programs, he realized there was a need for a web site with free and simple home remedies that anyone could do.



**Kimberly Gallagher, M.Ed.**, has also been using herbal remedies for years. She is currently an apprentice at RavenCroft Garden and brings herbal nourishment daily to our family's diet.

Kimberly is also a certified teacher and has extensive training in non-violent communication and conflict resolution. She homeschools Rowan and Hailey.

LearningHerbs.com is a family run, handcrafted business. We all take part in the fun, even baby Hailey. She cheers us on while we put together the herbal kits.

Thank you so much for visiting and supporting LearningHerbs.com!

