

Beat the Heat with Refreshing Herbal Beverages

Over the years we've collected many recipes for summertime drinks using our herbal bounty. Here are some of our favorites, perfect for sipping in the shade of a large tree on a hot August afternoon. Enjoy!

Herbal Sun Tea

Place 5 tea bags and 5 to 6 sprigs of your favorite tea herb in a gallon glass container and fill with fresh cold water. Bruise the herbs against the side of the container with a spoon to release the flavor. Cap loosely and place in a sunny area for 3 to 4 hours. Squeeze and remove tea bags and herb sprigs. Sweeten as desired and serve over ice.



Lime Cooler

1/2 lime, cut into wedges
1/2 to 3/4 cup simple syrup *
4 sprigs lime mint or spearmint

In a 2 quart pitcher, combine simple syrup and mint sprigs. With a wooden spoon, crush mint sprigs against side of pitcher to release flavor. Squeeze lime wedges into pitcher and add them to pitcher. Fill pitcher with cold water refrigerate for several hours to combine flavors. Serve drink over ice.

Variation: Substitute a fresh lemon for the lime, and in place of the mint add 4 sprigs of fresh lemon verbena or lemon balm.

Cucumber Mint Cooler

1/2 cucumber, thinly sliced
2 to 3 sprigs fresh Kentucky Colonel Spearmint
1/2 to 3/4 cup simple syrup*

In a 2 quart pitcher, combine simple syrup and mint sprigs. With a wooden spoon, crush mint sprigs against side of pitcher to release flavor. Add cucumber slices to pitcher. Fill pitcher with cold water and refrigerate for several hours to combine flavors. Serve drink over ice.

***Simple Syrup**

1 cup sugar
1 cup water

Bring water and sugar to a boil in a small saucepan. Simmer over low heat for 5 minutes, stirring to dissolve sugar. Let cool and refrigerate syrup. Makes 1 1/2 cups syrup.

Lavender lemonade

6 cups water

1 ¾ cups sugar

3 tablespoons fresh lavender buds

2 ½ cups fresh lemon juice

Bring water to a boil and add sugar; stir until dissolved. Remove from heat and stir in lavender buds. Allow to steep 30 to 60 minutes. Strain lavender out and stir in lemon juice. Let cool and serve over ice.

Minty Lemonade

6 large lemons, thinly sliced

2 cups loosely packed mint leaves

1 ¼ cups sugar, divided

½ cup fresh lemon juice

2 cups water

Ice cubes

Mash sliced lemons, mint, 1 cup sugar and lemon juice in large bowl with potato masher or wooden spoon until juices are released from lemons. Let sit 5 minutes for flavors to combine. Strain through a coarse sieve, pressing to extract both pulp and liquid. Mix water and remaining sugar into juice. Fill a pitcher with ice; pour lemonade over ice. Fill 4- 6 glasses with ice and add lemonade. Garnish with mint sprig.



Classic Mojito

2 fresh Kentucky Colonel Spearmint sprigs

2 teaspoons sugar

2 tablespoons freshly squeezed lime juice

1 ½ ounces (1 jigger) light rum

Chilled club soda, seltzer water or lemon- lime soda

In a tall glass, with the back of a spoon, muddle mint with sugar and lime juice until sugar dissolves; stir in rum. Add ice cubes and top off with club soda, seltzer water or lemon- lime soda. Garnish drink with a mint sprig and slice of lime.

More Herbal Beverage Ideas

Lovage Straws

Lovage is a tall perennial cousin to celery, with a stronger, distinctive flavor. When it flowers, it sends up 5 foot tall flower stalks that are hollow- perfect sipping straws for homemade tomato juice cocktails or Bloody Marys.

Lemongrass Stir Sticks

Use fresh lemongrass stems as stir sticks for pitchers of sangria or iced tea.

Herb Sugar

This flavored sugar is nice to have on hand for desserts as well as iced teas. Place 4 to 6 herb leaves and a cup of sugar in the bowl of a food processor or blender. Blend on high until well mixed. Dry the sugar overnight on a cookie sheet and store in an airtight canister. Herbs to try include rose geranium, lemon verbena, pineapple sage, and of course any mints.