

[Brandywine Table]

“Mother” Made

A TOAST TO LOCAL KOMBUCHA AND THE MATRIARCH WHO INSPIRED IT ALL.

Alyssa Thayer



Olga Sorzano, owner of Baba's Brew

IT'S THAT TIME OF YEAR WHEN WE HONOR THE mother figures in our lives — the mommies, aunties and grammies who've helped shape us into the people we are today.

Memories of these women often come to us on the wings of a savored scent or in the taste of a familiar food.

For Olga Sorzano, owner of **Baba's Brew** of Phoenixville, kombucha is the taste of childhood. She was born in South Siberia and raised by her great-grandmother Dora, affectionately called “Baba” or “red squirrel” until age six. Baba's home-brewed kombucha was a cure-all. No matter the ailment, she'd simply say “have some kombucha.”

Turns out, Baba wasn't far off ... kombucha, a fermented tea drink, has amazing healing properties. Its raw fermentation process yields a host of beneficial probiotics and enzymes to support a healthy microbiome. Plus, its lightly sweet and tangy notes and naturally occurring effervescence make it supremely refreshing.

When Olga came to the U.S. in the 2000s, she was excited to find kombucha in some stores, but quickly realized it wasn't Baba's. They were “too sweet, too sour and too full of junk,” she says. It wasn't until Olga and her husband attended a fermentation festival in California that she drank kombucha fresh and vibrant enough to remind her of home.



Olga with her great-grandmother Baba, the woman who inspired it all. Olga volunteered at the World Central Kitchen to help Ukrainian refugees.

Olga says, “When you cannot find what you want, you create it yourself.” And so she did. Upon returning home she put her unique background in microbiology, chemistry and culinary arts to work, brewing kombucha that was delicious, nourishing and authentic to her roots. She named the business “Baba's Brew” after the woman who inspired it all and committed to using real, organic ingredients, sourced as locally as possible. “If I put my great-grandma's name on the bottle, I want her to be proud of what we are doing,” she says.

At its inception, Baba's Brew occupied a 70-square-foot space at Artisan Exchange in West Chester. Little by little the business grew, and Olga and her husband devoted more of their time to it. Eventually, they quit their jobs to focus 100% on Baba's. The couple moved into a 7,000-square-foot building in Phoenixville and opened Culture Factory in 2019, a tasting room and education space at the front of the brewery.

Baba used to say, “Every new thing is a well forgotten old thing,” and in the case of kombucha, it's certainly true. The seemingly new and trendy beverage was invented in 221 BC in China and has been enjoyed by many cultures since.

You can find Baba's Bucha at local grocers, cafes and on tap at several locations including Kimberton Whole Foods and the Culture Factory. Wherever you grab it, enjoy it in good health and with a nod to the strong and wise “Babas” of the world.



All of Baba's Bucha ingredients are organic and as local as possible. Cases of local pawpaws for a limited release flavor.

Recipes

Baba's Bucha is admittedly delicious on its own but also blends perfectly into mocktails, cocktails, smoothies and even baked treats.

Springtime Sips

If you're looking for something a tad more “spirited,” stir up one of these festive seasonal cocktails.



Flower Power Buchatini

This fun and flirty cocktail is everything you'd want from a special martini, all while keeping those wonderful probiotics intact. Serve it 'up' in a martini glass for a bit of added drama.

Garnish

- 2 T. dried organic rose petals (or other edible flowers), crushed
- ½ C. granulated sugar

Martini

- 8 oz. vodka or gin
- 6 oz. Flower Power kombucha
- Juice of 1 lemon

In a shallow, wide bowl or plate, combine flower petals and sugar. Moisten rim of glasses with lemon juice and press, then spin rim into sugar mixture to coat.

Fill a cocktail shaker with ice. Then add vodka or gin, kombucha and lemon juice. Shake for 30 seconds or until well chilled. Strain into prepared glasses.

Serves 4.

Blueberry Kombucha Mojito

This fruit-forward refreshing cocktail is simple to create and delicious to enjoy. Make it into a satisfying mocktail by simply omitting the rum.

