



is for **Autopoiesis**

Ginger Beer: An Autopoietic Brew

This recipe was handed down in the usual tradition of the Stevenson legacy: watch and learn! I was never *taught* how to make ginger beer. The process was seeded and grew in me as I watched my mum make the brew every Christmas, as I licked the spoon and as I enjoyed the results of her labour. The process reached maturity in my adult years as I began to crave the tastes of my childhood and sought out to recreate my own recipe.

Ingredients:

For Brewing

A huge handful (perhaps a pound or more) of fresh ginger and then some 1 cup or so of Sugar (white)

Several limes (1 lime to every 2 medium sized pieces of ginger)

Filtered water (1 cup for every 3 medium sized pieces of ginger)

A handful of cloves to spice the brew

Some recipes call for yeast or cream of tartar to help with fermentation. I usually stick to the basics and add more lime.

After Brewed

White or brown sugar to taste or I sometimes use white grape juice or pear juice (no sugar added) to avoid overuse of what I like to call the white death!

Method:

1. Grate ginger or grind in a food processor. Add to your vessel. I use a pot. Avoid glass jars as the gasses may expand and shatter the glass.

2. Squeeze limes into ground ginger
3. Add sugar and cloves
4. Add cold water.
5. Cover your vessel (pot or plastic jug), seal it and put in a dark cupboard. Why a dark cupboard? Perhaps to let the mysterious process have its privacy? Some recipes suggest overnight. Some say a week. The longer you let it brew, the stronger the results. You may check on it and feed your brew: meaning add water and sugar and/or lime from time to time.
6. After 5-7 days, strain the ginger from the liquid using a fine strainer a cheese cloth. Once all of the liquid has been strained out use a cheese cloth to squeeze the remaining liquid out of the ginger mush.
7. Add sugar or juice to taste.
8. Serve with ice.
9. Add rum to give it a festive bump!

The Story

A few facts about Ginger: This life-giving root finds its beginnings in China, spread to the (Malaku) the so-called Spice Islands and other parts of Asia and later West Africa. It was brought to the Caribbean in 15th century by European colonists where it became a naturalised crop and flourished.¹ Hmm...sounds familiar! "Portuguese slave owners of West Africa fed ginger to their slaves[enslaved Africans] in the hope that it would ensure a strong population and thus a strong profit margin."²

Strong seems to be the operative word here.

Sugar, another well entrenched colonial product, is the catalyzing agent that is critical to the brewing process of Ginger Beer. The paradox being that to successfully brew this life-giving potion you must feed it with refined sugar and allow it to feed on itself. The symbiotic relationship between the ginger the sugar and the bitter lime gives this brew it's paradoxically bittersweet bite. The longer we leave these three contradictory elements alone in the dark to affect each other, the sharper the taste and the greater the healing properties. What does this say about the colonial process and how it lives and breeds itself in the colonised body? According to Humberto Maturana, the Chilean biologist/philosopher who first proposed the word autopoiesis, we *conserve* the pain (and other emotions such as love and liberation perhaps) in the present. What we conserve affects our development, how we see and interact with other beings in our social ecology. "Whenever, in the collection of elements, some relations begin to be conserved, a space is open for everything else to change around the relations that begin to be conserved. What is important/significant in *change* is what is being conserved."³

¹ I reference here the lifestyle section of the Trinidad and Tobago Guardian Sunday December 13, 2015.

<https://www.guardian.co.tt/lifestyle/ginger-treat-your-palate-6.2.372608.32ad5a830e>

² I found this nugget on The practical Herbalist website <https://www.thepracticalherbalist.com/holistic-medicine-library/ginger-warming-medicine-soul/> written by Candace Hunter

³ Humberto Maturana articulated this concept beautifully in an interview with Ward Miller. Filmed in Santiago Chile in 2009. Filmed and Edited by Devin Kumar Produced by Ward Maillard and Mount Madonna <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fQFlceVouPA>



is for **Quetzalcoatl**

Quetzalcoatl legacy curry wings (regular and **el diablo**)

In this recipe, Quetzalcoatl spreads his huge wings and serpentine tail reaching beyond MesoAmerica to touch the ports of Jamaica, Grenada, England, South America, India the Middle East and the land we now call Canada.

Ingredients

As many chicken wings as it takes to ensure the short-term sustenance of your party

Seasoning:

Any herbs or seasonings in your arsenal, cupboard, garden or plantation... Ride the winds of change and be bold! be creative! Be multi-culti-licious!

Flour (I prefer gluten free flours—chickpea flour is the best and it brings an Eastern flare!)

Hot Jamaican curry (Use Montego Jamaican style Hot Curry Powder for best results)

Y Josephine's homemade hot sauce to taste (a little goes a long way...)

Method:

1. Submerge your chicken wings in a bowl with Quezalcoatl's life-giving water. Add vinegar or limes. You can leave them to soak a while in the lime water. This will prepare these sacred wings—purifying them for their sacrificial duty.

2. Season chicken wings using what you have in your arsenal/pantry/garden or plantation. Don't be afraid to get your hands dirty as you massage the multi-culti-licious seasonings into the wings. Be careful not to over-salt your wings...as many seasonings hide their salt content to avoid detection. And you must remember that salt is the natural enemy of the spirit.
3. Let them sit in their seasoning for at least ½ hour in the fridge. Overnight is better as it will ensure complete penetration of your seasoning
4. Prepare the coating.
 - a. Combine flour and Jamaican hot curry (maybe ¼ cup flour to a few generous shakes of curry powder). You can either put the combined flour and curry mix into a plastic bag or create your coating mix on a plate.
5. Coat or shake the wings with the mixture ensuring that you shake your own body in response.
6. Bake at 350 degrees for 1 hour or until crispy and brown.

For **el diablo** wings

1. Before you shake or coat your wings in the flour/curry mixture anoint them in an oil based hot sauce of your choice for at least an hour. Overnight will have more potent results allowing the heat to penetrate and invigorate the bones. Be careful to ensure that your chosen hot sauce does not overpower the curry flavour. With a breathy (dry) whisper deliver this message to your Quetzalcoatl **el diablo** wings to appease the god of the underworld: **"Burn baby burn! But please spare our children!"**
You may choose to use your native language or the colonizer's tongue. Note that whichever way you go may influence the outcome. The same message must be delivered while you consume your **el diablo** wings and suck the marrow from the bones. You may want to perform Guillermo Gomez Pena's *Identity Ritual* prior to consuming the **el diablo** wings. Here's the link for your convenience:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=flfAk-guplA>

The Story

This recipe began in the kitchen of my Auntie-Pam who would make these wings by special request. They were a favourite alongside her rum balls. She didn't share how she made her wings—not necessarily to be obstinate or secretive but because she made decisions about what went into her seasonings based on what she had at her fingertips and what she fancied that day. When Quetzalcoatl got wind of these wings he/she/they scoured the planet to find out which ingredients would bring life back to the people and usher in the winds of change. Through trial and error—using the creative mind and hands of Auntie-Pam's niece Diane, he/she/they unlocked the mysteries of **Quetzalcoatl legacy curry wings (regular and **el diablo**)!**