










Almanac

A Practical Handbook for Living Naturally in the Modern World

NATURAL HANGOVER CURES

Scientists don't know what causes hangover symptoms—nausea, aches, and that general hit-by-a-falling-Dumpster feeling—but natural cures can help, says herbalist Karen Rose (page 69). Below, the remedies that stop hangovers before they start, or alleviate the morning-after blues.

NATURAL CURE	HOW IT WORKS	HOW TO TAKE IT
BORAGE OIL 	This Mediterranean herb is believed to have an anti-inflammatory effect, which may ease general hangover symptoms.	Try a capsule or a few drops of liquid tincture when you wake up feeling lousy.
GINGER 	Got that seasick feeling ? Gingerroot has long been celebrated for its stomach-settling, anti-nausea properties.	Brew a cup of gingerroot tea, such as the one by Swanson Organic, or make it from scratch. [Thinly slice a 1" segment of fresh ginger and steep in boiling water 5 minutes.]
HOVENIA 	In studies on mice, researchers at UCLA showed that a compound in the herb hovenia blocks a receptor in the brain related to intoxication and withdrawal .	Source it via an acupuncturist or a practitioner of Chinese medicine. The supplement BluCetin also contains its active ingredient (blucetin.com).
KOREAN PEAR JUICE 	Australian researchers found that downing this before alcohol significantly reduces symptoms, perhaps because of a substance that helps enzymes metabolize alcohol.	Sip at least 7½ ounces of Korean pear juice (also known as Asian pear juice) before going out. Look for it, canned or bottled, at Asian groceries.
MILK THISTLE TINCTURE 	This herb helps the liver process alcohol, moving it out of your system more quickly and reducing the risk of a hangover.	Add several drops to a glass of water before partying (follow instructions on the bottle). Milk thistle can also ease symptoms the next day.
PEPPERMINT OIL 	Herbalists prize peppermint for its headache-fighting powers—it affects blood flow by regulating blood-vessel dilation .	Rub a bit of the oil on your temples.
PRICKLY PEAR EXTRACT 	Compounds in this desert cactus quiet the body's inflammatory response to alcohol, researchers found, cutting hangover risk by half.	Pop a few capsules or squirt a few drops of liquid extract into your mouth (follow instructions on the bottle) 4 to 5 hours before your first drink.
TURMERIC 	This common kitchen staple in many Asian cuisines also packs a helpful anti-inflammatory punch.	Stir a spoonful of turmeric into warm milk with cinnamon.
UMEBOSHI 	A traditional remedy in Japan, the pickled plums contain electrolytes that help replenish your depleted supply and are thought to help the liver process alcohol.	Soak dried <i>umeboshi</i> (available in Asian markets) in hot water for at least 5 minutes, then chop and mix into rice.

The Cool Science of Wool

In addition to being a beautiful medium for woven goods (see "Homespun Beauty," page 24), wool has fascinating properties that make it ideal for keeping warm in winter—for people and sheep alike.

