

Cocktail Hour

Is there anything nicer than sipping a Pimms or a G&T on a warm summer evening in the garden? Probably not but sometimes the occasion seems to call for something more exciting. People are very coy about cocktails yet many are not complicated and they always impress guests.

So here is a guide to making three perfect, refreshing cocktails; two alcoholic and one for non-drinkers.

The Mojita - serves 4

Ice cubes
6fl oz light rum
4 whole and 8 broken mint sprigs (spearmint is lovely)
6 tbsp fresh lime juice
4 tbsp sugar
Club soda
4 slices lime



Place the ice in a beverage shaker (a large Tupperware cup with a lid would work). Add the rum, the 8 broken mint sprigs, the lime juice and the sugar. Shake well and pour over ice in tall glasses. Top up each glass with club soda to taste. Garnish with a slice of lime and a sprig of mint. Serve.

The Sea Breeze - serves 1

Ice cubes
2 fl oz vodka
2 fl oz cranberry juice
2fl oz fresh grapefruit juice
Lime wedge
Fill a tall glass with ice.
Pour the vodka, cranberry and grapefruit juices over the ice.
Stir gently, squeeze the lime into the drink then drop it into the glass. Serve.

For those who can't drink, for whatever reason, here is something so much more sophisticated than orange juice or coke.

The Shirley Temple - serves 1

Ice
Grenadine
Ginger Ale
2 lemon wedges
Fill a tall glass with ice.
Pour a couple of dashes of grenadine over and top up with ginger ale.
Squeeze the lemon wedges over then drop into the glass. Serve.

Those are just a few recommendations but there are many excellent books on the subject if you want to take it further. You should be warned though; cocktail making is quite addictive and makes you very popular. You may end up hosting an awful lot of cocktail parties this summer.