

Elderflower Champagne

Elder can be found in many of our hedgerows and this deciduous shrub or small tree will be coming into flower in April and May. The large flat heads of tiny creamy white flowers are a joy to behold and have a bewitching aroma, as well as a subtle flavour often compared to the Muscat grape. So why not celebrate the beginning of summer with this easy recipe for making elderflower champagne.

Ingredients:

- 15 elderflower heads
- 700g of sugar or honey
- Two lemons
- Four litres of water

Collect your elderflower heads when they are in full bloom and be careful to shake off any insects, as well as removing leaves or branches. Place in a large bucket and cover with the sugar or honey, before adding the zest and juice of the lemons. Proceed to boil the water and then pour this over the mixture before stirring well. Cover with a tea towel and allow to cool for at least 24 hours, stirring occasionally. Sieve the mixture through a muslin cloth and decant into sterilised screw-top bottles, such as those used for lemonade. Leave the tops slightly loose for a couple of weeks. Keep for a couple of months before drinking on a warm summer's evening.

