

LILAC SODA SYRUP



Lilac season is fleeting. Capture the delicate sweetness of this garden favorite with this delightful fizzy drink. Delicately purple and downright delicious, it's one snazzy, springtime sip.

INGREDIENTS

- * 4 or 5 large lilac flower clusters (to yield 1½ cups [about 50 g] blooms, removed from the stems)
- * 1 cup (235 ml) water
- * 12 fresh or frozen blueberries (optional, for color)
- * ½ cup (230 g) honey or ¼ cup (150 g) sugar

TIME: under 20 minutes

YIELD: 1 cup (235 ml)
soda syrup

INSTRUCTIONS

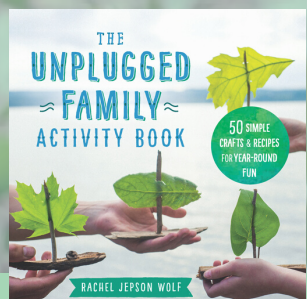
1. Harvest the lilacs on the same day you plan to make your syrup. Pick blooms after the morning dew has dried but before the heat of the day sets in. Choose clusters that are made up of mostly open flowers and avoid those with flowers tinged with brown, already past their prime (these spent flowers will taint the flavor of your finished syrup).
2. Pluck the flowers off the stems, removing as much green as possible. Discard the stems.
3. In a medium-size pot over high heat, bring the water to a boil.
4. Remove the water from the heat and stir in the lilac flowers and blueberries (if using). Cover the pot and let steep for 15 minutes.
5. Stir in the honey or sugar, stirring well to combine. Cover the pot and continue steeping for about 1 hour more or until the soda syrup has cooled to room temperature.
6. Pour the syrup through a fine-mesh strainer, pressing on the solids to extract as much syrup as possible. Compost or discard the solids.
7. Transfer the soda syrup to a clean glass bottle or jar and label with the contents and date.
8. Lilac soda syrup will keep refrigerated in an airtight container for up to 1 week and can be frozen for 1 year.

TO USE

In a tall glass, stir together 3 tablespoons (45 ml) syrup with 1 cup (240 ml) cold carbonated water. Adjust proportions as desired and serve over ice.

NOTE

Every lilac hedge has its own unique flavor, so if you have more than one to harvest from, nibble a flower from each before you decide which has the best flavor. Purple bushes are often most flavorful; whereas, white lilacs tend to be more bitter or bland.



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