SPIRITED SNOWBIRDS TASTING

Harvest Sips

Apples, Pumpkins, and Spiced Rum

Welcome to Spirited Snowbirds! This is a free cocktail tasting. Tonight we're going to try several harvest cocktails, talk a little about how they are made and what goes into them, and give you the recipes so you can make the ones you like at home. Each recipe makes one full drink, which we split four ways. Even so, tasting everything can add up to about 2 1/2 standard drinks, more if you spike your cider. Pace yourself, drink some water, eat something, and skip anything you like. Please don't drive afterward, golf carts included. Walk, totter, or stagger with dignity. **Allergies?** Some drinks contain dairy, tree nuts, or citrus, so ask before you sip.

1. Lemon Drop Martini RETURNING FAVORITE

The lesson: This is the vodka sour: spirit, sour, and sweet. Learn this pattern and you can make dozens of drinks.

- 3 oz citron vodka
- 1 1/2 oz fresh lemon juice
- 1 1/2 oz simple syrup
- Sugar for the rim and a lemon twist

How: Wet the glass rim with lemon and dip it in sugar. Shake the vodka, lemon juice, and syrup with ice. Strain into the glass and add the twist.

2. Spiced Rum Apple Cider: Sailor Jerry vs. Captain Morgan

The lesson: Same recipe, two rums, poured blind into cups A and B. Sailor Jerry is 92 proof and Captain Morgan is 70. Can you tell which is which?

Make one of each:

- 2 oz spiced rum
- 3 1/2 oz apple cider
- About 1/2 oz lemon juice (a good squeeze)

How: Jigger the cider and rum into a shaker, then add the lemon. Shake with ice about 15 seconds. Strain over fresh ice.

Taste for: aroma, sweetness, what kind of spice, and how much warmth you feel.

3. Autumn Vodka Smash

The lesson: Muddling and double straining. Press the fruit gently to release its juice; the fine strainer catches the bits.

- 2 oz vodka
- 1 1/2 oz apple juice
- 3/4 oz maple syrup
- 1/2 oz lemon juice
- 1 fresh fig and 3 basil leaves (half to muddle, half to garnish)
- About 1 1/2 oz ginger beer

How: Muddle half the fig and basil in the shaker. Add the lemon, maple, apple juice, vodka, and ice. Shake, then pour through a Hawthorne strainer and a fine mesh strainer over fresh ice. Top with ginger beer and garnish.

No fig? Use 1 teaspoon of fig jam.

4. Autumn Old Fashioned

The lesson: The Old Fashioned pattern is spirit, sugar, and bitters. Here maple plays the sugar and cider adds fruit.

- 2 1/2 oz Sazerac Rye Whiskey
- 3 oz apple cider
- 1/2 oz maple syrup
- 2 dashes Angostura bitters

How: Fill a glass with ice, add everything, and stir until cold.

Jigger Tips for the Rum Showdown

- Check both sides, since jiggers vary. The small side is the "pony."
- Fill to the brim. "Almost full" is often 1/4 oz short.
- Hold it level over the shaker, so spills land in the drink.
- Pour in one quick flip so nothing clings inside.
- Measure the cheap stuff (cider) first. A goof only wastes cider.
- With only 2 oz of rum, small errors matter. Measuring keeps it fair.

More recipes on the back

5. Caramel Apple Fire

The lesson: Two whiskeys working together. Cinnamon whisky brings sweet heat and bourbon adds depth. Think county-fair caramel apple.

- 1 1/2 oz cinnamon whisky (St. Elmo's Fire, Jack Daniel's Tennessee Fire, or Fireball)
- 1 oz bourbon (such as Maker's Mark)
- 2 1/2 oz apple cider
- 1/2 oz caramel syrup or sauce
- About 1/2 oz cream

How: Shake everything hard with ice to blend in the caramel and cream. Strain over fresh ice. **Contains dairy.**

Shopping tip: The little "Fireball Cinnamon" bottles at grocery and gas stations are a malt drink at half strength. Look for "Cinnamon Whisky" at the liquor store.

6. Cran on the Couch

The lesson: Building a drink right in the glass. No shaker needed. Add the fizz last so it stays bubbly.

- 3 oz vodka (such as Tito's)
- 3 oz ginger ale
- 1 1/4 oz cranberry juice
- 1/2 oz fresh lime juice
- Whole cranberries and a lime peel

How: Fill a tall glass with ice. Add the vodka, cranberry, and lime. Top with ginger ale, stir gently once or twice, and garnish.

Just one for you: 2 oz vodka, 2 oz ginger ale, 3/4 oz cranberry, and 1/4 oz lime.

7. Spiced Velvet

The lesson: The creamy pattern. Rich drinks coat your tongue and dull your taste buds, so they always come last.

- 2 1/4 oz RumChata (or another cinnamon cream liqueur)
- 2 1/4 oz unsweetened vanilla almond milk
- 1 1/4 oz spiced rum (such as Captain Morgan)
- 3/4 tsp pumpkin purée
- Pumpkin pie spice for the top

How: Shake everything but the spice with ice for 20 seconds. Double strain into a martini glass and dust with pumpkin pie spice. **Contains dairy and tree nuts.**

Going Home: Mulled Cider

Fill an 8 oz cup and keep it plain, or add 1 to 2 oz of vodka (plain, vanilla, or caramel) or your own flavored spirit. Then walk home!

Makes about 4 cups: 1/2 gallon apple cider, 3 cinnamon sticks, 2 star anise, 1 tsp each whole cloves and whole allspice, 1 sliced orange, and 1 to 2 tbsp brown sugar or maple syrup (optional).

How: Simmer on low 20 to 30 minutes, then strain. **Crockpot:** low for 2 to 3 hours, then warm. Tie the cloves and allspice in a coffee filter and you can skip straining.

Other ways to spike it: Fireball, Salted Caramel Crown Royal, Crown Royal Regal Apple, or Apple Fireball with a splash of Apple Pucker.

More Harvest Drinks to Try at Home

- **Cranberry Mule:** vodka, cranberry, and lime, topped with ginger beer
- **Apple Cider Mimosa:** cider, Prosecco, and a pinch of cinnamon
- **Pumpkin Spice Martini:** vanilla vodka, pumpkin, cream, and maple

Find these recipes and more at spiritedsnowbirds.com

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