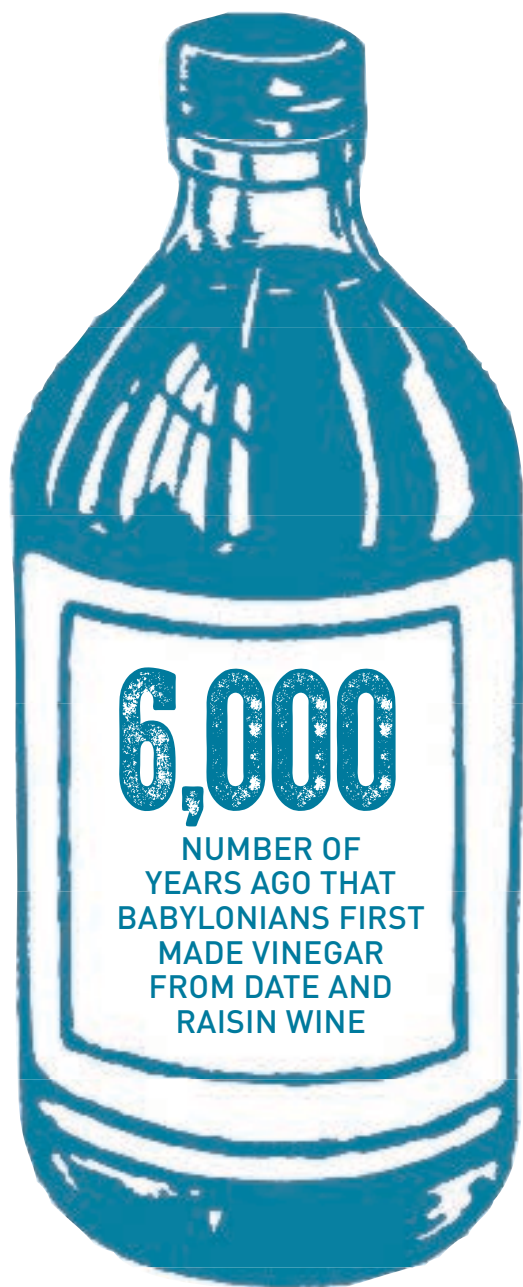
NATURALLY ODOR-RESISTANT Synthetic fabrics tend to take up body oils that cause odor, but wool fibers resist microbes. Lanolin, an antimicrobial oil secreted by the sheep, also adds protection.

INSULATES YOUR SKIN Wool fiber pulls moisture toward the outside of the garment so your skin stays dry. The material can soak up 35 percent of its weight before you'll feel damp.

COZY WHEN WET Wool feels warmer as it becomes wetter, thanks to a heat-generating chemical reaction between water molecules and the fiber's core.

CLIMATE CONTROLS In cold and windy places like the Rocky Mountains, sheep grow crimped fibers that trap extra insulating air. In milder climates, fibers tend to be more uniform, with less elasticity and air-trapping ability.





The New Delicious KITCHEN ALCHEMY

Red wine is great to drink, and for those of us who love to cook, it's also a beneficent gift from the gods of the kitchen. I challenge you to find an ingredient that deepens the flavor of a braised beef dish or a deglazed sauce more than a decent cabernet. The problem is leftovers. You open a bottle to drink a couple of glasses or add a plug to the pan, and then what? I hate to waste anything in my kitchen. Fortunately, there's a fantastic way to put those leftover dribs and drabs to good use: Make vinegar. The process is simple: All you need is a 1-gallon earthenware crock and a "mother" of vinegar made of active bacteria that converts the alcohol in the organic wine (buy it online at homebrewing.org). And you'll only need to purchase one mother: Make sure she never dries out, and she'll live forever. —Erik Murnighan, President of New York City Campus, International Culinary Center

Join Rodale's *Organic Life* and the International Culinary Center in New York City for classes on cooking the bounty of the season. For details, e-mail Kimberly Jarrell at kjarrell@culinarycenter.com.

DIY Red Wine Vinegar

1. Start with 8 ounces of "mother" of vinegar (see "Kitchen Alchemy," below) and anywhere from 8 ounces to one bottle of organic red wine. Pour both into a crock (check instructions on your particular mother). Cover crock with cheesecloth.

2. Add leftover wine periodically (it's fine to mix varieties) until the crock is three-quarters full, leaving a few inches at the top. About three bottles will fit in a 1-gallon crock.

3. Check the vinegar weekly. It's ready to bottle when the liquid smells strongly of vinegar and a solid skin has formed on top. This takes five to six weeks.

4. Ladle half of the vinegar from the crock, leaving the skin in place. The remaining vinegar is your new mother. Using a funnel, transfer the ladled vinegar into empty wine bottles. Cork and store in a cool, dark place. Bottled vinegar improves with age and lasts a few years.

5. Continue adding wine to the crock until you've replaced about as much as you bottled. Subsequent batches take only two to three weeks.

Garden Guru

A Fresh Resolve

BY MARGARET ROACH

It's early enough in the year that you're probably still jotting lists of seeds or plants to try, designing refinements, making other intentions for the garden ahead. Here are 10 resolutions for 2016 that add up to greener overall behavior, some with cost savings, too.

1 UPGRADE TO ORGANIC SEED if available.

It's a better match for your chemical-free garden, plus your purchases reward suppliers who farm cleaner.

