

Family Tree Food & Stories

What to do With Leftover Champagne

The Recipe



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How to Turn Leftover Champagne Into Something You and Your Family Will Brag About.

This is one of those how-to recipes that will make you look smarter than anyone else! It's very easy to do, surprisingly satisfying, and built on a simple bit of kitchen science. You don't need any special equipment or culinary skills— it's just a low-effort process that, with a bit of patience, has a serious payoff.

Once you try this, you'll start saving champagne on purpose!

Simple Champagne Vinegar Instructions

Step 1 — Pour champagne into your wide-mouth glass jar: NOTE: a wide-mouth is essential because the more surface area = the faster the conversion.

Step 2 — Add starter: Apple Cider Vinegar (ACV). Stir in 3 Tbsp of raw ACV per 1 cup of champagne.

Step 3 — Cover the jar correctly (don't seal): Cover the wide-mouth jar opening with cheesecloth/coffee filter/thin cloth/tea towel, and secure with a rubber band. You want your concoction to breathe, but you don't like bugs or fruit flies to get into it.

Step 4 — Store in the right place: Place the jar in a cool, dark spot (pantry/cabinet) for 3 to 6 weeks (or longer for a more tangy flavor). Taste occasionally to determine whether your mixture is at a point you like.

Step 5 — This is what “done” looks like: Your vinegar will be ready when it smells sharp and tastes like vinegar (not like sad wine).

Note: You may see a cloudy/gelatinous layer on top: that's the “mother,” and it's actually a good sign. You can strain the layer from your champagne before using. This layer, however, is like a sourdough starter, and you can use it to start your next batch of champagne vinegar.

Step 6 — Bottle it: When you like the taste or acidity, Strain out sediment (mother) if you want a clear vinegar (optional), and transfer your homebrew into a bottle with a tight-fitting non-metal lid, such as a cork.

Best uses (where champagne vinegar shines)

- Champagne vinaigrette: whisk with Dijon + honey + olive oil (add shallot/garlic if you want to behave like a restaurant).
- Brighten up and finish your vegetables: splash on roasted asparagus, green beans, or Brussels sprouts after they're cooked or just before they go into the oven for roasting.
- Quick pickles: cucumbers, onions, strawberries (yes, strawberries—don't knock it).
- Pan sauces: deglaze chicken or fish pans for a light, crisp acidity. It's also great for sautéed onions and/or mushrooms!