

# Wild Fermented Ginger Ale Recipe

Style: Wild Fermented Beverage | ABV: 0.5-2% | Fermentation Time: 2-7 days | Difficulty: Beginner

## Recipe Quick Stats

Stat	Value
Style	Wild Fermented Beverage
ABV	0.5-2%
Ginger Bug Development	5-7 days
Secondary Fermentation	2-7 days
Batch Size	1 gallon (3.8 liters)
Fermentation Temp	70-75°F (21-24°C)
Total Time	7-14 days
Difficulty	Beginner

## Ingredients

### For the Ginger Bug Starter:

- 3-4 inches fresh organic ginger root (with skin intact)
- 6-8 tablespoons granulated sugar
- 2 cups filtered water (chlorine-free)

### For the Ginger Ale Base (1 Gallon/3.8 Liters):

- 4-6 inches fresh ginger root, grated or finely chopped
- 1-1.5 cups sweetener (sugar, honey, or maple syrup)
- 2-3 lemons or limes, juiced
- 1 gallon filtered water (chlorine-free)
- ¼ cup active, bubbling ginger bug liquid

## Equipment Needed

- Pint-sized glass jar with lid (for ginger bug)
- Large pot (for brewing ginger tea base)
- Strainer or cheesecloth
- Funnel
- Flip-top bottles

- Grater or food processor
- Non-metal stirring utensil

## **Instructions**

### **Ginger Bug Development (5-7 days before brewing)**

#### **Day 1: Initial Mixture**

1. Grate 1 tablespoon of unpeeled organic ginger
2. Add to a pint-sized glass jar
3. Add 1 tablespoon sugar
4. Add 1 cup filtered water
5. Stir thoroughly with non-metal utensil
6. Cover jar with cloth or coffee filter secured with rubber band
7. Place in warm location (70-75°F/21-24°C)

#### **Days 2-7: Daily Feeding**

1. Add 1 teaspoon grated ginger and 1 teaspoon sugar daily
2. Stir thoroughly
3. Watch for signs of activity (bubbling, sweet-sour smell)
4. Bug is ready when consistently bubbling and smells pleasantly yeasty (typically 5-7 days)

### **Brewing the Ginger Ale Base (Day Before Bottling)**

1. Grate or finely chop 4-6 inches of ginger root
2. Bring 1 gallon of filtered water to a boil
3. Add ginger to water and reduce heat
4. Simmer for 15-20 minutes covered
5. Remove from heat
6. Add sweetener while liquid is hot, stir to dissolve
7. Allow to cool to room temperature (below 80°F/27°C)
8. Add freshly squeezed juice from 2-3 lemons or limes

### **Combining and Bottling (Bottling Day)**

1. Strain ¼ cup of liquid from your active ginger bug
2. Reserve the solids to continue your ginger bug culture
3. Add strained ginger bug liquid to cooled ginger tea base

4. Stir gently but thoroughly
5. Funnel into flip-top bottles, leaving 1-2 inches of headspace
6. Seal bottles tightly

## **Secondary Fermentation (2-7 days)**

1. Place sealed bottles in a warm location (70-75°F/21-24°C)
2. Store in a container or bag that can contain potential overflow
3. Ferment 2-7 days, depending on desired carbonation
4. "Burp" bottles daily by briefly opening to release pressure
5. When desired carbonation is reached, refrigerate to slow fermentation
6. Best consumed within 1-2 weeks

## **Maintaining Your Ginger Bug**

### **After Using**

1. Feed with 1 teaspoon each of sugar and grated ginger
2. Replace water removed for previous batch

### **Ongoing Maintenance**

1. Feed every 2-3 days if kept at room temperature
2. Refrigerate for dormancy between uses (feed weekly)
3. Revive refrigerated bug with daily feedings at room temperature until bubbling resumes

## **Flavor Variations**

### **Herbal Infusions**

- Add 2-3 tablespoons fresh herbs during tea phase:
  - Mint
  - Lemongrass
  - Rosemary

### **Fruit Additions**

- Add ¼ cup fruit juice per gallon at bottling:
  - Berry (strawberry, raspberry, blueberry)
  - Stone fruit (peach, plum)
  - Tropical (pineapple, mango)

## Spice Blends

- Add during tea phase:
  - 2-3 cinnamon sticks
  - 6-8 cardamom pods
  - 2-3 star anise
  - 1 vanilla bean, split

## Troubleshooting

### No Bubbles in Ginger Bug

- Increase temperature
- Ensure water is chlorine-free
- Verify ginger is organic and fresh

### Weak Carbonation

- Ensure proper sweetener levels
- Verify ginger bug is active before using
- Extend secondary fermentation time

### Over-Carbonation/Exploding Bottles

- Reduce sugar content
- Refrigerate earlier
- Burp bottles daily

### Off Flavors

- Maintain cleanliness
- Use fresh ingredients
- Refrigerate when desired flavor is achieved

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