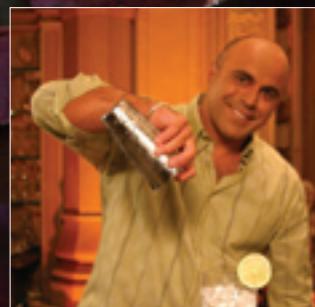


INDULGENCE

making
spirits
bright

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hot buttered rum

Hot Buttered Rum dates as far back as George Washington's time when according to the American Heritage Cookbook, the drink "found its way into domestic politics." Candidates would provide generous quantities to constituents in order to influence the vote. Today this cold weather warm-me-up is perhaps best enjoyed with friends sitting in front of a roaring fire, as this drink has been known to make the toes tingle and the heart merry. It is also ideal for larger gatherings or holiday celebrations since the batter can be made in quantity ahead of time.

My version feature's 10 Cane rum which is complex with layers of flavor and a perfect match for the rich, buttery batter, although any one of the great rums on the market would do. Look for one that is aged, with lots of character. Or for a change try using one of the spiced rums... Practice makes perfect.

When cooler weather descends many of our guests have come to look forward to the season's first mug of our Hot Buttered Rum. I really love this drink, and particularly this recipe, to which I have stayed true for years. The enchanting aroma always reminds me of my Father, who was a baker, and the many childhood excursions to our family's bakery where I would be sure to sample anything within reach.

Be sure to make a little extra batter – it will package nicely in an airtight container and makes a great Holiday gift, along with a special bottle of rum of course!

Kriston Araoz Gridley, Manager of Mixology and Drink Development at iMi Atlanta, shows us just how easy it is to make.

1. Spoon the batter into the cup.
2. Add rum and hot water
3. Stir vigorously
4. Enjoy a sensational Tony's Hot Buttered Rum!



Tony's Hot Buttered Rum Batter

- 1 lb Light brown sugar
- ½ lb unsalted butter (softened)
- 2 teaspoons ground cinnamon
- 2 teaspoons ground nutmeg
- ½ teaspoon ground allspice
- 2 teaspoon vanilla extract

In a mixing bowl beat together softened butter, brown sugar, vanilla extract and spices until well combined. Refrigerate in an airtight reusable container for up to a month, or place in your freezer until ready to use.

To Make Tony's Hot Buttered Rum

In a pre-heated coffee mug combine 2 heaping tablespoons batter with 1 ½ oz. 10 Cane Rum. Top with boiling water and stir well to mix. Serve with a spoon.

Hint: It is best to make the batter in advance so the spices have an opportunity to mingle. Be sure to remove batter from refrigerator at least 6 hours prior to serving to allow it to soften.

yuletide punch

Serving a Holiday Punch a most delightful custom, be it celebrating the first snowfall of the season with a couple of Tom & Jerry's, or mixing up a bowl of Egg Nog to see the family through a long night of Christmas Eve tree trimming. Most countries have their own Holiday Punch traditions. There is Sweden's Glogg, Britain's Wassail Bowl, Germany's Grossmutter's Punch, and so on. Each one is traditionally served at a gathering of loved ones during the Holidays to accentuate the communal spirit of joy and happiness of the season.

Yuletide Punch is a fruit based lighter alternative to the traditional Nog, and a little less complicated to prepare...no heating involved. One of the obvious advantages of serving a batch punch such as this is most of the recipe can and should be seen to in advance. More than a matter of convenience, allowing the punch to rest allows its ingredients to intermingle, over night if possible, improving the recipe's final draft, so to speak. Final assemblage, however, should take place immediately prior to serving – if possible just as the first guests are crossing the threshold. This keeps the bubbles from dissipating and the ice mold from over diluting the recipe before it can be enjoyed. Plus, the host is more likely to get out of the kitchen and join the party.

With a little imagination and pre-party organization it is possible to make a punch that looks great and tastes even better. I truly believe there is no conceivable Holiday gathering that cannot benefit from serving a great bowl of Punch, provided you follow a few simple rules:

- Always use fresh, seasonal fruits and juices
- Don't skimp, always use premium spirits and wines
- Don't use small cube ice, make a large ice-mold; this keeps your Punch cold without diluting it and its easier to maneuver with a serving ladle
- If using sparkling wine or carbonated beverages make sure they are well chilled and wait until the very last minute to add since the bubbles will soon dissipate
- Make sure to chill your punch very well in advance as the ring is used to keep the Punch cold, not to chill room temperature ingredients
- If using fresh berries always freeze them first to better maintain the look and shape of the fruit



Tony's Yuletide Punch

- 3 bottles Brut Sparkling Wine
- 1 liter Belvedere Citrus Vodka
- 12 ounces Marie Brizard Crème de Cassis de Bordeaux
- 2 bottles (46 oz) white grape juice
- 12 ounces fresh lemon juice
- 12 ounces freshly squeezed orange juice
- 6 ounces simple syrup
- Fresh frozen red raspberries
- Fresh frozen blackberries
- Sliced oranges
- Sliced lemons
- Fruit ice molds **

Pre-mix Belvedere Citrus Vodka white grape juice, fresh lemon & orange juices, simple syrup, crème de cassis, oranges, and lemons in a large bowl, cover and refrigerate until ready to serve (at least 3 hours, preferably over night). Transfer to a Punch or serving bowl, add frozen berries, ice molds and chilled sparkling wine just prior to serving. Serve in wine goblets with fruit. Makes 24 servings.

** I use plastic food storage containers of different sizes and shapes to make my ice molds. I begin by filling them ¼ full of water and add red raspberries, blackberries, orange and lemon wheels. I allow it to freeze and add another layer until it is full.