

Basic Mixed Drinks

Bloody Mary: In a cocktail shaker, combine ice cubes, 1/3 cup chilled tomato juice, 3 tablespoons vodka, 1 tablespoon lemon juice, dash Worcestershire sauce, dash celery salt, and dash pepper or bottled hot pepper sauce. Shake well to mix. Pour into a chilled glass; add ice cubes, if desired. Garnish with a celery stalk. Makes 1 serving. (Note: You may prefer to make Bloody Marys ahead and chill for flavors to blend. Stir before serving.)

Bourbon Sour: In a cocktail shaker, combine ice cubes; 1/4 cup bourbon, Scotch whisky, or rye whiskey; 2 tablespoons lemon or lime juice; and 2 teaspoons powdered sugar. Shake well to mix. Strain into a chilled glass. Pour 2 tablespoons chilled grapefruit carbonated beverage down the side of the glass; stir gently to mix. Add ice cubes, if desired. Garnish with an orange twist and a maraschino cherry on a skewer. Makes 1 serving.

Vodka Sour: Prepare Bourbon Sour as directed, except substitute 1/4 cup vodka for the bourbon.

Collins: In a tall glass, stir together 2 tablespoons lemon juice and 1 1/2 teaspoons sugar or Simple Syrup (see recipe below). Stir in 3 tablespoons gin, vodka, or light rum. Add ice cubes. Pour 3/4 cup chilled carbonated water down the side of the glass. Garnish with an orange slice and a maraschino cherry. Makes 1 serving.

Daiquiri: In a cocktail shaker, combine cracked ice, 3 tablespoons light rum, 2 tablespoons lime juice, 1 teaspoon powdered sugar, and 1 teaspoon orange liqueur. Shake well to mix. Strain into a chilled cocktail glass. Makes 1 serving.

Frozen Daiquiris: In a blender container, combine one 6-ounce can frozen limeade or lemonade concentrate and 2/3 cup rum. Cover and blend until smooth. With blender running, add 2 1/2 to 3 cups ice cubes, 1 at a time, through opening in lid. Blend until slushy. Makes 6 servings (about 4 ounces each).

Raspberry or Strawberry Daiquiris: Prepare Daiquiris as directed, except use half of a 6-ounce can (1/3 cup) frozen limeade or lemonade concentrate. Add one 10-ounce package frozen red raspberries or sliced strawberries and, if desired, 1/3 cup sifted powdered sugar. Makes 7 (4-ounce) servings.

Peach Daiquiris: Prepare Daiquiris as directed, except use half of a 6-ounce can (1/3 cup) frozen limeade or lemonade concentrate. Add 3 ripe medium peaches, peeled, pitted, and cut up (1 1/2 cups) or 1 1/2 cups frozen unsweetened peach slices. If desired, add 1/2 cup sifted powdered sugar. Makes 8 servings (about 4 ounces each).

Gimlet: In a cocktail shaker, combine ice cubes, 3 tablespoons gin or vodka, and 1 tablespoon bottled sweetened lime juice. Shake well to mix. Strain into a chilled cocktail glass. Makes 1 serving.

Gin and Tonic: Place ice cubes in a glass. Add 1/4 cup gin. Pour 1/2 cup chilled tonic water (quinine water) down the side. Squeeze a lime wedge into glass; stir gently. Add wedge to drink. Makes 1 serving.

Kir: Pour 3/4 cup chilled dry white wine into a chilled wine glass. Add 1 tablespoon creme de cassis; stir gently to mix. If desired, add ice cubes. Garnish with a lemon twist, if desired. Makes 1 serving.

Manhattan: In a cocktail shaker, combine cracked ice, 3 tablespoons blended whiskey, 1 tablespoon sweet vermouth, and dash aromatic bitters. Shake well to mix. Strain into a chilled cocktail glass. Garnish with a maraschino cherry. Makes 1 serving.

Dry Manhattan: Prepare Manhattan as directed, except substitute dry vermouth for the sweet vermouth. Garnish with a green olive.

Margarita: In a cocktail shaker, combine ice cubes, 3 tablespoons tequila, 2 tablespoons orange liqueur, and 2 tablespoons lime juice. Shake well to mix. For a salt-rimmed glass, rub the rim of a chilled cocktail glass with a lime wedge; invert into a dish of coarse salt. Strain drink into glass. Makes 1 serving.

Frozen Margaritas: In a blender container, combine one 6-ounce can frozen limeade concentrate, 2/3 cup tequila, and 1/2 cup orange liqueur. Cover and blend until smooth. With blender running, add 4 cups ice cubes, 1 at a time, through opening in lid. Blend until slushy. Serve in salt-rimmed glasses. Garnish with lime slices, if desired. Makes 8 (4-ounce) servings.

