

# “WILD BITTERS”

Bitters is defined by Merriam Webster as “a usually alcoholic solution of bitter and often aromatic plant products used especially in preparing mixed drinks or as a mild tonic”.

Bitters have a long history of medicinal purposes including that of being a digestive agent. They have also been a key ingredient in many classic cocktails like the Old Fashioned or the Gin Fizz.

The primary ingredients in making bitters are things like aromatic herbs, spices, botanicals and bark or roots which impart a bitter flavor.

Following are several recipes by our very own Jamie Carlson which use foraged ingredients like black walnuts, juniper berries, sumac and more. So, have some fun on your next foraging adventure and bring home some ingredients to make your own bitters, and then try one of the cocktail recipes in this booklet.

Mark  
Founder, Modern Carnivore



## BASIC BITTERS RECIPE

**Servings: 2-1/2 cups**

(Use with any of the foraged ingredient combinations below)

Place all of the ingredients except the alcohol, water and syrup/sugar in a quart-sized Mason jar or other large glass container with a lid. Add alcohol, seal the jar and store at room temperature out of direct sunlight for 2 weeks, shaking the jar daily.

After 2 weeks, strain the liquid through a cheese-cloth-lined funnel into another large jar. Squeeze the cheesecloth over the jar and transfer solids to a small saucepan. Add the water to the saucepan and bring to a boil. Cover the saucepan, lower heat and simmer for 10 minutes. Let mixture cool completely, and then add mixture to the original Mason jar. Cover the jar and store at room temperature out of direct sunlight for 1 week, shaking the jar daily.

After 1 week, strain the jar with the liquid and the solids through a cheesecloth-lined funnel. Add the syrup/sugar to the jar and stir to combine, then cover and shake well. Strain through cheesecloth one last time and then divide into storage bottles. The bitters will taste their best if used within 1 year.

### SIMPLE SYRUP RECIPES

Many of the wild bitters recipes below calls for a simple syrup. Here's how to make them.

#### Simple Syrup - Basic

1 cup water  
1 cup sugar

In a small pot heat over medium heat until combined, allow to cool and use.

#### Simple Syrup - Maple

2/3 cup maple syrup  
1/3 cup water

Stir together and use.

#### Simple Syrup - Birch

2/3 cup birch syrup  
1/3 cup water

Stir together and use.

## FORAGED INGREDIENT BITTERS

### Maple-Walnut Bitters

3/4 cup lightly toasted chopped black walnuts

12-15 black walnut leaves

1 tsp cassia chips, available online or at specialty stores

1/2 tsp whole allspice

1/4 tsp black peppercorns

4 cloves

2 cups high-proof bourbon, such as Old Granddad 114

1 cup water

3 tablespoons maple sugar

### Plum Burdock Bitters

2 cups old granddad 114

1 cup toasted pecans

8 oz whole pitted wild plums

1 tsp whole allspice berries

2 tsp juniper berries

4 Star Anise

1 Vanilla Bean, split

1 tablespoons cassia chips

1-1/2 tablespoons Earl Grey Tea

Fresh Burdock, the size of a small carrot, ~1.5 ounces, sliced with carrot peeler

1 cup of distilled water

3 tablespoons maple sugar

### Juniper Sumac Bitters

2 cups 100 proof vodka

1/3 cup fresh juniper berries

2 tablespoons whole black peppercorns

8-1/4 inch thick strips of lemon peel

1 tablespoon whole allspice berries

1 tablespoon dried sumac

4 sprig of thyme

2 sprigs of rosemary

2 star anise

1 cup distilled water

3 tablespoons honey

### Birch Bitters

2 cups 100 proof vodka

1 large handful of fresh birch leaves and twigs

2 tsp dried lemon peel

1 tsp cardamom

1 tsp fennel seeds

1 tsp whole allspice

4 cloves

1 cup of distilled water

3 tablespoons of birch syrup

### Rosehip and Dandelion Root Bitters

2 cups High proof rum (151 work great)

1 cup dried rosehips

1 tsp white pepper corns

1 tsp cocoa nibs

1 tsp dried dandelion root

1 tsp cassia chips

1 cup distilled water

3 tablespoons maple sugar

# COCKTAIL RECIPES

## WITH FORAGED BITTERS

### Mr. Pepper

- 2 ounces bourbon
- 1-ounce lemon juice
- 1-ounce simple syrup
- 2 dashes Worcestershire sauce
- 2 dashes hot sauce
- 2 droppers of juniper sumac bitters

Add all the ingredients to a cocktail shaker with 4-5 ice cubes and shake for 30 seconds. Strain into a glass and enjoy.



