Sides / United States

Raw Apple Cider Vinegar

A two-stage biological transformation: first, wild yeast converts apple sugars to hard cider; then acetobacter bacteria convert the alcohol to acetic acid over four to six weeks. The result is a cloudy, tangy, complex vinegar alive with the mother — a cellulose mat of beneficial bacteria that commercial vinegar pasteurizes into oblivion.

Time 80640 min **Servings** 4

What you'll need.

- ☐ 2000 g Fresh apple juice (unfiltered, unpasteurized) or pressed apple scraps
- ☐ 40 g Raw honey or cane sugar (if juice is low-sugar)
- ☐ 60 g Raw ACV with mother (unpasteurized, as starter culture)

Let's make it.

01 Pour fresh unfiltered apple juice into a wide-mouth glass jar or crock. If using apple scraps (cores and peels), cover with filtered water and add sugar. Stir in a tablespoon of the raw ACV with mother as a bacterial primer (optional — wild ferment can work on its own). Cover with a cloth secured with a rubber band — never seal airtight. Wild yeast on the apple skins or naturally present in raw juice will begin alcoholic fermentation within 24–72 hours at 65–75°F. Stir once daily. This stage takes 2–4 weeks until very little sweetness remains and the liquid smells of dry hard cider or sharp apple wine.

02 Once the cider is no longer sweet (alcoholic fermentation is complete), add the raw ACV with mother — this introduces acetobacter, the aerobic bacteria that convert alcohol to acetic acid. Stir gently. This stage requires oxygen: keep covered with a cloth only, never a lid. The wider the jar's opening, the faster acetification proceeds. Acetobacter need oxygen and will form the 'mother' — a cloudy white-to-tan gelatinous mat — on the surface.

03 Age the vinegar undisturbed for 4–8 weeks total (from the start of stage 2), tasting every 2 weeks. The mother may grow thick and sink, forming a new one at the surface — this is normal. When the vinegar tastes pleasantly tart and sour with good apple flavor and no remaining alcohol, it is done. Strain through cheesecloth, reserving the mother in a small jar of finished vinegar for your next batch. Bottle the vinegar. Store at room temperature: raw ACV does not require refrigeration.

Recipe & provenance ForkRecipe Kitchen / ForkRecipe / FoodML and contributors / CC BY-SA 4.0.
Original recipe and attribution CC BY-SA 4.0
Servings are an estimate; check quantities in the source recipe.
recipes.dvs-services.be / apple-cider-vinegar