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## Best Margaritas

- key limes
- 1 orange
- 1/2 cup orange liquor, such as Cointreau
- 1/2 cup tequila, preferable silver
- 1/4 cup super-fine sugar (regular granulated sugar will do in a pinch)
- coarse salt and lime wedges for garnish.

Remove the zest from each lime, and put the zest in a measuring cup. Juice the lime and add the juice to the measuring cup. Continue until you have 1/2 cup of lime juice. Add the zest from one orange. Refrigerate the juice for two hours or overnight.

Strain the juice to remove the zest. Put the juice, tequila, orange liquor, and sugar in a blender. Blend until smooth.

Put some salt on a small plate. Wet the rims of four glasses and press in the salt. Fill the glasses with ice, add the margarita mixture, and garnish each glass with a wedge of lime. It is well worth the time and effort to buy fresh key limes and juice them for this.

*RGP*

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## Blackberry Cordial

- 2 parts blackberry juice
- 1 part sugar
- 1 part Christian Brothers brandy

Measure juice and put in a large kettle. Add 1/2 cup sugar per cup of juice. Heat just to a boil, then cool. When cool, add brandy and place in sterile containers and seal. Store in a cool, dark place for at least three months.

I usually use old wine bottles and corks. The longer you can leave this alone the better it becomes.

This recipe can also be used for grape or blueberry cordial. Blackberry is our favorite.

### Blackberry Juice

- 1 gallon blackberries
- 1 quart water
- 1 tablespoon whole allspice
- 1 tablespoon whole cloves
- 1 tablespoon cinnamon bark

Place clean, unwashed berries in a large kettle. Add water. Tie spices in a thin bag and add to berries. Squash the berries with a potato masher, while bringing to a boil. Boil about 5 minutes. Strain through 2 or 3 layers of cotton cloth, letting gravity do the work. Do not squeeze the berries or the cordial will be cloudy. You can refrigerate for a few days if desired.

*MEP*

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## Grape Juice

- 10 pounds Concord grapes
- 2 pounds sugar
- 2 quarts water

Use only clean ripe grapes. Place grapes in a large kettle and cover with water and let boil until the seeds are free. Strain, while hot, through fine cloth. Heat juice to boiling point and skim. Let boil again and skim. Add sugar. You can use more or less sugar depending on your preference. Heat to boiling point to dissolve sugar and put into sterilized jars and seal tightly.

*MEP*

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## Kahlua Liquor

### Easy Version

- 4 cups white sugar
- 3-4 ounces instant coffee
- 1 quart boiling water
- 1 quart vodka
- 1 vanilla bean
- 1 gallon bottle

Combine sugar, coffee and water. Stir until sugar is dissolved. Cool until just warm. Add coffee mixture, vodka and vanilla bean to gallon bottle and seal. Store in a dark place for at least thirty days, shake the bottle periodically.

### The Best

- 4 cups sugar
- 3 cups water
- 1 ounce good fresh roasted coffee beans ground as you would for drip coffee
- 1 quart vodka
- 1 vanilla bean cut into thirds
- 3 quart bottles

Boil sugar and water for five minutes and cool. Add ground coffee to syrup and mix well. Divide syrup equally between three bottles. Put one piece of vanilla in each bottle. Fill each bottle to the bottom of the neck with vodka. Cork. Store in a dark place for at least thirty days. Decant or strain and return to clean bottles.

*JPO*

I like to use raw or turbinado sugar instead of white sugar. Also, adding the zest of 6-8 oranges makes a very nice variation.

*RGP*

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## Key Style Eggnog

- 1 quart good quality commercial eggnog
- 4 ounces dark rum
- 4 ounces Kahlua
- 4 ounces Triple Sec
- 1 teaspoon grated orange peel plus some for garnish
- nutmeg and cinnamon to taste
- whipped cream, orange peel, and nutmeg for garnish

Combine ingredients. Serve chilled with a daub of whipped cream and a sprinkle of orange peel and nutmeg.

