

FLOWER GARDENING / VEGETABLE GARDENING / OUTDOOR LIVING / GARDEN FRESH RECIPES

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## GARDEN-FRESH COCKTAIL RECIPES TO GET YOU THROUGH THE SUMMER



ummer has finally arrived – and what better way to celebrate than by sitting out on the patio with a refreshing cocktail? To help inspire your next outdoor cocktail hour, we've gathered up a few delightfully refreshing summer cocktail recipes to get you started.

Each of our three great recipes features a few simple ingredients that you can pluck fresh from your very own garden! Not only are they easy to make, but it's an inexpensive alternative to the classic drinks at cocktail bars. Plus, we've saved you the trouble of taste-testing endless Pinterest recipes by trying these out on our own. Trust us they're delicious.

### Rosemary Lemon Vodka Spritzer

Everyone needs a signature drink - why not make it a Rosemary Lemon Vodka Spritzer? It's simple and easy to make in individual servings, so it's the perfect cocktail for regular evenings in the backyard with a good book. You can also make a larger batch to serve at your next brunch. Best of all, the homemade simple syrup and fresh ingredients are a great alternative to the artificial mixers found in many drinks, which only adds to the charm of this delightful drink.

### Ingredients:

- ½ cup sugar ½ cup lemon juice
- Sprig of rosemary
- 5 oz vodka (for additional fresh-fruit flavor try blueberry vodka)
- 8 oz lemon-flavored seltzer
- Lemon slices, fresh blueberries, and rosemary for garnish





#### Instructions:

#### To make the simple syrup:

- 1. Combine equal parts lemon juice and sugar with a sprig of rosemary in a small pot over medium-low heat and bring to a boil.
- 2. Reduce heat to a simmer and stir for a few minutes until the sugar dissolves.
- 3. Remove from heat and cool to room temperature. Remove the rosemary before using the
- 4. Any leftover syrup should be stored in the refrigerator in a clean jar.

#### To make the cocktail:

- 1. Combine vodka with 1 tablespoon of the cooled simple syrup in a cocktail shaker with ice. Shake vigorously until the mixture is cooled.
- 2. Strain into a glass filled with ice. Top with lemon-flavored seltzer.
- 3. Garnish with lemon slices, fresh blueberries, and a sprig of rosemary. Serves 1.

Other cocktails featuring rosemary: Spanish Mojito, Rosemary Gin Fizz, Wild Mustang

### **Strawberry Basil Margaritas**

When you're hosting a gathering or even just having a few friends over, pitcher drinks are a great way to simplify your life. They look great and you can make them ahead of time and then place the pitcher in the fridge until you're ready to enjoy. That way, you'll be able to relax and enjoy your time with friends rather than running back and forth to the kitchen to prepare more drinks. This Strawberry Basil Margarita recipe is the perfect fresh and colorful cocktail you need to liven up your next backyard happy hour.

### Ingredients:

- 12 oz frozen limeade concentrate
- 12 strawberries
- 8 basil leaves
- Approximately 2 ¼ cups of tequila (gold or silver)

### Instructions:

- 1. In a pitcher, empty the can of frozen limeade choose to add a bit less tequila.
- concentrate. Add 2  $\frac{1}{2}$  cans of water and 1  $\frac{1}{2}$  cans of tequila (or approximately 2 ¼ cups). If you don't want your drinks quite as strong, you may also 2. Hull the strawberries and slice lengthwise before adding them to the mixture in the pitcher.
- them in the pitcher. 4. Cover the pitcher and place in the fridge overnight, or for at least for hours. This will allow the mixture to marinate and create a full range of flavors. The margaritas should be a pale

3. To release the flavor of the basil, crumple the leaves slightly using your hands and then place

via Pinterest

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pink color when you remove the pitcher from the fridge. Pour over ice if desired. Serves 8.

Other cocktails featuring basil: Gin Basil Smash, Hibiscus Martini, Strawberry Basil Lemonade

# **Watermelon Mint Breeze Cocktail**

Finally, our Watermelon Mint Breeze Cocktail is the perfect mild cocktail for any summertime gathering. It's eye-catching and easy to sip on - it's practically summer in a glass. Plus, the combination of watermelon, lime, and coconut water is amazingly refreshing. With such high water content, you won't have to worry about getting dehydrated during a long afternoon in the summer heat. As an added bonus, watermelon and coconut water are both relatively low in calories, so you won't even risk ruining your summer diet efforts.

# Ingredients:

- 3 cups chilled, cubed watermelon 1 cup coconut water
- 6 fresh mint leaves
- 1 fresh lime, squeezed 1/3 cup coconut rum
- Watermelon wedges and mint for garnish
- 1 cup ice (optional) Instructions:

# 1. Place all of the ingredients in a blender and blend until smooth. If you'd prefer a slushy-like

- drink, you may also want to add a cup of ice to the blender. 2. Pour into a chilled glass and garnish with a watermelon wedge and sprig of mint. Serves 4.
- Other cocktails featuring mint: Mint Julep, Mojito, Pimm's Cup

# Shake It Up

Give our recipes a try for your next backyard gathering – we'd love to know what you think! Post your thoughts in the comments below and share pictures of your attempts on your next visit to our Facebook page. Or do you have your own summer cocktail recipes that you think should be featured in an upcoming post? Let us know! Also, be sure to subscribe to our <u>e-newsletter</u> to receive links to more helpful articles and receive a 10-percent discount on any of our gardening supplies!

If you like these, be sure to check out some of our other great recipes to kick-start your summer: Fire Pit Grilling Recipes

Mint Tea with Lime

- Spinach Salad with Thyme and Citrus Vinaigrette
- Tomato Mozzarella Salad Foil Packet Breakfast Recipes

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