THAT WHICH IS CLAIMED:

1. A method for preparing an ethanol-containing beverage comprising subjecting a source of ethanol comprising an ethanol/water mixture and at least one flavoring component to an extraction process under conditions to provide an ethanol-containing beverage under a rapid aging process compared to conventional methods of aging an ethanol-containing beverage, wherein the method comprises:

subjecting at least one flavoring component to an extraction process with a source of ethanol comprising an ethanol/water mixture,

wherein the extraction process comprises at least one cycle of:

heating and refluxing the source of ethanol and a first portion of a flavoring component in a first vessel to produce a vapor;

condensing the vapor produced from the heated and refluxed source of ethanol in a condenser to provide a condensate;

collecting the condensate in a second vessel comprising a second portion of a flavoring component contained therein; and

remixing the condensate collected in the second vessel with the source of ethanol in the first vessel,

to provide an ethanol-containing beverage.

2. The method of claim 1, wherein the extraction process is a continuous extraction process.

3. The method of claim 1 or 2, wherein the ethanol-containing beverage is a whiskey, bourbon, scotch, rum, brandy, cognac, gin, vodka, tequila, wine, sherry, port, mead or beer.

4. The method of any one of claims 1-3, wherein the second vessel is partially filled with condensate prior to remixing with the condensate with the source of ethanol in the first vessel.

5. The method of any one of claims 1-3, wherein the second vessel is completely filled with condensate prior to remixing with the condensate with the source of ethanol in the first vessel.

6. The method of any one of claims 1-5, wherein the vapor and/or the condensate is passed through a catalyst and/or a filtering material and/or an absorbent material.

7. The method of any one of claims 1-6, wherein the condensate collected in the second vessel is passed through a catalyst and/or a filtering material and/or an absorbent material prior to remixing with the source of ethanol in the first vessel.

8. Use of a system in a method for preparing an ethanol-containing beverage, the system comprising:

a first vessel;

a condenser and/or a reflux component;

a second vessel, wherein the second vessel is smaller than the first vessel;;

a catalyst and/or filtering material and/or absorbent material; and

an aerator, and

the method for preparing the ethanol-containing beverage comprising subjecting a source of ethanol comprising an ethanol/water mixture and at least one flavoring component to an extraction process under conditions to provide an ethanol-containing beverage under a rapid aging process compared to conventional methods of aging an ethanol-containing beverage, wherein the method comprises:

subjecting the at least one flavoring component to an extraction process with the source of ethanol comprising an ethanol/water mixture,

wherein the extraction process comprises at least one cycle of:

heating and refluxing the source of ethanol and a first portion of a flavoring component in the first vessel to produce a vapor;

condensing the vapor produced from the heated and refluxed source of ethanol in a condenser to provide a condensate;

collecting the condensate in the second vessel comprising a second portion of a flavoring component contained therein; and

remixing the condensate collected in the second vessel with the source of ethanol in the first vessel,

to provide an ethanol-containing beverage.

9. Use of claim 8, wherein the system comprises an extraction apparatus.

10. Use of claim 9, wherein the extraction apparatus is configured to provide a substantially constant flow of a liquid throughout the process.

11. Use of claim 9, wherein the extraction apparatus comprises a distillation process wherein a source of ethanol is continuously added to the first vessel such that the volume of liquid contained in the first vessel during the process remains substantially constant, and the distillate is collected in the second vessel.

12. A rapidly aged alcohol-containing beverage obtainable by the method of any one of claims 1-6.

13. The rapidly aged alcohol-containing beverage of claim 12, wherein the rapidly aged alcohol-containing beverage is a whiskey, bourbon, scotch, rum, brandy, cognac, gin, vodka, tequila, wine, sherry, port, mead or beer.

14. The rapidly aged alcohol-containing beverage of claim 12, wherein the rapidly aged alcohol-containing beverage is a blended alcohol-containing product

15. The rapidly aged alcohol-containing product of claim 14, wherein the blended alcohol-containing product is a whiskey, bourbon, scotch, rum, brandy, cognac, gin, vodka, tequila, wine, sherry, port, mead or beer.