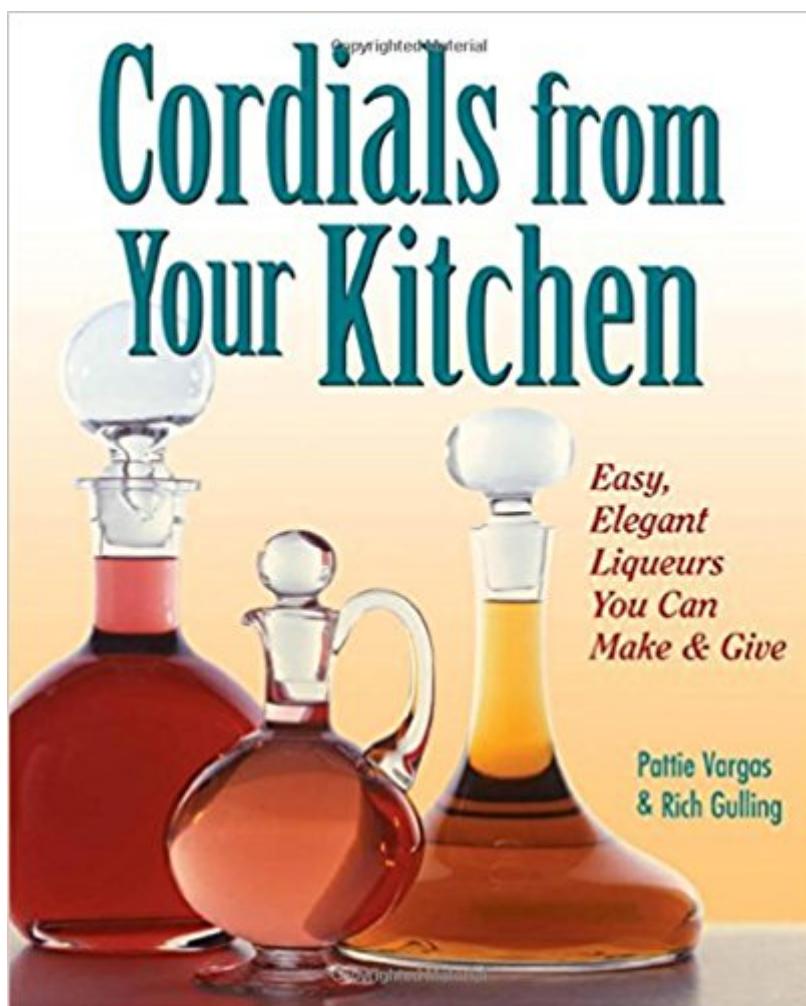


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# Cordials From Your Kitchen: Easy, Elegant Liqueurs You Can Make & Give



## Synopsis

Create your own delicious liqueurs. Pattie Vargas and Richard Gulling provide recipes for over 100 home-crafted cordials to suit every occasion, from cinnamon coffee liqueur to spiced blackberry brandy, and pineapple rum to black walnut liqueur. The simple instructions and insightful tips will have even beginners filling bottles with after-dinner joy. Learn to use your flavored liqueurs to spice up main dishes or add an extra pop of flavor to timeless desserts, and be sure to invite some friends over to enjoy a few sips. ^

## Book Information

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Average Customer Review: 4.5 out of 5 stars^ ^ See all reviews^ (53 customer reviews)

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## Customer Reviews

I've been looking a long time for a really good home-liqueur book, and this is not it. The "Getting Started" info at the beginning is very helpful for beginners -- the authors include details about materials, procedures, and a glossary -- but the recipes themselves cater a little too much to a suburban craft-fair mentality. There are "quick-and-easy" recipes using store-bought flavor oils and food coloring (why bother?), and nearly all the recipes across the board are too sweet. That said, there are a few nice ones: a home version of Strega which clearly cost the authors some effort and experimentation, a tasty cranberry cordial and a brilliant elderberry liqueur. A good book for beginners in home liqueur production, but not much new or interesting for serious hobbyists.