Martini (classic): In a cocktail shaker, combine cracked ice, 1/4 cup gin, and 1 tablespoon dry vermouth. Shake well to mix. Strain into a chilled cocktail glass. Garnish with a green olive or a lemon twist. Makes 1 serving.

Old-Fashioned: Pour 1 tablespoon Simple Syrup (see recipe below) into an old-fashioned glass. Stir in dash aromatic bitters. Add ice cubes and 3 tablespoons bourbon, brandy, Scotch whisky, or Southern Comfort. Pour in 3 tablespoons chilled carbonated water; stir gently to mix. Garnish with an orange twist and a maraschino cherry on a skewer. Makes 1 serving.

Orange Champagne: Thinly peel 1/2 of a medium orange into a spiral of peel about 12 inches long; place in a chilled champagne glass. Add 2 teaspoons orange liqueur; pour in 1/2 cup chilled champagne. Stir gently to mix. Makes 1 serving.

Rusty Nail: Place 2 ice cubes in a cocktail glass. Pour in 1/4 cup Scotch whisky and 2 tablespoons Drambuie; stir to mix. Makes 1 serving.

Screwdriver: Place 3 or 4 ice cubes in a tall glass. Add 3 tablespoons vodka and, if desired, 1 tablespoon orange liqueur. Add 1/2 to 3/4 cup orange juice to fill the glass; stir to mix. Makes 1 serving.

Whiskey Sour: In a cocktail shaker, combine cracked ice, 3 tablespoons bourbon or blended whiskey, 2 tablespoons lemon juice, and 2 tablespoons Simple Syrup (see recipe below). Shake well to mix. Strain into a chilled cocktail glass. If desired, add cracked ice. Garnish with an orange twist and a maraschino cherry on a skewer. Makes 1 serving.

Wine Spritzer: Combine 3/4 cup chilled dry white, red, or rose wine with 1/4 cup chilled club soda or lemon-lime carbonated beverage. Serve over ice. Makes 1 (8-ounce) serving.

Simple Syrup: Pour 1 cup boiling water over 1 cup sugar; stir until sugar dissolves. Chill in the refrigerator before using; store in the refrigerator.

Lime and Tonic: Place ice cubes in a tall glass. Add 2 teaspoons lime juice. Pour 1 cup chilled tonic water (quinine water) down the side of the glass; stir gently with an up-and-down motion to mix. Garnish with a lime wedge. Makes 1 serving.

Orange Collins: Squeeze the juice from 1 medium orange (about 1/3 cup). Combine the freshly squeezed orange juice and 1/4 cup chilled collins mixer. Pour over ice cubes in a tall glass. Pour chilled carbonated water (about 1/2 cup) down the side of the glass to fill; stir gently with an up-and-down motion to mix. Garnish with an orange slice and a maraschino cherry. Makes 1 serving.

Zippy Tomato Cocktail: In a cocktail shaker, combine several ice cubes, one chilled 9-ounce can vegetable juice, 1/2 teaspoon lemon juice, 1/4 teaspoon Worcestershire sauce, dash bottled hot pepper sauce, and dash celery salt. Shake well to mix. Strain over ice cubes in a tall glass. Garnish with a celery stalk. Makes 1 serving.

Setting Up Your Bar:

Don't be tempted to buy out the liquor store. Choose only the liquors you know your guests will drink. If you're unsure, stick with the basics: whiskey, Scotch, gin, vodka, tequila, rum, or vermouth for cocktails, and wine and beer. Buy plenty of mixers—carbonated water, tonic water, lemon-lime carbonated beverage, and ginger ale. Remember to make a variety of nonalcoholic beverages available for nondrinkers. Sodas, fruit and vegetable juices, bottled water, iced tea, and hot coffee and tea are all popular. Keep in mind that many guests will drink both alcoholic and nonalcoholic drinks.

When making and garnishing cocktails, be sure to have the necessary "extras," such as maraschino cherries and olives, on hand. You also may want to cut lemon peels and lime and lemon wedges in advance.

You don't need a wide selection of bar glasses. Ten- or 12-ounce all-purpose glasses and 9- or 10-ounce stemmed wineglasses will work for nearly every drink. If you'd like, you can rent old-fashioned glasses, highball glasses, brandy snifters, and cordial glasses for your party. Disposable plastic glasses, available in various sizes, are convenient to use, especially for a big party.

Be sure to have a bottle opener, corkscrew, cocktail napkins, small towel, sponge, and wastebasket handy. Don't forget the ice. Allow about a pound of cubes per person, a little more for longer parties (or for parties on hot days). You may want to have a blender nearby if you plan to serve blended drinks, such as frozen margaritas or daiquiris.

Set up the bar away from the food table and either make it self-serve or snag a friend to act as bartender.