

AUTHENTIC UKRAINIAN ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES (АВТЕНТИЧНІ УКРАЇНСЬКІ АЛКОГОЛЬНІ НАПОЇ)

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It is no secret that Ukrainians carefully preserve the authenticity of local cuisine, its particularities and diversity. Such a practice applies not only to the food, but also to drinks.

Before 1936, horilka was known as an infusion of herbs, berries or roots in strong alcohol. However, the modern meaning of horilka as a solution of water and purified alcohol is the right one. Due to its composition, the drink is recognized as the purest alcoholic beverage in the world. It is a universal drink that will fit any event or feast.

Varenuvka is another drink that consists of vodka and spices. However, its peculiarity is in how it's made, having appeared in the 16th century on the territory of Central Ukraine. It involves taking dried fruit, putting them in clayware, pouring vodka over it, and then adding a mixture of spices, particularly a bit of hot pepper, cinnamon, cloves, ginger, and a spoonful of honey. The drink is completed by putting the mixture into the oven on low heat and cooking for 10–12 hours. It can be poured hot or cold.

Spotykach is a sweet Ukrainian alcoholic beverage that is distinguished by the original manufacturing technique of the heating of ingredients. Being created in the 18th century, the drink was constantly improved and reached its top form in the following century. Spotykach is a drink prepared with berries, spices, and vodka and infused for two weeks. There are four different kinds of spotykach: berry, lemon, mint, and rowanberry. In addition, it has a particular physiological impact, in that those who try it become totally relaxed and stumble.

Medovukha originates from the times of Kievan Rus. Those who have visited Western Ukraine at least once know that medovukha is the most popular beverage there. A low-alcohol drink, obtained through the fermentation of honey, it has different methods of preparation. One can add spices, hop, berries, or even exclude the vodka. Because honey contains a large number of minerals and vitamins, medovukha has healing properties and a beneficial effect on the digestive system.

Traditional beverages in Ukraine have their own unique recipes and characteristic flavors and remain a part of everyday life up to today. Therefore if somebody wants to surprise guests, it's better to take care of it beforehand.