- ¼ C. fresh blueberries, plus additional for garnish
- 8 mint leaves, plus additional for garnish
- 1 oz. white rum
- 6 oz. Baba's Bucha Purple Rain kombucha
- Juice of one-quarter lime

Add blueberries and mint leaves to a cocktail shaker. Using a muddler or



Bucha Basics

Say it: “kom-BOO-cha.”

Mother Made: Kombucha is a fermented tea drink. It uses a live pancake-shaped culture called a SCOBY or Symbiotic Culture of Bacteria and Yeast, which is also referred to as the “mother.”

Tasting Notes: The fermentation process transforms the tea and sugar into a refreshingly sweet and tart, naturally effervescent beverage. Baba's Bucha has five year-round flavors with various smaller releases each season.

Why It's Great: As with many fermented foods, it's extremely high in probiotics and beneficial enzymes, which do wonders for our digestion and immune system. Plus, the fruits and herbs added for flavor offer additional antioxidants, adaptogens and more.

Sugar Status: Olga is often asked if the product can be made sugar-free. Short answer: No. The sugar is needed to initiate the fermentation and feed the bacteria and yeast. That said, the fermentation process breaks down most of the sugar content into beneficial acids.

Satisfying Switch: Since kombucha has a refreshing taste and wonderful effervescence, it's a perfect replacement for soda. Sodas are much higher in sugar and don't offer any of the same health benefits. Sugar substitutes have also been found to hurt the body's microbiome.

Slow Start: For those who are new to kombucha and live fermented foods, Olga says to start with a little bit and let your system adjust. As with most things, having it often is more important than having it in large quantities. Start with a few ounces per sitting and see how you feel.

wooden spoon, muddle blueberries and mint together. Add rum and kombucha to the shaker and stir well.

Strain and pour the cocktail into a large glass filled with ice. Squeeze in the lime juice and garnish with mint leaves and blueberries.

Serve and enjoy! Serves 1.

Yogurt Panna Cotta and Kombucha Strawberry Jello

This dessert is fresh yet satisfying and benefits from the complex flavors of the kombucha. Make it ahead and serve cold to make your gathering simple and sweet.

Panna Cotta:

- 1 envelope unflavored gelatin
- 2 T. cold water
- 1 C. cream
- ¼ C. sugar
- 1 vanilla bean
- 2 C. Greek yogurt or strained regular full-fat yogurt

Jello:

- 1 T. cold water
- 1 T. unflavored gelatin

2 ½ C. kombucha (Ruby Sipper used but any fruity flavor will work)
1 C. strawberries, chopped



In a small bowl, sprinkle the gelatin over the cold water. Let stand until softened, about 5 minutes.

In a small saucepan, bring the cream, sugar, vanilla bean and its seeds to a simmer. Turn off the heat. Stir in the gelatin until melted.

In a bowl, whisk the yogurt until smooth. Gradually whisk in the vanilla cream. Remove the vanilla bean. Pour the mixture into six ½-cup ramekins and refrigerate until set, at least 3 hours.

Once set, make jello. Add cold water in a small saucepan, sprinkle gelatin on top and let it “bloom” for 5 minutes. Heat over low while stirring constantly until the gelatin is dissolved, about 2 minutes. Slowly add kombucha and chopped strawberries.

Cool completely.

Pour over chilled panna cotta. Place in the refrigerator and let chill for another 2 hours, until set.

Serves 6.

**Honey Almond Cake with Kombucha
Macerated Strawberries**

This delightful cake is the perfect finish to your Mother’s Day luncheon (or any other gathering). It is delicately sweet, moist and surprisingly wholesome.

