

Riga Black Balsam is a traditional Latvian herbal liqueur made with many different natural ingredients mixed in pure vodka, giving a 45% abv (90 proof) drink. It can be had as it is, on the rocks or mixed with schnapps, akvavit, or vodka, or warm, in tea, or mixed with soda water or a soft drink - in other words, it can be mixed in a variety of cocktails. The drink itself is black and very bitter, but with a distinct sweetness.

Riga Black Balsam is made by JSC Latvijas Balzams. The traditional recipe was created by Abraham Kunze, a pharmacist living in Riga, and is based on a composition of 24 different ingredients like plants, flowers, buds, juices, roots, oils and berries prepared in oak barrels. It is sold in ceramic hand-made jugs. Over time, experts from many countries have highly regarded the quality of Riga Black Balsam, and have given it more than 30 awards at international fairs.

The Black Balsam is also used in traditional medicine. It is considered to be a good cold remedy and is used against digestion problems. It has been made in Riga since the middle of the 18th century. According to legend, Empress Catherine the Great of Russia, became ill during a visit to Latvia, but was cured after drinking Riga Black Balsam.

Kort sammanfattning

Black Balsam är en traditionell lettisk örtlikör med många naturprodukter som blandas med 45 %-ig vodka.

Drycken är svart och mycket bitter men med distinkt sötma.

Receptet på drycken kommer från farmaceuten Abraham Kunze som blandade 24 olika ingredienser. Black Balsam har vunnit mer än 30 priser vid internationella mässor.

Den används i traditionell medicin och sägs ha botat Katarina den stora när hon insjuknade under ett besök i Lettland.



Då Black Balsam är mycket bitter förreslås 1 tsk (5ml) till 15 cl mousserande vin.