

# How mead is made

## 1 Water + Honey + Yeast

This is the foundation of traditional meadmaking. The ratio of honey to water influences the alcohol content, with approximately 3 pounds of honey per gallon of water producing around 13% alcohol. To achieve a lower alcohol content, the amount of honey used is reduced. Wine or cider yeasts are commonly used for higher gravity meads, while beer yeasts are often used for lower gravity meads.

3-4 WEEKS

## 2 Primary Fermentation

During the 7-14 day primary fermentation, yeast converts the sugars in honey into alcohol and CO2. This process is visible through the off-gassing of CO2 bubbles. Since honey is low in nitrogen, nutrients are typically added to support the yeast and ensure a proper fermentation that reaches the desired alcohol level.

## 3 Adjuncts

Once fermentation is complete, the mead is nearly dry, with its base character coming from the honey and yeast. To deepen the profile, additional ingredients such as fruits, herbs, and spices are steeped until the desired balance is reached. This step customizes each mead's unique taste.

8-12 WEEKS

## 4 Stabilizing & Backsweetening

After achieving the right flavor, the mead is stabilized using sulfites and sorbates to halt any further yeast activity, preventing additional fermentation. Backsweetening is then done by adding honey to reach the preferred level of sweetness. Stabilization is crucial to creating a balanced and shelf-stable final product.

## 5 Filtration & Aging

Mead can then be aged, often in stainless steel or oak barrels, with options like bourbon or wine barrels introducing added complexity. Clarity can be obtained through either time or through filtration. Filtration, often down to 0.45 microns, removes any remaining solids and ensures clarity while preventing refermentation. This final step results in a clear and refined mead ready for consumption.



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**IS FOR**  
**MEAD**  
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Tradition and innovation await in every sip on the Virginia Mead Trail.

Discover the rich flavors of locally-crafted mead as you journey throughout scenic Virginia.

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Mead, often called "honey wine," is one of the world's oldest fermented beverages, dating back thousands of years. This ancient drink is crafted by fermenting honey with water, and it can be enhanced with fruits, spices, or hops to produce a broad range



of styles. From sweet to dry and still to sparkling, mead provides a unique tasting experience that bridges ancient traditions with modern techniques. As one of the most sustainable alcoholic beverages, mead inherently supports pollinators

—essential to Earth's ecosystems.

The Virginia Mead Trail offers a journey through this fascinating drink across the Commonwealth's picturesque landscapes. Seasoned connoisseurs and curious newcomers alike can explore its rich variety and uncover the artistry behind this time-honored drink.





# VIRGINIA MEAD TRAIL

make your own itinerary at [vameadtrail.org](http://vameadtrail.org)

**1** Atheling Meadworks  
Meadery and Tasting Room  
123 Campbell Ave, SE  
Roanoke, VA 24011

**2** Black Heath Meadery  
1313 Altamont Ave  
Richmond, VA 23230  
(804) 998-7090

**3** Breezy Hill Meadworks  
15981 Breezy Hill Ln  
Smithfield, VA 23430  
(757) 214-7494

**4** Funktastic Meads  
1212 Alverser Plaza  
Midlothian, VA 23113  
(804) 472-6920

**5** Garden Grove Brewing  
and Urban Winery  
3445 W Cary St  
Richmond, VA 23221  
(804) 918-6158

**6** Hill Top Berry Farm Winery  
& Meadery  
2800 Berry Hill Rd  
Nellysford, VA 22958  
(434) 361-1266

**7** Honey & Hops Brew Works  
212 E Main St A  
Front Royal, VA 22630  
(540) 692-6032

**8** Meadery at Graham Ordinary  
8578 Peaks Rd  
Bedford, VA 24523  
(540) 986-5621

**9** Misty Mountain Meadworks  
661 Warm Springs Rd  
Winchester, VA 22603  
(540) 336-2273

**10** Mountain Run Winery  
10753 Mountain Run Lake Rd  
Culpeper, VA  
(703) 638-5559

**11** Peaks of Otter Winery  
1218 Elmos Rd  
Bedford, VA 24523  
(540) 586-3707

**12** Saga Meadery & Winery  
7 South St  
Front Royal, VA 22630  
(339) 221-3115

**13** Saga Meadery  
56 E Main St  
Luray, VA 22835

**14** Silver Hand Meadery  
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224 Monticello Ave  
Williamsburg, VA 23185  
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**15** Thistle and Stag Meadery  
2045 E River Rd  
Fork Union, VA 23055  
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**16** Thistlerock Mead Co.  
3075 Gables Run Rd  
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(434) 340-1933

**17** Three Legged Run  
4418 W Hundred Rd  
Chester, VA 23831

**18** White Oak Mountain Meadery  
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Chatham, VA  
(888)-264-6323

**19** Windchaser Meadery  
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