*JPO*

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## Mulled Wine

- peel of 1 lemon, cut into strips
- 10 whole cloves
- 1 stick of cinnamon
- 1/2 cup sugar
- 2 cups water
- 1 bottle dry red wine
- juice of one lemon

Combine the lemon peel, cloves cinnamon, sugar and water in a large sauce pan. Bring to a boil and then simmer for 15 minutes. Remove and discard the lemon peel and the spices. Add the wine and lemon juice and heat to a simmer. Do not boil.

Serve in heated mugs.

A good warm up after a football game.

*MEP*

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## Russian Tea

- 1 18 ounce jar of Tang
- 1/2 cup instant tea
- 1 1/2 cups sugar
- 1 teaspoon cinnamon
- 1 teaspoon allspice
- 1 teaspoon ground cloves

Mix all ingredients together. Put 2 heaping teaspoons into a mug and fill with boiling water.

*MEP*



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## Sangria

- 3 sticks of cinnamon, cracked
- 8 whole cloves
- 8 black peppercorns, cracked
- 3 allspice berries
- 1 cup water
- 1/2 cup sugar
- 4 oranges
- 1 orange
- 1 lemon
- 1 lime
- 1 bottle fruity red wine

Put the spices, water, and sugar in a small saucepan. bring to a boil, stirring regularly to dissolve the sugar. When the liquid begins to boil, reduce the heat and simmer for three minutes. remove the pan from the heat and let cool until room temperature.

Meanwhile, juice three of the oranges. Strain the cooled mixture and discard the spices. Combine the orange juice and the liquid. The resulting nectar can be made ahead of time and kept for 2-3 days in the refrigerator.

To serve, slice the remaining fruit into thin slices. Combine the wine, nectar, and sliced fruit in a pitcher with ice, and serve chilled.

Sangria is a traditional Mexican mulled wine. This version has a wonderful combination of spicy and sweet.

*RGP – Two Hot Tamales*

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## Tom and Jerry Batter

### Batter

- 8 eggs, separated
- 3 cups sugar
- 1 cup water
- 1 cup powdered sugar
- 1 teaspoon cinnamon
- 1 teaspoon vanilla

### Liquor Mixture

- 1 part brandy
- 1 part bourbon
- 1 part light rum
- freshly grated nutmeg

Boil water and sugar until it spins a thread (hard ball stage on your candy thermometer). Beat egg whites until they are very stiff. Slowly add syrup, beating continuously. Beat egg yolks until lemon colored. Add powdered sugar, cinnamon and vanilla to egg yolks. Fold egg yolk mixture into cooled egg white mixture.

To serve, put 2 ounces of the liquor mixture into a heat mug. Add one heaping tablespoon of the batter. Fill with boiling water and stir to blend. Freshly grate some nutmeg over the top and serve immediately.

The batter will keep up to three weeks in the refrigerator. It will tend to separate so be sure to stir it each time you use it.

This has been a Christmas tradition in our house for as long as I can remember. When the children were little, they had these too, but without the liquor.

*MEP - Sandy Hayes*

## **Punches**

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## Champagne Punch

- 2 six ounce cans frozen orange juice
- 1 six ounce can frozen lemonade
- 1 ten ounce package frozen strawberries, thawed
- 1 bottle of champagne
- block of ice

Dilute orange juice and lemonade according to the directions on the can and pour over ice block. Add strawberries. Just before serving pour the champagne down the side of the punch bowl.

Makes 30 - 40 cups.

A simple, easy and elegant punch. For a nonalcoholic punch use Seven-Up in place of the champagne and for half of the water need to dilute the orange juice and the lemonade.