1½ C. almond flour
½ C. coconut flour
¼ C. arrowroot starch
½ tsp. baking soda
1 tsp. baking powder
¼ tsp. salt
4 large eggs
¼ C. coconut oil, melted and cooled

⅔ C. honey
½ tsp. vanilla
⅓ C. kombucha (any honey, berry or floral flavor will work, we used Bee’s Knees)

Macerated Berries:
1½ C. strawberries, thinly sliced (can be any fresh, ripe berry)
⅓ C. kombucha (we used more Bee’s Knees)
1 T. coconut sugar

Optional Whipped Cream:
1 C. heavy cream, cold
1 T. coconut sugar
½ tsp. vanilla extract
1 pinch sea salt



*****Shortcake Style:*** If you want to make a double layered dessert, split the batter between two 6-inch cake pans. Once cooled, layer with whipped cream (or whipped coconut cream) in between the cakes and on top, and serve with macerated strawberries spooned over.

Preheat oven to 350°. Use a bit of coconut oil to fully grease a 9” cake pan. Place a circle of parchment paper in the bottom of the pan to allow the cake to release more easily. Set aside.

In a large bowl, sift and whisk together all dry ingredients (almond flour, coconut flour, arrowroot, baking soda, baking powder and salt).

In a separate large bowl, whisk together all wet ingredients (eggs, coconut oil, honey, vanilla and kombucha). Carefully mix dry ingredients into wet ingredients until fully incorporated but not over-stirred.

Pour batter into prepared cake pan and place into preheated oven. Bake for 20–25 minutes or until a toothpick/knife comes out clean.

While cake is baking, make macerated berries. Add berries, kombucha and coconut sugar to a small bowl. Let mixture stand for 30 minutes (sugars will dissolve and berries will absorb flavors). Stir occasionally.

Once cake is done baking, remove from oven and place on a rack to cool. Loosen edges with a butter knife and turn cake out onto a plate or cutting board. Allow to cool completely before slicing and serving with macerated berries spooned over top.

If serving with whipped cream, simply add all ingredients for whipped cream into mixer bowl and whisk on medium speed until frothy. Then, turn up to high until soft peaks form. Scoop a little whipped cream over top of the slices or use as directed above to make into a shortcake.

Serves 8.

****Note:*** Spoon strawberries over just before serving since liquid will make the cake mushy if sitting for too long.

Kombucha Float



May gives us little glimpses of the warm weather ahead. Pick any balmy afternoon to enjoy the simplicity and innocence of this elevated childhood favorite.

2 scoops vanilla ice cream (or any other flavor),
nice cream (made from frozen bananas) or sorbet
1 C. Purple Rain kombucha (or any of your favorite flavors)

Scoop the ice cream into a large glass. Slowly pour the kombucha over. Serve immediately.

Serves 1.

Purple Power Smoothie

This antioxidant-rich smoothie is the perfect way to start the day. Mix and match berries and kombucha to make it fit your taste buds.



¾ C. kombucha (we used Purple Rain)
1½ C. frozen mango chunks
1 frozen banana, chopped
1½ C. frozen berries (we used a berry blend)
1 T. lemon juice
1 T. raw honey
¼–½ C. cold coconut water (or regular water)

****Optional:***
1 T. nut butter, to drizzle overtop

Add all ingredients except for coconut/regular water into a high-powered blender. Start on low and work your way up to high, blending on high for 30–40 seconds or until completely smooth. Pour in coconut/regular water slowly as needed to thin out mixture.

Serves 2.

Good ‘n’ Green Smoothie Bowl

There’s something fresh and invigorating about a vibrant smoothie bowl. This one also happens to be packed with good stuff: chlorophyll, iron, fiber and vitamin C to name a few.



½ C. frozen pineapple
½ large banana, frozen
½ avocado
1 T. lemon juice
½ C. chopped apple
½ C. baby spinach
½ C. kombucha (we used Believe for this one)

Add all ingredients to high-powered blender and blend until thick and smooth. Pour/scoop into a bowl and load with toppings: sliced fruit, seeds, shredded coconut, nuts and granola are all great.

Serves 1–2. ♦

Alyssa Thayer found her love of food at an early age, frolicking around her mother’s organic farm and eating her weight in berries and snap peas each summer. She is a self-proclaimed urban farm girl, whose mission is to bring inspired ideas to life, passionate people together, and good food to every table.



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