I tried many recipes from this book, and I am very disappointed with 90% of them. The liquors have no character, are too sweet, and are mostly "quickies." What the heck is the point of making a

"home" cordial by mixing vodka, food coloring, and an artificial flavouring?! Get real, just buy some cheap schnaps for \$5, the taste will be better. But I guess you can expect those results from these authors. At the beginning of the book they admit that they wrote it because of the success of their "wine making" book (I think, I am not sure if it was really about wines). They started experimenting, and - voila! - here is another book from the "experts." Well, it does not work. Skip this book.

I bought this book a year ago to make some unique holiday gifts, and I'm already excited to start ramping up for this year. Now I have a food processor, so I can give the nut liquors (i.e. homemade amaretto, yum) a shot. We have found these recipes to yield quite delicious results. Our top three so far are the raspberry, vanilla bean, and honey liqueurs. The honey liqueur is the easiest to make, as it is basically a honeyed brandy. The fruit ones are more work, since they need to be strained and then need time to settle. The results are worth it though! A previous reviewer who did not like the book mentioned the "quickie" recipes using artificial colors and artificial flavorings. Yes, those recipes are in the book, and yes, I've tried some of them. The caramel liquor yielded great results, but the "quickie" raspberry was completely sub-par compared to the real deal. For the most part, I've been avoiding them, although I want to give the butterscotch one a try. The good news is that the book is so full of recipes, I don't feel like skipping them leaves me with less of a book. Supplies-wise, I bought 2 and 3-quart mason jars from The Container Store. Trader Joe's has a 1 quart bottle of Green Tea in a green glass bottle for \$1, and I use those bottles as well as my empty vodka and brandy bottles for recipes that make 1 qt. or less. For gift-giving, I order 5 oz. "woozy" glass bottles with a white lid from [...] (Click on "Glass Bottles", then "Sauce", and you'll see a great assortment.) The 5 oz. Woozy starts at \$.57 each. I also recommend using their easy to apply Shrink-Wrap Bands. The book is also chock full of ideas on how to use your liqueurs once made. Just yesterday I added the raspberry liqueur to buttercream icing for cupcakes. I think this book is awesome. I'll be using it for years to come!

I can't really cook, but Cordials I can make. I have used this book to create several cordials, I even won an award for one strawberry cordial that I made from my brewer's guild. Many recipes say let stand for 1 week or 1 month. I find that most of my cordials taste best after 10 months to 1 year. Even better after 2 years (note: not the cream liquors), so don't throw it out if it still doesn't taste right after 6 months... let it age. I keep notes in this book on how they turned out and what I did differently which makes it even more valuable to me. It's more than just a cordial recipe book, it's a cordial inspiration spring board.

In an effort to save money this past Christmas, my husband and I decided to get back to homemade gifts. What a hit our homemade liqueurs were! So, we decided it was worth the investment of buying this book and adding to our collection of recipes. This book contains delightful and different recipes that we are anxious to start making. Things like mango rum, pineapple rum, pear liqueur, cherry liqueur, the list goes on. Our friends and family are now always asking "what's brewing?" and putting in their requests for next Christmas!!! My only concern is that many of the recipes in this book contain a lot of sugar (which we try to limit.) For gifts, we use the proper recipes, but for home we do experiment with less sugar or equal (next I'll try Splenda) and have had some success. This book is fun and worth buying, but I won't share it! We've even started making fun and quirky labels on the computer (with a logo too!) to dress up the gifts. People love it! And, we now save all of our small screw top bottles (200-400 mls are perfect) so that one batch of liqueur will yield 4-6 gifts for giving.

I've made about a dozen of the cordials in this book. They are easy to make whether you use fruit or extracts and they look and taste great! I'm including some in all my holiday gift baskets this year and we are going to feature them at our Holiday Open House. Personally, I'm not a drinker but I use cordials frequently in cooking, especially desserts. This book has saved me a lot of money considering I can make a bottle of walnut liqueur for a few dollars instead of buying it...

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