2 STOP BUYING BAGGED MULCH and find a local source of an aged product for bulk delivery instead. Fewer plastic bags get trucked around, and you get a more soil-sustaining material than bark chips that tie up nutrients like nitrogen as they break down.

3 TEST SOIL as soon as it's workable instead of reflexively buying amendments, including fertilizer, presuming you need to "add something." Usually you don't.

4 AVOID STORE-BOUGHT GARDEN REMEDIES, even those labeled organic. Use vigilance instead. Promptly remove faded, floppy leaves or sick plants before they invite trouble. Inspect beds regularly for early signs of pests (eggs on leaf undersides or chewed bits). Intervene with hand-picking or a stiff hose spray—a few holes in your arugula don't warrant pesticide.

5 CREATE MORE "EDGE," technically called ecotone—the midlayer, wildlife-supporting transition zone between two habitats. Hint: There's no ecotone where mown grass meets 40-foot tree.

6 REASSESS YOUR LAWN. Can a portion be converted to more diverse planting? Maybe a change in mowing frequency is all that's needed. Less turf mowed is less fuel burned, too.

7 REALLY LEARN TO WEED, once and for all. Do it early (with a hoe to fell emerging seedlings) and often. Waiting until weeds are out of control only increases the urge to resort to sprays.

8,9,10 REMEMBER THE BASICS. Skip the lawn chemicals. Make every drop of water count (which doesn't include watering turf). Compost with commitment.

Margaret Roach creates the awaytogarden.com website.

HOW TO SEASON A NEW CAST- IRON SKILLET OR REVIVE AN OLD ONE

A well-seasoned cast-iron skillet is the ideal vessel for baking airy, golden cornbread. The cast iron retains and also radiates heat, helping to cook the cornbread's interior while yielding a delectably crisp crust. —*Juli Roberts, Rodale Test Kitchen Manager*

Skillet Cornbread

- 1 cup medium-grind stone-ground yellow cornmeal from Heartland Mill, divided
- 1 tsp. baking powder
- 1 tsp. sugar
- ½ tsp. kosher salt
- ¼ tsp. baking soda
- ½ cup boiling water
- ¾ cup buttermilk (or ¾ cup whole milk mixed with 2 tsp. white vinegar)
- 1 egg, lightly beaten
- 4½ tsp. unsalted butter or bacon fat

1. Position a rack in the center of the oven and heat to 450°F.
2. In a small bowl, whisk together ⅔ cup cornmeal, the baking powder, sugar, salt, and baking soda.
3. In a medium bowl, combine boiling water with remaining cornmeal, stirring to make a paste. Stir in buttermilk and egg. Stir dry ingredients into buttermilk mixture to form a batter.
4. Place butter in an 8-inch cast-iron skillet. Place skillet in oven and cook until butter is melted and slightly browned, about 3 minutes.
5. Carefully remove skillet from oven; stir melted butter into batter and quickly pour batter into heated skillet.
6. Return skillet to oven. Bake until golden brown and a toothpick inserted into the center comes out clean, about 20 minutes. Turn cornbread onto a plate and then invert onto a wire rack to cool.



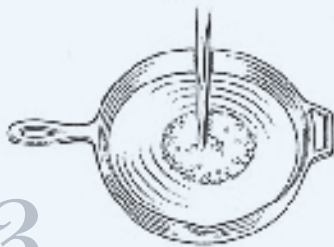
1

Even if it is “preseasoned,” clean the pan inside and out with hot water, soap, and a stiff brush. Scour away any rust. (After this, never use soap, only hot water followed by a touch of oil, to keep the pan in shape.)



2

Using a kitchen towel or a cotton rag, wipe the pan until it's completely dry.



3

Apply a thin coat of melted organic vegetable shortening. You can use cooking oil, but shortening leaves a slightly less sticky finish and has a higher burn point.



4

Place skillet upside-down on the top rack and bake at 350°F for one hour. Put a baking sheet below to catch drips. Let it cool in the oven.

