

Wagner & Griswold Society

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Wagner and Griswold Society Information > Cast Iron (general info) > Cleaning and Restoration
(Moderators: [Scott Sanders](#), [Jeff Friend](#))


 vinegar bath (Read 319 times)

 **Gary Salsman**
WAGS member
★★★★★


 **vinegar bath**
Nov 19th, 2012, 6:11pm

Posts: 124
OK. I had a senior moment, and left a couple of skillets in a vinegar bath for more than a week. Now when I try to season them, the iron seems to dry right away, and the iron is dull. Are they lost for good, or will repeated seasonings work.

 **Shorty Thompson**

 **Re: vinegar bath**
Reply #1 - Nov 19th, 2012, 7:59pm
Good question !

Posts: 264


 **C. Perry Rapier**
WAGS member
★★★★★

 **Re: vinegar bath**
Reply #2 - Nov 19th, 2012, 8:04pm

Posts: 23581

I have always wondered what would happen to cast iron if it was left in a vinegar bath for an extended period of time. Would you be able to post pics of them? But without looking at them, I am thinking, just clean them up and start seasoning them. I don't see how they could not be usable. 😞

 **Cheryl Watson**
Forum Administrator
WAGS member
★★★★★

 **Re: vinegar bath**
Reply #3 - Nov 19th, 2012, 8:35pm

Posts: 4009

Gary,
1. how did you clean the skillet before placing in the Vinegar bath?
2. After the vinegar bath how did you wash it down?
(note: after being in the vinegar that long, I'd soak it in some baking soda water to neutralize the vinegar)
3. What type of oil are you using to season the skillet, and at what temperature?

And a picture would surely be helpful. 😊

 **Will Person**
Forum Administrator
★★★★★


 **Re: vinegar bath**
Reply #4 - Nov 19th, 2012, 9:13pm

Posts: 9673


I left a scotch bowl in the bath for a few hours and did it in. More than a week..... 😞 I think they are a lost cause.

Will 😞

 **George Gardner**
WAGS member
★★★★★

 **Re: vinegar bath**
Reply #5 - Nov 19th, 2012, 9:19pm
Most likely the acid in the vinegar has surfaced etched the metal, making it less porous.

Posts: 398

 **C. Perry Rapier**
WAGS member
★★★★★

 **Re: vinegar bath**
Reply #6 - Nov 19th, 2012, 9:25pm

Posts: 23581

Quote from George Gardner on Nov 19th, 2012, 9:19pm:
Most likely the acid in the vinegar has surfaced etched the metal, making it less porous.


Is cast iron porous? I always though it was too. But I have been told its not. 😞

 **Will Person**
Forum Administrator
★★★★★

 **Re: vinegar bath**
Reply #7 - Nov 19th, 2012, 9:47pm

Posts: 9673

Cast iron is porous. I could never get the scotch bowl to stop leaving iron behind when I wiped it off. It left the surface slick.


 **Darius Thiel**

 **Re: vinegar bath**
Reply #8 - Nov 19th, 2012, 10:14pm

Posts: 3


I had a #3 skillet once that in my ignorance I polished. After reading the forums here I realized I had seriously screwed it up. I stripped it down again and wet it down and let it rust. After it was fairly rusty I did electrolysis on it and reseasoned it. It did season better than the first time and I think if I had waited for a complete layer of rust it would have been even better. It might not work but what do you have to lose?

 **Blake Williams**
WAGS member
★★★★★

 **Re: vinegar bath**
Reply #9 - Nov 19th, 2012, 10:26pm

Posts: 452

Cast iron is absolutely porous, that's why when you heat it up, then oil it, the piece soaks up the oil and darkens.

 **Gary Salsman**
WAGS member
★★★★★

 **Re: vinegar bath**
Reply #10 - Nov 19th, 2012, 11:14pm

Posts: 124

I cleaned it in a lye bath, then the vinegar. After that I washed with soap and water. I used the pam seasoning method I read about elsewhere in the forums. I'm thinking I took off the hard coating of iron, and now it is more porous. When I oil it, and wipe it down, within minutes of putting in in the oven, it is completely dry. Other skillets I've seasoned are still moist for a while after putting in the oven.

C. Perry Rapier
WAGS member
★★★★★

Re: vinegar bath
Reply #11 - Nov 19th, 2012, 11:35pm

At our convention in Iowa we had this guest speaker and he was a metalurgist, I think that's how you spell it, and he had more degrees than a thermometer. And he said cast iron was not porous. Will, you and Jenny were there. I always thought cast iron was porous too.

Posts: 23581

Cheryl Watson
Forum Administrator
WAGS member
★★★★★


Re: vinegar bath
Reply #12 - Nov 19th, 2012, 11:36pm

Gary, I am agreeing with you on this one... the acid etching from the acetic acid in the vinegar has caused the top layer of iron to become porous due to the long exposure to the acid.

Posts: 4009

Try putting it back in the lye bath for a couple of days(neutralization), and then scrub down with soap and water... NO barkeepers friend(which contains oxalic acid which is STRONGER than acetic acid), just Dawn, cold water and a stainless scrubbie..... dry thoroughly with paper towels and place in 250° oven... I'd let it dry for an extended period of time... maybe 40 minutes... take it up to 500° then try the PAM again...

And a question for the folks on the 'cast iron is porous' thinking.....
If that is true, then why do we need to wipe, and wipe, and wipe the oil away to prevent the oil from globbing up when we season pans? Why doesn't it just get absorbed???
Absorption vs. carbonization.....?

EDIT: Perry I wasn't there, but I agree with the Metallurgist on this one.... Porosity in cast iron is not desirable, and they use fancy x-rays in quality control to diagnose and prevent that in the industrial environment... however porosity vs porous are two different concepts..... I think folks confuse the two. Just my 

Chris Stairs
Forum Administrator
★★★★★


Re: vinegar bath
Reply #13 - Nov 19th, 2012, 11:41pm

[Quote from C. Perry Rapier on Nov 19th, 2012, 9:25pm:](#)

[Quote from George Gardner on Nov 19th, 2012, 9:19pm:](#)

Most likely the acid in the vinegar has surfaced etched the metal, making it less porous.

Posts: 2863

Is cast iron porous? I always though it was too. But I have been told its not. 

Perry,

This was discussed in the technical presentation given by Prof. Frank Peters at the Des Moines WAGS convention. I was not there, but that is probably where you remember the discussion.
While cast iron is not porous, it does have a surface texture that can be damaged from improper cleaning, leading to problems when seasoning.

Chris

Edit: I see others have posted while I was pecking away slowly at the keyboard. 

Cheryl Watson
Forum Administrator
WAGS member
★★★★★

Re: vinegar bath
Reply #14 - Nov 20th, 2012, 12:15am

I like your description Chris, of surface texture. 

Posts: 4009

Gary Salsman
WAGS member
★★★★★

Re: vinegar bath
Reply #15 - Nov 22nd, 2012, 10:48pm

Thanks for the tips Cheryl. I re-soaked them, washed, scrubbed, and dried in the oven. When they cooled, I oiled with pam and wiped dry. Tomorrow I will cook them in the gas grill, but they do look better than they did.

Posts: 124