*MEP*

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## Lemon Strawberry Punch

- 3 six ounce cans frozen lemonade concentrate
- 1 ten ounce package frozen strawberries, thawed
- 1 quart ginger ale, chilled
- 1 small tray of ice cubes

Empty lemonade concentrate into punch bowl and dilute with water as directed on the cans. Stir in the strawberries. Just before serving slowly pour the ginger ale down the sides of the punch bowl. Add a small tray of ice cubes.

Another simple, easy recipe. If you want an alcoholic punch simply use a bottle of white wine in place of the ginger ale.

*MEP*

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## Luau Punch

- 3 cups strong tea
- 1 quart orange juice
- 1 cup lemon or lime juice
- 2 ten ounce packages frozen strawberries, thawed
- 1 cup crushed pineapple
- sugar to taste
- 2 quarts sparkling water, chilled
- block of ice

Strain strawberries through a sieve. Mix strawberries with tea, orange juice, lemon juice, pineapple and sugar. Pour over block of ice. Slowly pour sparkling water down the side of the punch bowl just before serving.

Makes 4 quarts of punch.

If you want an alcoholic punch, substitute a bottle of dry white wine for 1 quart of the sparkling water.

*MEP*

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## Our Champagne Punch

- 1 can pineapple chunks with juice
- 1 twelve ounce can frozen lemonade, undiluted
- 1 six ounce can frozen orange juice, undiluted
- 1 jar maraschino cherries and juice
- 1 cup Almond liqueur
- 1 bottle sparkling water
- 1/2cup Cointreau
- 1/2 cup Southern Comfort
- 1 bottle dry white wine, chilled
- 2 bottles pink champagne, chilled
- 1 orange, thinly sliced
- 1 lemon, thinly sliced
- ice ring

Mix pineapple, lemonade, orange juice, maraschino cherries, Almond liqueur, sparkling water, Cointreau and Southern Comfort. Chill thoroughly. Pour over ice ring in a chilled punch bowl. Add white wine. Slowly pour chilled champagne down sides of punch bowl. Add lemon and orange sliced.

Slices of lemon, orange and maraschino cherries can also be put in the ice ring when you make it by freezing about one inch of water in the ring, adding the fruit and covering with water and then refreezing. This keeps the fruit in the middle of the ring.

*MEP*

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## **Puka Punch**

- 2 cups lemon juice
- 2 cups orange juice
- 2 cups grenadine syrup
- 1-2 cups fresh fruit or berries
- 2 1/2 quarts chilled ginger ale

Mix lemon juice, orange juice and grenadine syrup. Add fresh fruit or berries. Add ginger ale just before serving by pouring it down the sides of the punch bowl which helps maintain its bubbly.

Makes 4 quarts of punch.

If you want an alcoholic punch substitute a bottle of dry white wine for one of the bottles of ginger ale.

*MEP*



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## Quick Whiskey Punch

- 2 fifths blended whiskey
- 1 six ounce can frozen lemonade
- 1 six ounce can frozen orange juice
- 1/2 cup cherry cordial
- 1 quart sparkling water
- 2 trays ice cubes

Mix lemonade and orange juice with cans of cold water in a large container with a lid. Shake until frothy. Pour into punch bowl. Add whiskey and cordial. Stir in 2 trays of ice cubes. Just before serving add sparkling water by pouring it slowly down the sides of the punch bowl.

Most men do not seem to like punch. This is one punch they all seem to like.

*MEP*

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## Wassail

- 1 gallon apple cider
- 1 gallon white wine
- 2 cups dark rum (I prefer Black Gosling)
- 8 sticks cinnamon
- 1 lemon, washed and sliced
- 1 orange, washed and sliced
- 1 TB whole cloves
- 1 TB whole allspice

Simmer the nonalcoholic ingredients together for 1 to 2 hours. Add the wine and rum about 10 minutes before serving. Serve hot.

Wassail is a traditional mulled wine drink served during the holidays. This recipe was a massive hit at our last Christmas party. We went through several gallons of the stuff, but there was still some left when the guests started to arrive...

*RGP*