

## Black Currant Gastrique

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Recipe type: Sauce

One go-to sauce in our kitchen that works well with game meat, venison and other fall and winter dishes is a gastrique. That is the official term used for a sweet and sour savory sauce that goes well with hearty Alaskan dishes. If you like the flavor of balsamic vinegar, substitute apple cider vinegar for balsamic. You can also add in other fruits, like fig and apple, to change the characteristics of this versatile sauce.

### Ingredients

- 1 cup chicken stock
- 1 shallot, peeled and minced
- 1 teaspoon thyme leaves
- 3 cups black currants
- 1 tablespoon honey
- 1/2 cup apple cider vinegar
- 1 teaspoon unsalted butter
- Salt and pepper to taste.

### Instructions

1. Place the chicken stock into a medium saucepan over medium high heat. Reduce the chicken stock by half. If you are using a good quality chicken stock, the reduction won't be too salty, but if you use certain commercial stocks, the reduction will be quite salty. You might find some reduced chicken stock packets in the store these days that are of good quality. If you are preparing any type of meat and have pan scrapings at hand – bits of cooked meat – to add into the sauce, add in up to 1/4 cup of scrapings as desired.
2. Add the shallot to the chicken stock and cook until the shallot is soft and golden. Continue to reduce the stock for a few more minutes. Add in the thyme leaves and the currants, coating the currants with the chicken stock. Add in the honey and the vinegar.
3. Simmer the sauce over low heat for about 7 to 10 minutes, or until the black currants have softened and extruded their juices. You can use the back of a wooden spoon to press against the berries to crush them lightly. Add in the butter at the end of the cooking process to “mount” the sauce. This gives the sauce a velvety shine and makes it smoother and creamier.
4. You can either strain the sauce through moistened cheesecloth to make it perfectly smooth, or you can serve it rustic style with the bits of black currant and shallot adding texture and interest to the sauce. I like it both ways.
5. Taste the sauce and add in salt and pepper as needed.

### Notes

Makes 2 cups

Recipe by Within The Wild at <http://withinthewild.com/2012/09/black-currant-gastrique/>