

Kitchen Essentials Part 2 - Apple Cider Vinegar



A lovely old apple press. Photograph by Bill Owen 2012.

Apple Cider Vinegar is made from fermenting apple juice using bacteria and yeast, producing a fresh and sour tasting amber coloured liquid. Often you will notice floaty particles in the vinegar and this indicates the presence of the culture used to produce the vinegar and is only present in healthy unpasteurised or unheated vinegar and always found in organic vinegar.

Apple Cider Vinegar is recognised by many as a supportive health tonic and was used as far back as the 4th century BC by the great physician Hippocrates, referred to today as the 'Father of Modern Medicine'.

Apple Cider Vinegar is acidic when it is first swallowed and can help to stimulate the secretion of digestive enzymes important for the proper breakdown of food in the stomach. After a period of time the vinegar becomes alkaline, which is very beneficial for the body.

Apple Cider Vinegar offers a range of health benefits, the most well known of which include assisting in blood sugar regulation and weight loss.

Apple Cider Vinegar is a good support for the treatment and maintenance of hemorrhoids. This is due to the vinegar's astringent qualities. It has also been shown to reduce muscle fatigue after exercise, reduce abdominal fat and lower blood cholesterol as well as being very useful as a facial toner, in reducing varicose veins and in healing mild burns such as sunburn.

In addition to its many internal health benefits, Apple Cider Vinegar is also wonderful for the skin. Adding a little to your bath water helps to restore a natural balance to the skin's pH, as well as killing harmful skin bacteria and fungus which often result in a host of skin ailments including eczema, psoriasis and dandruff.

Apple Cider is also very handy in the kitchen. It keeps rice from sticking together and can prevent egg shells from cracking whilst boiling. For both, just add a tablespoon to the cooking water before boiling.

It is most notable used in salad dressings, adding that extra fruity zing we all love, and it gives gluten free baking extra rise when mixed with bi-carb soda. With its tangy, fruity taste it adds depth of flavour to homemade sauces and chutneys whilst in marinades it assists with tenderising meats and killing off any bacteria that may be present.

Last but not least, apple cider vinegar makes a good preservative for foods (being a preservative itself). By adding a little to foods that need to be stored for longer periods it can help to preserve their taste.

Below is a healthy digestive tonic recipe that includes apple cider vinegar.

Enjoy your week in the kitchen,

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Apple Cider Vinegar Tonic

A healthy tonic that aids digestion and has an alkalizing affect on the body. Best sipped ½ an hour prior to eating.

Ingredients:

1/3 cup fresh grapefruit juice

A squeeze of lemon juice

2 teaspoons raw apple cider vinegar

1/3 teaspoon honey

Method:

Mix together and sip before a main meal.