

# DangerDave's Dragon Blood Wine

My name is David C. Land (dangerdave). I am a firefighter from southern Ohio who started making wine in August 2011. Like most of you, I began slowly, but was soon bitten by the wine bug and started making many kits in my spare time. After gaining this valuable experience and understanding of the wine making process, I ventured out on my own. My very first homemade recipe was Lon DePope's original Skeeter Pee. I was amazed that anyone could make a good cheap wine so quickly. After varying degrees of success, I went about modifying Lon's recipe into a process that reflected both my own desires for my wines, and the processes I had come to understand. Here, I will impart the recipe I developed that has become popular among a diverse group of wine makers. It is specifically designed to make good wine cheaply and quickly while waiting for your kits to age. There are no secrets in wine making. You, my fellow wine makers, are more than welcome to use or modify this recipes or process for your own wine making pleasure. Enjoy!

*The recipe is formatted for a six (6) gallon batch. To make a larger or smaller batch, simply do the math. Doubling the batch to twelve gallons would require twice the listed ingredients, while making a three gallon batch would only take half.*

***READ THROUGH THESE STEPS COMPLETELY BEFORE BEGINNING, TO MAKE SURE YOU HAVE EVERYTHING YOU NEED TO FINISH YOUR WINE.***

*Always make sure anything that touches your wine is both cleaned and sanitized, and record everything you do!*



This is a sweet-tart fruity “blush” wine made from raspberries, blackberries, and blueberries with a lemon twist (if desired). It ferments quickly and clears fast. Batches of this wine have been

cleared and bottled in less than two weeks (your experience may vary).

\* Special notes, including cautions and variations appear in *italics*.

**Step 1: To a cleaned and sanitized seven gallon (or larger) primary, add---in this order:**

1 bottle (48 oz each) 100% Lemon Juice (ReaLemon in the green bottle): *More or less lemon juice can be added to your taste, (i.e., if you want to reduce the acid level use less lemon juice). The acid added here will help balance the final wine. Substitutes include any other kind of citrus juice (orange, lime, etc.), or use no citrus at all for a very soft, supple blush.*

Water to about four gallons

20 cups of white granulated sugar (you will be looking for a SG of around 1.075 after filling to 6 gallons below. This will give you a finished alcohol by volume of about 10%-11%): *Add more/less sugar for high/lower desired final ABV. Stir sugar until completely dissolved.*

1 tsp. tannin (stir)

3 tsp. yeast nutrient (stir)

1 tsp. yeast energizer (stir)

3 tsp. pectic enzyme (stir)

Top water to six (6) gallons\* and stir well

Test SG with hydrometer (remember, you are looking for a SG around 1.075) *Note: The natural sugars from the fruit (below) will slightly increase the final ABV, so be careful how high you drive up the SG at this point!*

6 lbs. of Triple Berry Blend (raspberry/blackberry/blueberry--available in most grocery store freezer sections), frozen then thawed, in a fine mesh nylon bag (tied shut), placed in primary (add any extra juice from the fruit as well): *Give the bag a couple of squeezes to work in pectic enzyme. You may also toss the fruit directly into primary, but this makes for a "messier" fermentation and subsequently will require more clearing time and further racking. Dozens of variations on this recipe have been created by simply substituting different or combinations of different fruit.*

Cover primary: *Do not snap down the lid or add an airlock. Cover the lid with a cloth or towel.*

Place brew belt (if desired): *Keep temp in 68F-80F range. A higher temp will result in a faster fermentation, and a sharper tasting, more colorful wine. A lower temp will produce a paler blush with more fruity aroma and a smoother taste.*

Let sit undisturbed for 12-24 hours...

**Step 2: To the primary fermenter, add:**

1 packet of EC-1118 Yeast (follow yeast manufacturer's directions): *Sprinkle yeast into one cup of warm water (100F), let sit for 15 minutes (no longer), stir and add to primary. Other yeast strains also work well. Experiment!*

Stir Primary Vigorously!

**Step 3: Each day, do the following, in this order:**

Uncover primary

Check and record temperature

Check and record specific gravity

Squeeze juices from fruit pack into fermenter and remove fruit pack (The Presser Method):

*Temporarily place in sanitized bucket or bowl.*

Stir primary vigorously: *To introduce oxygen into must, suspend the yeast, and drive off CO2..*

Replace fruit pack in primary

Cover primary

**Step 4: When the SG drops to <1.000, do the following:**

Squeeze juices from fruit pack into fermenter---remove fruit pack: Discard fruit.

