**Conditum Paradoxum**

“Put six sextarii of honey into a bronze jar containing two sextarii of wine, so that the wine will be boiled off as you cook the honey.  Heat this over a slow fire of dry wood, stirring with a wooden rod as it boils.  If it boils over, add some cold wine. Take off the heat and allow to cool.  When it does cool, light another fire underneath it.  Do this a second and a third time and only then remove it from the brazier and skim it.  Next, add 4 ounces of pepper, 3 scruples of mastic, a dragma of bay leaf and saffron, 5 date stones and then the dates themselves.  Finally, add 18 sextarii of light wine.  Charcoal will correct any bitter taste.” – Apicius, 1.1

750 ml bottle of white wine  
1 cup honey  
1 date-coarsely chopped  
1 tsp black pepper  
1/2 tsp fennel seeds   
2 bay leaves

Put the cup of honey, 1/4 of the wine, and the date in a saucepan and bring to a boil, make sure the honey dissolves completely.

Once the honey-wine mixture is boiling, lower the heat to simmer and add the remaining ingredients. Cover the pan and let simmer for 10 minutes, giving the spices time to infuse.

Strain the mixture into a pitcher with a fine strainer and a coffee filter. If any of the spices make it into the pitcher you can pour back into the saucepan and re-strain as many times as you’d like. Add the rest of the wine into the pitcher and stir. Use a funnel to pour the wine back into the bottle if desired. Either way, put the wine into the fridge and chill.

Makes one bottle.

Sextarius: noun. (plural sextarii) (historical) **A Roman measure of capacity**, one sixth of a congius, about 546 ml or approximately one pint.