### Dark and Stormy

- 1-ounce Lime juice
- 2 ounces dark rum
- 6 ounces ginger beer
- 2 droppers of plum and burdock bitters

Fill a highball glass with ice and add the lime juice and the bitters. Pour in the ginger beer and top with dark rum. Serve with a lime wedge.



### Bloody Mary

- 4 ounces tomato juice
- 1-ounce lemon juice
- 2 ounces vodka
- 2 droppers of juniper sumac bitters
- 2 dashes Worcestershire sauce
- 2 dashes of your favorite hot sauce

Pour all ingredients in a glass over ice, stir and enjoy with your favorite garnishes, I like a pickle and some pickled ramps.



### The Consolation

- 1-ounce bourbon
- 1-ounce amaretto
- 1-ounce lemon juice
- 1/2 ounce simple syrup
- 1 egg white
- 2 droppers of maple walnut bitters

Add all ingredients to a cocktail shaker and shake vigorously without ice for 30 seconds. Add 3-4 ice cubes and shake for another 30 seconds. Strain into a glass and enjoy.

## Hemingway Daiquiri

1-1/2 ounces of good rum

1/2 ounce luxardo Maraschino liqueur

3/4 ounce grapefruit juice

1/2 ounce lime juice

2 droppers of rosehip bitters

Add these ingredients to a cocktail shaker with ice and shake. Strain into a coupe glass and read *The Old Man and the Sea*.

## Gin Fizz

2 ounces of gin

1-ounce lemon juice

1-ounce simple syrup

1 egg white

2 droppers of juniper sumac bitters

Club soda

Add all Ingredients except the club soda to a cocktail shaker and shake vigorously without ice for 30 seconds. Add 3-4 ice cubes and shake for another 30 seconds. Strain into a glass then add enough club soda to fill the glass, about 3 ounces.



HEMINGWAY DAIQUIRI



IRISH COFFEE

## Irish Coffee

1 ounce Irish whiskey

2 tsp maple sugar

4 ounces coffee

2 droppers of maple walnut bitters

Lightly whipped cream

For the whipped cream add 1/2 cup heavy whipping cream to a bowl along with 1 tablespoon of maple sugar and 1 tablespoon Irish whiskey. Whisk until the cream thickens slightly but still is pourable.

In a glass add the 2 teaspoons of maple sugar, the bitters and 1 ounce of whiskey, pour in the hot coffee and stir to combine, pour the whipped cream over the top and enjoy.



## Martini

2 ounces of gin

1/2 ounce of dry vermouth

2 droppers of rosehip bitters

Add the ingredients to a cocktail shaker and stir together for 30 seconds. Strain into a martini glass and serve with an olive.



OLD FASHIONED

## Manhattan

- 2 ounces of rye whiskey
- 1 ounce of sweet vermouth
- 1 tsp maraschino cherry juice
- 2 droppers of plum and burdock bitters

Add the ingredients to a cocktail shaker with 3-4 ice cubes and stir for 30 seconds. Strain into a stemmed glass.



## Old Fashioned

- 2 ounces of bourbon
- 1-ounce maple simple syrup
- 2 droppers of maple walnut bitters
- 1 tsp maraschino cherry juice

Add the ingredients to a glass and stir together, garnish with a maraschino cherry and an orange slice.



## Birch and Bourbon

- 2 ounces of bourbon
- 1 ounce sweet vermouth
- 1 ounce birch simple syrup
- 2 droppers birch bitters

Add all the ingredients to a cocktail shaker with ice and shake vigorously for 30 seconds. Fill a glass with crushed ice or snow and strain the cocktail into that glass.



## Grapefruit Sour

- 2 ounces of vodka
- 1 ounce of grapefruit juice
- 1 ounce of birch simple syrup
- 2 droppers of birch bitters

Add all ingredients to a cocktail shaker and shake vigorously without ice for 30 seconds. Add 3-4 ice cubes and shake for another 30 seconds. Strain into a glass and garnish with a grapefruit peel.



## Whiskey Sour

- 2 ounces bourbon
- 1 ounce lemon juice
- 1 ounce simple syrup
- 1 egg white
- 2 droppers full of plum burdock bitters

Add all ingredients to a cocktail shaker and shake vigorously without ice for 30 seconds. Add 3-4 ice cubes and shake for another 30 seconds. Strain into a glass then float a few drops of maple walnut bitters on top of the egg white head.

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