*Note: When the specific gravity (SG) has fallen below 1.000, and the fruit bag has been removed, discontinue stirring daily but check the SG and temp daily as before. Proceed from here only when the wine's SG has stabilized below 1.000. A stable SG means that the SG for three consecutive days reveals no change in the SG.*

Uncover primary

Rack (siphon or drain) the wine into a cleaned and sanitized six gallon carboy, leaving the gross lees (the stuff in the bottom of the primary) undisturbed.

Add 1/4 tsp. Potassium Metabisulfite (dissolved in half cup cool water) and stir

Add 3 tsp. Potassium Sorbate (dissolved in half cup cool water) and stir

Degas wine very thoroughly: *I cannot emphasize this enough! Gas in the wine will prevent it from clearing quickly.*

Add Sparkolloid\* (or other clearing agent) per package directions (stir for 2 minutes): *\*1 tbs in one cup of water simmered (boiled) for about 5-10 minutes. Add hot mixture directly to carboy and stir.*

If the carboy is not full, add enough cool water to bring the level within two inches of the top opening: *Adding a like wine rather than water is preferred. A cheap white zinfandel will work well.*

Add a bung and airlock (filled half way with sulfite solution)

Allow to clear undisturbed for no less than 1 week

**Step 5: When wine is clear:**

Carefully rack off one gallon of wine into a cleaned and sanitized container, and set aside.

Carefully rack the remainder of the wine off of the lees into a cleaned & sanitized six gallon carboy.

Add 2-6 cups of white granulated sugar (stir until sugar is completely dissolved): *This is where your personal taste comes in. Different people like different levels of sweetness in their wine. My DB is made with ¾ of a cup of sugar per gallon. Remember! The sugars will blend with the lemon and berry flavors over time, and the sweetness will come forward. Do not over-sweeten!*

If carboy is not full, top up within two inches of top of carboy opening with some of the spare gallon of wine

Replace bung and airlock

Allow wine to sit quietly for another week.

**Step 6: If the wine is completely clear:**

Filter if desired

Bottle in clear bottles (because it's beautiful)

Note: *Never bottle cloudy wine! NEVER!*

Enjoy! *This wine is great right from the start! It will, however, improve over time in the bottle. The first few weeks brings a noticeable improvement as the flavors blend and meld, while months will make it smooth and delightful. Be warned, though, it will go quickly. So, get some more going, fast!*

**SO MANY VARIATIONS!**

Any kind of fruit you can imagine may be substituted for the triple berries in the above recipe.

Use the exact same procedure, just use different fruit in the bag. I personally have made

blueberry, blackberry, strawberry, raspberry, and a delightful tropical blend using pineapple/mango/peach/strawberry. Other wine makers have had success with a quad-berry blend (blueberry/blackberry/raspberry/strawberry), a tropical blend using pineapple juice instead of lemon, and even cherry-lime (with lime juice). Fruit purees and fruit wine bases abound on the market. Try oak and/or raisins in the primary or secondary. The list of possibilities is endless. Use your imagination. Pick your favorite fruit, and make a Dragon Blood version of your own. Try raisins, spices, oak, or extracts. Give it a catchy name, and make this recipe yours!

#### **A NOTE ON THE “*PRESSER METHOD*”**

I developed this method of wine making simply out of necessity. My desire was to make country fruit wine, but I lacked good available juice, and I do not own a press. The solution was to add the fruit to the primary in a bag of some sort. I use fine mesh nylon bags sold by most wine supply vendors. A cheaper disposable substitute is knee-high lady's nylon stockings. While the fruit is in the primary---in the bag---simply squeeze the bag each day and stir the juices into the must, replacing the bag afterwards. Needless to say, make sure your hands are clean when doing this. When the wine is dry, remove the bag and discard the fruit. This method slowly introduces the juice into the must during fermentation rather than all at the beginning. This also gives the skins of the fruit extended contact with the fruit pectin and yeast, elevating the flavors to a remarkable level in a very short time.

#### **V. A NOTE FROM THE AUTHOR**

This knowledge is nothing new. I have built my methods and recipes from the stones quarried by others. The wine making community is a wealth of information and a multitude of wonderful people. They are your greatest resource. I am more than willing to help anyone who asks. If I don't know something, I will point you in the right direction. You may seek me out in the winemakingtalk.com forums (dangerdave), or email me at [dangerdave911@yahoo.com](mailto:dangerdave911@yahoo.com), and we'll talk about making some good wine!

# David C Land