

Italy: Limoncello (Lemon liqueur)

🕒 Preparation time: 30 minutes 🗄️ Fermentation: 2 to 4 days

Ingredients

- 8-10 organic lemons
- 1 bottle (750 ml) of pure grain alcohol (from 70% to 90%)
- 2 1/2 cups of white sugar (about 700 gr)
- 750 ml of Water



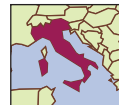
Preparation

Take the lemons, wash them well and remove the zest. After this peel them, being sure to remove as much of the pith (white) from the lemons as possible to avoid bitterness. Separate the alcohol into two bottles and add the lemon zest from earlier to both bottles of alcohol, and let it marinate for between 48 to 72 hours. Seal both bottles well, and keep them out of sunlight.

After the marination period, put the water in a pan to boil. Once boiled remove from the heat and add the sugar and stir until the sugar has dissolved. Cover and let stand at room temperature overnight. Strain the alcohol through a mesh strainer to remove the zest which can then be discarded. Add the sugar/water mixture in equal parts to your bottles and then also transfer the alcohol back into the bottles. Seal the bottles and refrigerate until cold for at least 4 hours and up to 1 month. Limoncello is best served chilled after a meal as a digestive liqueur.



The recipe and preparation of this Limoncello were provided by Mr Marco Aceto, organic lemon farmer based in Amalfi, Italy



Globally Important Agricultural Heritage Systems (GIAHS) Lemon Gardens, Italy



The lemon farms or gardens spread all along the Costiera Sorrentino Amalfitana in Southern Italy are an outstanding example of how an agricultural landscape is characterising a whole geographical area. However, the “giardini di limoni”, as they are known in Italian, are gradually being abandoned. One of the reasons is that cultivation costs are very high.

The narrow and steep lemon terraces limit the access of agricultural vehicles and machines. Therefore, man-power is the only resource. Nevertheless, by occupying even the steepest slopes, their presence has protected the territory and contributed to preserve the soil from hydro-geological instability. In addition, they have created a beautiful coastal landscape admired by visitors from around the world.

“In our family, we keep producing lemons according to the old traditional cultivation method. We have to go back to the root if we want to keep our agricultural practices and cultural traditions alive.”

Marco Aceto,
Local lemon farmer

Locally grown lemons are of middle-to-large dimensions with light yellow peel and numerous large pockets or pits where essential oils are stored. These are responsible for the aroma given off when the peels are bruised or ground up. The white fleshy interior is large, spongy and dry and is composed of separate sections containing a lot of acid juice and very few seeds.

In July 2001, the Italian Ministry of Agricultural Policy (MIPA) established the “Indicazione Geografica Protetta” for lemons from the Costiera d’Amalfi as prescribed by CEE provision n. 2081/92.

It would be important to analyse the legislative background to identify possible incentives and strategies for the promotion of an enabling environment ensuring the dynamic conservation of this unique agricultural and landscape-shaping practice as a heritage for the future.



GIAHS – A Global Partnership Initiative

In response to the global trends that undermine family agriculture and traditional agricultural systems, in 2002, during the World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD, Johannesburg, South Africa), the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) of the United Nations launched a Global Partnership Initiative on conservation and adaptive management of “Globally Important Agricultural Heritage Systems”.

The overall goal of the partnership is to identify and safeguard Globally Important Agricultural Heritage Systems and their associated landscapes, agricultural biodiversity and knowledge systems through catalyzing and establishing a long-term programme to support such systems and enhance global, national and local benefits derived through their “dynamic conservation”, sustainable management and enhanced viability.