

On the table...

Summer Sangria!

By Laura Kurella

We all need to take more time to simply celebrate being alive, and no season makes it easier than summer!

Looking for something fun, flavorful, and refreshing that can be made with or without alcohol, sangria is surely one that checks all these boxes!

Thought to be invented by the Romans (back in 6000 B.C.), the Romans are also credited with naming it “sangria,” which translates into (sorry) “blood,” because its color resembles blood – nothing more! Likely created out of necessity, because water back then was often unsafe to drink, the addition of alcohol was also necessary to kill off harmful bacteria! What’s interesting is sangria is not just a delicious drink, but also good for our health when made with beneficial ingredients.

For example, if you use a good red wine, which provides heart-healthy, cancer-fighting anti-oxidants, and fresh fruit, which offers healthy doses of vitamins, minerals and proteins too, there’ll be more than just refreshment in your glass of sangria!

Though it can be made many different ways, sangria is typically made from a red wine, fresh fruit and sometimes a little brandy or rum added in. However, today the foot has come off the brakes with sangria recipes, so just about anything can be mixed in!

When making a sangria with wine, be sure to select one that you would drink by itself. Reds like a Bordeaux or Cabernet or Rioja work best. However, whites like a Chardonnay or Pinot Grigio work well, too.

Always use fresh fruit. Citrus, berries, plums, pears, or any other fruit you desire pair well, but time is very necessary for the flavors to marry properly with the wine, and a “must do” for true sangria to fully bloom with flavor!

It is true that the most important rule to making a good sangria is to give it time to steep - at least half a day – so do plan ahead, and be sure to make plenty

of it!

To lower alcohol content, or even make your sangria near non-alcoholic, try simmering your favorite wine for a few minutes. Alcohol will cook off, and if you do it gently, not a rapid, rolling boil, the wine’s flavor will remain intact. This helps you avoid sugary grape juice or soda substitutes.

Here now are some extra-special ways to sip your way splendidly through summer - with a little help from sangria. Enjoy!

True Summer Sangria

Crisp, classic, refreshing!

Yield: 8 servings

3 cups dry red wine

1 1/2 cups sparkling mineral water

1 1/2 cups orange juice

1 lime, sliced thin

1 lemon, sliced thin

1 orange, sliced thin

1/2 cup brandy

1/4 cup sugar or sub (optional)

2 tablespoons Cointreau liqueur or orange liqueur

2 tablespoons grenadine

2 tablespoons fresh lemon juice

2 tablespoons fresh lime juice

Berries (in season), whole and sliced

Ice cubes

In a large pitcher, combine wine, soda, orange juice, brandy, sugar, Cointreau, grenadine, lemon juice, lime juice and half of the lime slices, lemon slices, orange slices, and berries. Let stand for at least 2 hours.

Sippin’ Sake-Ginger Sangria

Sake has less sugar than wine and none of the sulfites and tannins in the traditional drink!

Yield: 6 servings

1 cup water

1/3 cup sugar or sub

1 4-inch piece ginger, peeled and cut into thin rounds

3 pears, cut into chunks

1 lemon, cut into thin rounds

1 bottle dry sake

Simmer water, sugar, and ginger over medium heat for 10 minutes, stirring to dissolve sugar. Remove from heat and cool. Strain syrup. Stir together pears, lemons, ginger syrup, and



Delicious and inviting, sangria offers a light, crisp and refreshing way to celebrate summer- all season long!

sake in a pitcher. Refrigerate at least 4 hours before serving.

Sober Strawberry-Green Tea Sangria

Rich in disease-fighting antioxidants!

Yield: 6 servings

7 cup water

6 green tea bags

1/4 cup dried hibiscus flowers (optional)

3 cup strawberries, stemmed and quartered

Boil water and steep with green tea and hibiscus. Let cool and strain. Combine green tea and strawberries in a pitcher. Refrigerate at least 4 hours before serving. Serve over ice.

Cheery Cherry Sangria

Offers all the benefits of tart cherries in every glass!

Yield: 8 servings

2 cup frozen pitted cherries

1 cup halved red grapes

2 small oranges, sliced into thin rounds

1 cup tart cherry juice

1 bottle red wine

In a pitcher, combine all ingredients. Refrigerate at least 4 hours before serving. Serve over ice. Wonderful Watermelon Sangria

Fun and super-refreshing!

Yield: 8 servings

1/2 small seedless watermelon

2 limes, cut into thin

rounds

2 cup strawberries, stemmed and cut into

chunks

1 bottle rosé wine

Scoop watermelon into balls using a melon baller or ice cream scoop. Freeze on a parchment-paper lined cookie sheet overnight (makes about 4 cups). Combine frozen watermelon, limes, strawberries, and rosé in a pitcher. Refrigerate at least 4 hours before serving.

Marvelous Mojito Sangria

Loaded with anti-aging vitamin C, silica, and trace minerals!

Yield: 12 servings

1/3 English cucumber, cut into thin rounds

2 limes, cut into thin rounds

10 fresh mint leaves

2 cups white grape juice (100% juice)

1 cup white rum

1 bottle white Rioja Spanish wine or other dry white wine

Sparkling mineral water (optional)

In a pitcher, combine cucumber, lime slices, mint leaves, grape juice, rum, and wine. Stir gently then. Refrigerate at least 4 hours before serving. Serve over ice with a splash of soda.