

# Cocktail Magic with Herbs

## By Sue Adams, Adams Greenhouses

### **Muddling**

Muddling is a process that extracts essential oils from the herb by gently crushing it in the bottom of a glass with a muddler or the back of a spoon. You can also rub the herb between the palms of your hand. The idea is to extract the flavor without reducing the herb to a pulp.

### **Infusing**

- Liquor: Add fresh herbs to liquor and store over time. This is easy, but you need to experiment with the herb and time.
- Syrups

Infusing simple syrups is a great way to add a sweet herbal essence to drinks like sparkling water, tea or juice. You can elevate your cocktail experience by creating simple syrups. They can be stored for one to six months and if put into pretty jar, makes a great hostess gift.

Use fresh herbs like basil, rosemary, thyme, lavender (a little goes a long way), tarragon or lemon verbena.

For a thick syrup, the ratio is 1:1 – for example, 1 cup sugar to 1 cup water

- Add granulated or superfine sugar to hot water and stir or whisk until completely dissolved.
- Remove from heat. If you're making several flavored syrups at once, separate into different containers before adding herbs. Let the syrup sit, covered, for two hours until cooled down.
- Strain out the herbs using a fine sieve. Pour the syrup into sterilized containers for longer storage, or into squeezable bottles or glass ones for immediate use.

### **Fall Sangria**

1 bottle (750 ml) white wine	1 green apple, sliced	1 bottle sparkling white wine
1 cup apple cider	1 pear, sliced	4 sprigs rosemary, muddled
1 red apple, sliced	1 cup fresh cranberries	

In a large pitcher, whisk together white wine, rosemary, apple cider, apples, pear and cranberries. Chill over ice with sparkling wine, garnished with rosemary if desired.

### **Cranberry Sangria**

1 bottle (750 ml) red wine	1 cup triple sec	Other fruits like lime, oranges
2 cups cranberry juice	1 ½ cup fresh cranberries	5 sprigs rosemary, muddled
½ cup orange juice (or apple)	1-2 medium apples, cored & diced	

Add the cranberries and apples to a pitcher. Pour in the wine, juices and triple sec. Add rosemary sprigs. Stir together. Chill about 2 hours before serving.

### **Pomegranate & Rosemary White Sangria**

1 bottle dry white wine	¼ cup simple syrup (1 part water to 1 part sugar)	1/3 cup triple sec
¾ cup pomegranate arils	Juice of 1 lemon	
4 sprigs rosemary, muddled	Juice of 1 orange	

Put all ingredients into a large pitcher and refrigerate for 24 hours. Serve over ice.

### **Summer Fruit Sangria** from Martha Stewart

6 cups assorted fruits such as mango, pineapple, can, apricot, cut into chunks	¼ cup thinly sliced, peeled fresh ginger	1 bottle white wine such as Sauvignon Blanc or Pinot Grigio
1-1 ½ cups fresh basil or mint leaves	½ cup orange liqueur	3 tablespoons fresh lemon juice
Ice		

In a large bowl or pitcher, combine fruit, ginger, basil or mint and orange liqueur. Mash gently with the back of a wooden spoon until the basil is bruised and fruit releases juices. Add wine and lemon juice and stir to combine. Refrigerate 1 hour (or up to 1 day). To serve, fill glasses with ice and top with sangria.

### **Pineapple Basil Cocktail**

3 basil leaves, rolled & sliced into thin strips	1 ½ oz. gin	Club soda
¼ cup pineapple juice	Ice	

Put the basil and lime in the bottom of a glass and muddle. Add pineapple juice, gin and ice cubes and top with club soda. Garnish with a slice of pineapple, lime wedge or a sprig of basil.

### **Pineapple Basil Margarita** Woman's World 6/27/16

4 cups pineapple juice	1/3 cup triple sec	½ cup packed basil leaves
1 8 oz. can crushed pineapple in juice	1 cup tequila	1 can frozen (10 oz) frozen margarita mix

The night before: in freezer-proof 13" X 9" pan, mix 4 cups pineapple juice and crushed pineapple in juice and freeze. When ready to serve, if you like, garnish the rims of 6 large margarita glasses with chunky salt. In blender, puree tequila, triple sec, and basil leaves until basil is finely chopped; strain into a bowl. Stir in margarita mix. In batches, blend with frozen pineapple mixture until smooth.

