

Sharbat Sekanjabin

Sharbat is Persian cordial, a syrup flavoured with fruits and/or flowers, usually with a sour touch, that's then diluted with water and served over ice. The word is related to sherbet, sorbet, shrub (in the drinks sense) and syrup, via the Arabic sariba meaning 'to drink'. Sharbat sekanjabin, made from honey, white wine vinegar and mint, is the most famous and very refreshing. Other popular sharbat flavours are rhubarb, sour orange, sour cherry, and quince or rose mixed with lime. Use a light, neutral-flavoured honey and a agrodolce-style white wine vinegar, like ALTO olives Chardonnay vinegar, to make sharbat sekanjabin.

Serves 4

INGREDIENTS

- ½ cup honey
- ½ cup water
- ¼ cup agrodolce white wine vinegar
- 3 or 4 sprigs mint leaves, plus extra for serving
- 1 small Lebanese cucumber, thinly sliced
- Ice cubes, for serving



METHOD

1. Place honey and water in a small saucepan over medium-high heat and stir until honey dissolves.
2. Bring to the boil, reduce heat to low-medium and simmer for 10 minutes.
3. Stir in vinegar, increase heat to return to the boil, reduce heat to low-medium and simmer for a further 10 minutes or so, stirring occasionally, until reduced to about 100ml.
4. Remove from heat, add mint, stalks and all, and press to submerge as much as possible. Set aside to cool.
5. Remove the mint from the saucepan, squeezing it to extract as much of the syrup as possible; discard.
6. Transfer syrup to a small jug and refrigerate until needed.
7. Mix 1 tablespoon of syrup with 1/3 cup water in a glass; taste and adjust with more syrup or water to suit your taste.
8. Add ice cubes, a couple of cucumber slices and a sprig of mint and serve.