

A PINT A DAY KEEPS THE DOCTOR AWAY?

Ralph Craft thinks so. He began brewing kombucha in late 2010 for himself and his wife Roseann, who had most of her intestines removed in 2004. A friend recommended it to Ralph, Roseann's primary caregiver for the last 7.5 years, as a homeopathic treatment for stress.

Now both of them report dramatically improved health. Ralph, a 65-year-old former Marine pilot, is within 10 pounds of his weight when he joined the Corps. He hasn't taken his arthritis medication for 10 months, his allergies have cleared up, and his last dermatologist's appointment turned up exactly no skin cancer or lesions, for the first time in 14 years.

Roseann has been infection-free for almost two years, and she works (often without her walker) in the kombucha production facility every day, according to a friend.

Ralph credits the 2,000-year old recipe for fermented tea. The water comes from a 400-ft deep well on his property near Warrenton, and the herbs he uses to flavor it are from his garden.

"I wish I could explain the scientific aspect of it. Magical or mystical—it's a common term we've had our customers use over the last year," said Ralph, who now sells kombucha made to order in 19 flavors in a purpose-built kitchen on his 10-acre property, covered in wildflowers. "I think it balances out the body systems, the digestive system. It sets a pH level in your gut that allows you to absorb probiotics."

And if Ralph and Roseann are any indication, kombucha could be good for the heart, too: June 2012 marks their 29th "month-iversary," their monthly celebration of their wedding 24 years ago.

Knock back a pint yourself and watch the magic happen.

Native Harvest is now stocking MTO Kombucha for retail sales.

www.mtokombucha.com



MTO KOMBUCHA

HOMEMADE MEAD

Foraging isn't just for eaters. Drinkers can get in on the fun of discovering wild delectables, too.

Tim MacWelch of **Earth Connection**, near Warrenton, conducts one-day workshops several times a year called Wild Brew 101. The June 23 class will feature blackberry wine, raspberry mead, a seasonal beer, and mint soda. Students go home with each of the brews. Classes are \$97—the perfect father's day gift?

www.earth-connection.com

THE MEN WITH GREEN HATS

The District is about to welcome "liquor making" to its long and varied list of entrepreneurial endeavors. D.C. resident John Uselton and his father-in-law Michael Lowe are preparing to introduce **New Columbia Distillers** to the capital city.

Inspired by a distilling course Lowe took at Cornell University and the duo's apprenticeship at a distillery in Washington state, the gentlemen have decided to complement the city's recent microbrewery uprising with craft liquor. Gin will be the inaugural spirit, says Lowe, as it leaves "a lot of room for creativity." They are currently experimenting with a variety of botanicals but have not yet finalized the recipe. The booze has a name, however: "Green Hat Gin," a nod to the infamous Prohibition era bootlegger, George Cassiday, a.k.a. "the Man in the Green Hat."

Lowe and Uselton anticipate a June release for the gin, with future plans to offer seasonal liquors and whiskey.

—Ashlie Hughes

www.newcolumbiadistillers.com
www.greenhatgin.com



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