### **The Basil North Cocktail** from The Cocktail Novice

¾ oz. Apple juice	2 basil leaves, muddled	Dash of sugar
1 ¾ oz. vodka	½ lemon, juiced	

Combine all ingredients into a cocktail shaker filled with ice. Shake well. Fine strain into a chilled cocktail glass.

### **Luscious Lemon Sour** from Frank Fontaine, Jeffries Restaurant, Lancaster, PA

*Infuse Basil with vodka* – no muddling. Fill a large container with vodka and basil leaves. Strain after 6 days.

1 cup fresh lemon juice	1 cup simple syrup (3 cups sugar to 1 cup water)	1 ½ oz sour mix
1 cup water	2 oz basil infused vodka	

Shake and strain into martini glass.

### **Purple Basil Mojito** from Ruben Pinto, Cafe Maya, Wappingers Falls

2 lime wedges, each ¾" thick	Ice cubes	1 tablespoon simple syrup
2 sprigs fresh purple basil	2 tablespoons light rum	Club Soda

In a tumbler, muddle 1 lime wedge and basil. Fill tumbler with ice. Add rum and simple syrup. Top with club soda. Stir well. Garnish with remaining lime wedge.

### **Sue Adams' Strawberry Mint Mojito**

4 mint leaves, muddled	2 oz. Strawberry flavored rum	Sprig of mint for garnish
1 lime for juicing	2 oz. Club soda	Crushed ice
1 tablespoon powdered sugar	1 strawberry, sliced	

Put the mint leaves into a tall glass and squeeze the lime juice over them. Add the powdered sugar and strawberry and muddle the mint, lime juice and sugar together. Stir in the rum and top off with club soda. Add ice.

### **Mint Julep** – Emeril Lagass

6-8 mint leaves	2 ½ oz. bourbon	<u>Simple Syrup:</u>
1 tablespoon sugar	Splash of simple syrup, recipe follows	1 cup sugar
Crushed ice	Sprig mint, for garnish	1 cup water

*Make the simple syrup:* Combine sugar and water in a small saucepan and bring to a boil over medium-high heat. Cook until sugar is dissolved, about 2 minutes. Remove from heat and cool completely. Yield: About 1 ½ cups  
Put the mint leaves and the sugar in the bottom of a tall glass. With the handle of a wooden spoon, crush and mash the leaves to extract the flavor. Fill the glass with crushed (not cubed) ice. Pour in the bourbon. Top with a splash of simple syrup. With a long-handled spoon, jiggle to chill and mix. Garnish with a sprig of mint.

### **Vodka Thyme Cocktail**

Fresh thyme	1 oz fresh lime juice	Ice
2 oz. vodka	1 oz sugar	

Fill a cocktail glass with ice and set aside. Muddle 3 or 4 thyme sprigs in a cocktail shaker, then add ice, vodka, lime juice and sugar. Close shaker and shake vigorously. Strain over the ice in the glass and garnish with another thyme sprig.

### **Bloody Mariana** from [whattodrink.com/drinkrecipes/3410-bloody-mariana.asp](http://whattodrink.com/drinkrecipes/3410-bloody-mariana.asp)

2 oz vodka	Drops Tabasco Sauce	Pinch celery salt
6 oz tomato juice	Drops Worcestershire Sauce	Pinch oregano
1 tsp lime juice	Pinch pepper	

Combine all ingredients with ice into a shaker. Shake, strain, then add ice.

### **Lavender Syrup** from Saveur

1/2 cup water	½ cup sugar	2 tablespoons lavender
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Combine sugar, lavender and water in a 1-qt. Saucepan over medium heat; cook until sugar is dissolved, 3-5 minutes. Let steep for 20-20 minutes; strain, discarding lavender. Set aside to cool. Makes about ½ cup; extra will keep, refrigerated, for up to two weeks.

### **Lavender Paloma** from Saveur

1 tablespoon dried lavender	1 slice grapefruit	2 oz. mescal
1 tablespoon sea salt	3 oz. grapefruit juice	½ oz. lavender simple syrup

Combine lavender and salt in a small dish. Rub grapefruit slice around rim of glass and dip the rim in salt to coat. Fill with ice. Combine grapefruit juice, mescal, and simple syrup in a cocktail shaker filled with ice; shake vigorously and strain into salt rimmed highball glass.

### **Lavender Martini**

Ice	½ cup vodka	2 Tablespoons lavender syrup
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Fill cocktail shaker halfway with ice; add vodka and lavender syrup. Cover; shake until blended. Strain between 2 martini glasses. If desired, for color, lightly dip tip of toothpick into violet concentrated food coloring and swirl through drink. Serve garnished with fresh lavender sprig.

### **Lemon-Thyme Martinis** from [www.oprah.com/food/lemon-thyme-martinis](http://www.oprah.com/food/lemon-thyme-martinis)

1 bottle (375 ml) dry vermouth	2 oz. chilled vodka	Ice
1 bunch fresh thyme, several sprigs set aside	1 bunch lemon verbena	

To make the infusion, pour vermouth into a bowl; add thyme. Press thyme into vermouth with a spoon. Cover tightly for 24 hours. Discard thyme.

To make one martini, combine 2 ounces chilled vodka, 2 tsp. Thyme-infused vermouth, ice and a lemon verbena sprig in a cocktail shaker. Shake and strain into a chilled martini glass. Garnish with a fresh lemon verbena and thyme sprig.

### **Oregano Cobbler** By Alba Huerta

3 oregano sprigs	1 oz. pisco	Ice cubes + cracked ice for serving
½ oz. simple syrup	¼ oz. fino sherry	
1 ½ oz. Italian bianco vermouth	¼ oz. Fresh lemon juice	

In a cocktail shaker, muddle 2 of the oregano sprigs with the simple syrup. Add the vermouth, pisco, sherry and lemon juice. Fill the shaker with ice cubes and shake well. Fine strain into a chilled, cracked-ice filled highball glass and garnish with the remaining oregano sprig.

### **Cilantro Mojito** from the Cocktail Novice

¼ cup fresh cilantro leaves	½ oz. simple syrup	2 oz. white rum
½ lime, cut into thirds	Crushed ice	4 oz. club soda
1 tablespoon sugar	10 oz highball glass	

Lightly muddle cilantro, one lime wedge and sugar in a cocktail shaker. Add one more lime wedge and simple syrup; lightly muddle again. Fill the glass ¾ full with crushed ice. Add rum and cilantro lime mixture. Top with club soda. Garnish with lime wedge.

### **Vodka Tarragon Gimlet** from the Cocktail Novice

*Tarragon Syrup:* Bring ½ cup water and ½ cup granulated sugar to a boil in a small saucepan. Remove from the heat and add the tarragon leaves. Let infuse for a few hours, then strain into an airtight container and store in the fridge. The syrup will last for a few weeks.

1 ½ oz. vodka	1 oz. tarragon syrup	¾ – 1 oz. fresh lime juice
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Combine all ingredients in a cocktail shaker filled with ice. Shake well. Strain into a cocktail glass. Garnish with tarragon leaves.

### **Apple & Sage Smash** from the Cocktail Novice

*Sage Simple Syrup:* Combine ½ cup sugar, ½ cup water and a small handful of fresh sage leaves in a small saucepan over medium heat. Simmer until sugar is completely dissolved. Remove from heat and steep for 1 hour. Strain syrup.

3-4 fresh sage leaves	2 tablespoons sage simple syrup	Club soda
1 teaspoon fresh lemon juice	2 oz. vodka	Thinly sliced green apple

Lightly muddle lemon juice, sage leaves and apple slices in a 6 oz. glass. Fill the glass with crushed ice. Add vodka. Top with club soda. Garnish with apple slice and sage leaf.