



April 13, 2016

Refreshing Spring Drinks

The days are getting longer, the birds are back, and the garden is starting to bloom. It's time to pull that patio furniture out of storage—or at least dust the snow off—and soak it all in with an ice-cold drink in hand.

Take advantage of the rhubarb in your backyard with our Rhubarb Strawberry Slush or Rhubarb Lime Punch. Both are simple recipes meant to serve a crowd, but can be easily scaled down to just a glass or two. Add a shot of vodka or white rum for the adults in the room!

Didn't plant any rhubarb this year? Substitute frozen rhubarb, or try our Iced Ginger Tea instead. This refreshing drink features fresh ginger steeped with green tea and sugar. Alternatively, try using honey instead of sugar (you might find that you need less as honey is sweeter) or add some fresh mint sprigs.

RHUBARB STRAWBERRY SLUSH

The fruit mixture in this recipe is made ahead of time and then used to make this beverage.

Ingredients:

3 cups (750 mL) fresh or frozen sliced rhubarb
2 cups (500 mL) halved strawberries
1 cup (250 mL) water
1/2 cup (125 mL) granulated sugar
2 cups (500 mL) apple juice
Carbonated lemon-lime beverage

Method:

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1. Combine rhubarb, strawberries, water and sugar in a large non-reactive saucepan. Bring to a boil over medium heat, stirring occasionally.
2. Reduce heat and simmer, covered, stirring occasionally, for 10 minutes or until rhubarb is tender. Remove from heat and cool for 15 minutes.
3. Purée mixture in a blender.
4. Return mixture to saucepan. Stir in apple juice.
5. Pour mixture into a plastic wrap-lined 9 x 13 inch (23 x 33 cm) baking dish. Cover and freeze until firm.
6. Invert frozen mixture onto a cutting board. Remove plastic wrap. Cut frozen mixture into 48 cubes.
7. Transfer cubes to a freezer container and freeze for up to 1 month.
8. For each serving, place 3 cubes and 1/2 cup (125 mL) lemon-lime beverage in a blender; purée until slushy.
9. Pour into a glass. Serve immediately. *Serves 16.*

RHUBARB LIME PUNCH

Ingredients:

- 8 cups (2 L) frozen sliced rhubarb, thawed
- 1 cup (250 mL) granulated sugar
- 1 cup (250 mL) water
- 3 strips lime peel (3 x 1/2 inch/7.5 x 1.25 cm)
- 2 tbsp (25 mL) fresh lime juice
- 5 1/2 cups (1.375 L) club soda, chilled

Method:

1. Place a colander over a large bowl. Line colander with four layers of cheesecloth.
2. To prepare rhubarb juice, work in batches and place thawed rhubarb in a food processor; process until finely chopped and juicy.
3. Transfer rhubarb to prepared colander. Fold cheesecloth over rhubarb to enclose completely.

4. Wring rhubarb, extracting as much juice as possible and allowing juice to strain through colander into bowl; discard pulp. There should be about 4 cups (1 L) rhubarb juice; set aside.
5. Combine sugar, water and lime peel in a small non-reactive saucepan. Bring to a boil over medium heat, stirring until sugar is dissolved. Remove from heat and cool to room temperature, stirring occasionally.
6. Stir lime juice into sugar mixture.
7. Strain sugar mixture through a sieve into rhubarb juice. Stir to combine. Refrigerate for 1 hour or until mixture is cold.
8. Pour mixture into a punch bowl. Stir in club soda. Serve immediately. *Serves 8.*

ICED GINGER TEA

Ingredients:

12 cups (3 L) water
1/2 cup (125 mL) thinly sliced fresh ginger
1/4 cup (50 mL) sugar
12 green tea bags
6 cups (1.5 L) ice cubes

Method:

Combine water, ginger and sugar in a Dutch oven. Bring to a boil; reduce heat, cover and simmer for 5 minutes. Remove from heat. Add tea bags, cover and let stand for 3 minutes. Remove tea bags and ginger. Cool tea mixture to room temperature. Divide tea mixture between 2 large pitchers. Cover and refrigerate until serving. To serve, stir half of ice cubes into each pitcher. *Serves 10 - 12.*