

# Blackcurrant Liqueur

## Ingredients

- 500g blackcurrants, stripped from their stalks
- 500ml fruity red wine, such as Beaujolais or Tarrango
- About 500g granulated sugar
- About 300ml vodka

## Method

1. Combine the blackcurrants and wine in a glass or ceramic bowl and leave to macerate for at least 24 hours (and up to 48).
2. Purée the blackcurrants and wine in a food processor, then tip into a sieve lined with muslin or a clean cloth.
3. Leave to drip for several hours, then squeeze out the last of the juice by twisting the edges of the cloth together with your hands.
4. Measure the juice into a large saucepan. For every 100ml juice, add 60g sugar.
5. Heat gently, stirring frequently, until the sugar dissolves.
6. You now need to cook the syrup at the lowest possible temperature – to quote Jane Grigson, ‘regulate the heat so that the liquid keeps above blood heat but well below simmering and boiling points’.
7. This helps to ensure that the pectin in the fruit isn’t released, which would cause the liquid to set into a gel once cooled.
8. You might find it helpful to use a heat-diffusing plate on the hob, and even to turn the heat off every now and again for a minute or two, to keep the liquid below simmering.
9. Cook it like this for about 2 hours, skimming off any scum that forms.
10. It will reduce slightly and become a little more syrupy, though it can be hard to detect this while it’s still hot. Leave it to cool completely.
11. Meanwhile, sterilise your bottles, and their lids or caps, by washing in very hot, soapy water (use a bottle brush), rinsing well and then putting them on a tray in a low oven (at 120°C/Gas 1/2) for 20 minutes to dry out.
12. Leave to cool.
13. Measure the cooled syrup, then stir in one part vodka to three parts syrup.
14. Decant into the cold, sterilised bottles.
15. Store for at least 2 weeks before drinking.



## Notes

This homemade version of crème de cassis has a deliciously rounded, smooth flavour that’s perfect in a kir or kir royal (combined with white wine, or sparkling wine, respectively). You can also use it in puddings such as sorbet. Or simply trickle it over vanilla ice cream, or apple pie, or both!