

Grape Hyacinth Syrup – *Jarabe de jacintos de la uva*

CAUTION: True hyacinths are toxic. As with any other kind of foraging, make sure that you have identified the plant, and it has been grown without chemicals.

Ingredients

2 dozen grape hyacinth (*Muscari*) flower racemes; freshly harvested from chemical-free plants
1 cup freshly boiled water
1 cup sugar
Lemon or lime juice, to taste



Wash grape hyacinth racemes, and drain, shaking excess water (photo below, left). Working with one raceme at a time, hold the stem in one hand, and gently run index and thumb of the other hand up the stem, to dislodge flowers (second photo, below). Continue with the rest of racemes. The flowers measure about half a cup (third photo, below, with stems on the side). Discard stems, and place flowers in a heat-proof bowl or cup; pour in boiling-hot water. Allow flowers to soak for a couple of hours, then strain infusion through a mesh. Discard flowers. This infusion may be kept in the fridge for a couple of days. To prepare syrup, Place infusion and sugar in a saucepan over high heat, stirring to dissolve sugar. Bring to a boil, and continue cooking, stirring occasionally. After ten minutes, tilt pan and run the back of a wooden spoon along the exposed bottom; if a trail may be seen, the syrup is ready. If not, continue cooking and testing every five minutes; this batch took twenty minutes (fourth photo, below). Add a few drops of lemon or lime juice, to turn the murky purple syrup, into a bright pink concoction (photo below, right):



Transfer syrup to a jar with lid. It may be kept for a couple of weeks. Drizzle on pancakes, pastries, yogurt, ice cream, fruit, or use to sweeten and colour pink lemonade.

Shown at the top, and right: a small batch of plain grape hyacinth syrup, next to a larger batch of pretty pink syrup, with added lemon juice:

