

A glass jar filled with a vibrant red liquid, likely kombucha, is shown. The jar is covered with a white cloth tied around the neck. The background is a soft, light blue gradient. A white rectangular box is superimposed over the center of the jar, containing the text 'MAKE YOUR OWN Kombucha'. At the bottom of the jar, the website 'EDIBLEALCHEMY.CO' is visible.

MAKE
YOUR OWN
Kombucha

EDIBLEALCHEMY.CO

KOMBUCHA TEA

WHAT IS KOMBUCHA?

Kombucha is a fermented sweet tea that originated in China and other parts of Asia over 2000 years ago, and spread across the world. Just like beer, wine, and sour-dough bread, kombucha is a fascinating and simple education in fermentation. You simply brew a strong, sweet tea, then add the **starter** (the **SCOBY – Symbiotic Colony Of Bacteria and Yeast**). The bacteria and yeasts in the SCOBY eat the sugar during the fermentation process and produce carbon dioxide. Details of flavor, acidity, and even color are open to the individual brewer's creativity. The finished drink is full of pro-biotics, promoting good health to ones immune system, digestive system and over all wellbeing.



WHAT ARE SOME OF THE BENEFITS OF KOMBUCHA TEA?

- filled with amino acids, vitamins B and C, minerals, antioxidants and probiotics which:
 - boost immunity
 - enhance mood
 - fight allergies
 - detoxify and defend body of infection and disease
 - detoxify liver = happy mood
- increase metabolism
- improve digestion
- rebuild connective tissue (helps with arthritis, gout, asthma, rheumatism)
- cancer prevention
- reduce glucose levels
- aid healthy cell regeneration (because its alive!)

HOW TO MAKE YOUR OWN KOMBUCHA ONCE YOU HAVE A SCOBY:

1. Get your gear. A glass jar (preferably 1 liter or more), as well as a healthy SCOBY. Your SCOBY should come in some liquid of starter tea (i.e., already fermented). Your jar should have a wide opening to get the SCOBY in and out of the jar easily, as it grows and multiplies over time.

2. Prepare your water. Fill a large pot with water and place it on the counter to de-chlorinate for 24 hours. The chlorine will evaporate away. Or boil the water for 3 minutes to quickly evaporate the chlorine. (Bottled spring water is also a safe option)

3. Make your tea. With your de-chlorinated water, make a strong, sweet tea. Boil the water, then add an unflavored black, green, or hibiscus tea, in any proportion you like. Tips on tea selection: Black tea makes the final product much more flavorful. Avoid teas with oils in them like Earl Grey as the oil floats on top and suffocates the SCOBY. Avoid Chai or teas with cinnamon and other antibacterials, as they will kill the SCOBY.

4. Add the sugar while the water is hot! Add $\frac{1}{4}$ cup of sugar to every 1 liter of tea. Use mineral filled sugars like palm-sugar, cane sugar, panella, or jagery. Then you too get the benefits of minerals when you drink the tea! Avoid honey or agave which have antibacterial properties. These

sweeteners can be added at the end when you have removed the SCOBY and bottled your tea.

5. Steep and cool. Let the tea steep for at least 30 minutes. Strain it, then allow it to come to room temperature.

6. Add the SCOBY and the starter. Gently, and always with clean hands, place the SCOBY into the jar of sweet tea. Pour the starter (the already-fermented kombucha) into the jar as well. Sometimes the SCOBY mother sinks, and sometimes it floats; either is OK.

7. Ferment your brew. Cover the jar with a layer of cloth or paper towel with an elastic band to protect against dust and fruit flies. The SCOBY needs to breathe. Set the jar in a location with good air flow and medium light. (Direct sunlight can damage the tea, and closets won't allow the tea enough air.)

8. Wait and taste test! Wait one week or two and constantly try your tea as time goes. You will notice a new SCOBY growing on top of the jar. Just slip a straw under it and try the tea. When you like it, bottle it and save the SCOBY and some tea for the next batch.

The tea's fermentation rate depends on the ambient temperature in your home. If you want your kombucha more acidic, let it sit longer. (As time goes by, the pH of the kombucha will fall, making the brew more acidic and less sweet.) If you prefer it on the sweeter side, you'll need to bottle your next batch at an earlier point in the process.

9. Build up the fizz. When the tea has fermented to your liking, decant it into bottles that have rubber stoppers or very strong seals. This will allow the fizziness caused by the fermentation to build up even more. Let the bottles sit for about 3-7 days at room temperature to acquire even more fizz, then refrigerate them. You can add extra sugars and flavors here. The extra sugar also helps with the carbonation once the bottles are sealed tight.

10. Serve your drink. Kombucha is delicious simply poured over ice, but you can also mix it with wine for an interesting take on sangria, or add fruit syrups for new flavors or if the tea is too acidic.

11. Salvage a batch gone vinegary. If you end up with a batch that's too acidic to drink, dilute it with water and repurpose it as a mild all-purpose cleaning product. You can also use it in the shower for extra-shiny hair.

12. Start over. If your first batch went just fine and you want to do it again, simply repeat the process, saving some fermented tea from each batch to use as a starter in the next batch.

13. Share the wealth! Each new batch will grow a "baby" SCOBY on top. Pass it along to a friend, and spread the kombucha love.

Questions about Kombucha? Would like to get a SCOBY? Or want to learn more about other ferments and workshops? contact Alexis at alexis@ediblealchemy.co Or join my group on Facebook! [Edible Alchemy Facebook](#)