

Healthy *Holiday* LIBATIONS

Restorative Drinks Revive Good Cheer

by Judith Fertig

During jam-packed special occasions like holidays, our drinks should multitask, too.

We need festive tipples to refresh us without overdoing it, restore equilibrium if we overeat or drink or revive us when we're feeling low from a seasonal cold or flu.

In addition to traditional offerings that family and friends might expect, why not add a new and improved signature drink to everyone's repertoire? These feel-good beverages, featuring winter fruits high in vitamin C, anthocyanins, therapeutic herbs and fresh ginger, deliver delicious boosts to help us feel our best.

Refresh

The season of hospitality is happily also the season of pomegranates, blood oranges and Meyer lemons (a sweeter, thin-skinned, aromatic variety). These vibrant fruits give a taste of good cheer to anything we can pour, shake, muddle or simmer.

Whether we offer fresh-squeezed blood orange juice in the morning, a non-alcoholic cocktail of pomegranate juice and sparkling water, or a squeeze of

Meyer lemon juice in a hot toddy or tea, the tart flavor is a sure pick-me-up. The red color in antioxidant-rich blood oranges and pomegranates indicates the presence of anthocyanins, compounds that might help prevent cancer and heart disease, as well as treat eye disorders, according to an article published in the *Journal of Biomedicine and Biotechnology*. Meyer lemons are a good source of vitamin C, essential for producing collagen needed to support the formation of new bone, blood vessels, ligaments and tendons, according to the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations.

Restore

After an evening of over-imbibing, our systems need to reboot. The stomach needs help in processing alcohol, plus we may be dehydrated and feeling a little queasy. Filtered water, coconut water or a sweet, caffeine-free coffee or carbonated beverage of the lemon-lime variety rehydrate, as well as help our digestive system break down and flush out the alcohol.

According to Registered Dietitian Aicacia Young, in Austin, Texas, founder of *ClimbHealthy.com*, the simple act of drinking water before we

go to bed can assist in the recovery process.

Research published in the *Food & Function* journal found that lemon-lime soda helps the body metabolize alcohol better by speeding up its ability to process the compound aldehyde dehydrogenase, the main cause of hangover symptoms. For nausea and motion sickness, ginger or peppermint tea can help, according to studies in the *American Journal of Physiology* and the French *Prescrire International*.

Revive

Sometimes the stress of holiday to-dos, often combined with travel, can lower the resilience of our immune system. When we feel symptoms of a cold or flu coming on, the classic hot toddy can help us feel human again. The alcohol in whiskey is a natural decongestant; plus, it helps get us to sleep. Honey soothes and perky lemon juice gives us hope that we'll feel better the next day.

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Perk-Me-Ups

Seasonal Drinks that Revitalize

The best holiday drinks are festive and taste great. They should also be easy to fix. Here are five to get us started.

Blood Orange French 75

Yields: 1 serving

In a champagne flute, pour a jigger of gin, the juice of half a blood orange and a squeeze of Meyer lemon juice. Top up with champagne.

Courtesy of Kathryn Taylor, a whole foods and vegetarian blogger; Search CookieAndKate.com.

Holiday Sangria

Yields: 8 servings

Combine 1 liter of cabernet sauvignon, a quart of pomegranate juice, 1/4 cup agave nectar, 1 thinly sliced Meyer lemon and 1 thinly sliced pear in a pitcher. Add ice and stir. Pour into glasses to serve.

Fresh Hot Ginger Tea

Yields: 2 servings

Bring 2 cups of water to a boil, and then add 1 small knob of fresh ginger, precut into thin slices. Reduce the heat and simmer for 15 minutes. Strain out the ginger slices and serve in a mug.

Courtesy of Judith Fertig, AlfrescoFoodAndLifestyle.blogspot.com.

Fresh Hot Peppermint Tea

Yields: 1 serving

Bring 1 cup of water to a boil. While it's boiling, place 7 to 10 fresh organic mint leaves in a tea cup. Pour the hot water over the mint leaves and let them steep in the cup for 5 minutes. Strain out leaves as desired, and enjoy.

Courtesy of Heather Crosby, author of [YumUniverse: Infinite Possibilities for a Gluten-Free, Plant-Powerful, Whole-Food Lifestyle](http://YumUniverse.com); YumUniverse.com/fresh-peppermint-tea.

Meyer Lemon Hot Toddy

Yields: 1 serving

Bring 1 cup of water to a boil. Remove from the heat. Stir in the juice of half a Meyer lemon, a tablespoon or two of honey and a jigger of whiskey. Serve hot in a mug.

Courtesy of Judith Fertig, AlfrescoFoodAndLifestyle.blogspot.com.



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