ROL Sources

19 EARTH-FRIENDLY **CHOCOLATES**, page 16: Not finding them on store shelves? Here's where to grab our favorite bars online: Liddabit Sweets The S'more Candy Bar, \$9 at shop.liddabitsweets.com; Lake Champlain Organic Peanut Butter bar, \$5 at lakechamplainchocolates.com; Chuao Firecracker bar, \$6 at chuaochocolatier.com; Just Good Chocolate Belize bar, \$6 at justgoodchocolate.com; Fruition Dark Milk with Flor de Sal, \$9 at tastefruition.com; Raaka Coconut Milk bar, \$8 at raakachocolate.com; Alter Eco Dark Velvet organic chocolate bar, \$4 at shop.alterecofoods.com; Divine Milk Chocolate bar, \$4 at shop.divinechocolateusa.com; Pacari Montubia, \$15 at pacarichocolate.us; Amano Dos Rios Dominican Republic, \$8 at shop.amanochocolate.com; Askinosie Tanzania bar, \$9 at askinosie.com; Rogue Chocolatier Jamaica, \$16 at roguechocolatier.com; all others, various prices at chocosphere.com. **CALENDAR**, page 18: Get ready to hit the **Maui Whale Festival** at mauiwhalefestival.org; start planning your trip to the **Sapporo Snow Festival** at snowfes.com/english; and get details on the **Organic Seed Growers Conference** from seedalliance.org/events. **ARMCHAIR AGENDA**, page 20: Learn more about *Bread, Wine, and Chocolate: The Slow Loss of Foods We Love* at the author's website, simransethi.com. All of the **books** on page 20 can be purchased from indiebound.com. *Bread, Wine, and Chocolate*, \$27; *Indian Harvest*, \$35; *Near & Far*, \$30; *Vegan*, \$23; *Part-Time Vegetarian*, \$25. **DRESSED FOR WINTER**, page 30: Order **saba** for the arugula and grape salad (recipe on page 35) from igourmet.com (\$17 for a 250 ml bottle). **COLD-WEATHER WARRIORS**, page 52: Shop Claire and Emma Laukitis's online store at aksalmonsisisters.com. **ROL 100**, page 57: (2) Upgrade your centerpiece with **Honeycomb vases**, \$19 to \$59 at westelm.com; (4) organic **jelly beans** will be available January 2016, \$3 at jellybelly.com; (5) kid- and earth-friendly **art supplies** run \$10 to \$20 at ecokidsusa.com; (15) pick up a bottle of **Populus Red** wine for \$24 at popthatbottle.com; (16) get **lingerie** you'll love from Brook There, starting at \$32 per set at brookthere.com; (23) upcycled Peg and Awl **cutting boards** run \$80 to \$120 at pegandawlbuilt.com; (25) cozy up in the plush Hedge **love seat**, starting at \$2,865 at johnderian.com; (27) rethink your commute with the 2016 **Chevy Volt**, starting at \$33,995 at chevrolet.com/2016-volt; (29) to make your own **sprouts**, find organic seeds at johnnyseeds.com or sproutpeople.org; (33) meals delivered by **HelloFresh.com** cost \$69 for a weekly box (6 servings); (34) pick up a bottle of L'Estornell organic **olive oil**, \$25 at igourmet.com; (37) heritage **cornmeal** can be purchased for \$3 to \$4 for 2 lb. at heartlandmill.com; (41) customize your own **hammock** starting at \$35 at tickettothemoon.com; (62) organic **teddy bears** start at \$40 from bearsforhumanity.com (miniature bow ties and polo shirts extra); (65) get an artisan **garden rake** for \$58 at fisherblacksmithing.com; (79) Picaflor **perfume** starts at \$35 for 1 ml at perfumeracurandera.com; (89) a Fjord **Flannel Shirt** from Patagonia costs \$89; (92) Monograno Felicetti **farro pastas** run \$6 to \$9 at eatally.com; (94) sip sustainably with a **glass straw**, starting at \$8 at glassdharma.com; (95) **knives** start at \$400 at bloodrootblades.com. **MY ORGANIC LIFE**, page 112: Visit the **Brooklyn Waldorf School** online at brooklynwaldorf.org and the **Jaya Yoga** studio at jayayogacenter.com.

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