

Your Complete Guide to Sangria - Nightlife

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FEATURES

Your Complete Guide to Sangria

SUZANNE KOCH, JUNE 9, 2016

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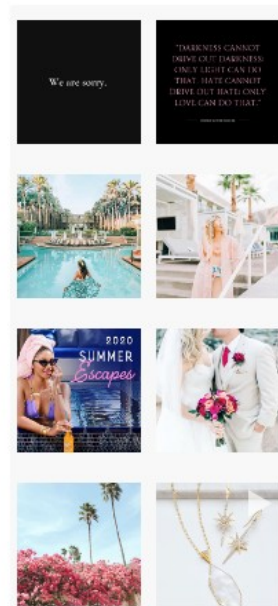
NORTH Red Sangria

One of summer's more popular drinks, sangria is the perfect poolside companion and tapas-dinner accompaniment. With fruity flavors and refreshing notes, it's impossible to not sip at least one of these during a sizzling Arizona summer. We had the chance to speak to Mat Snapp, the beverage director of Fox Restaurant Concepts and we learned the ins and outs of the history of the fruity drink, the best wines to use, the tastiest foods to pair with it and some simple at-home recipes so you can really sip up the summer.

HISTORY

Sangria was born as a means to preserve leftover wine because even many centuries ago they knew not to throw the precious beverage out. A higher level of alcohol leaves no room for bacteria, so to keep the wine going strong, brandy was added to the wine. To maintain the tasty flavor, fresh fruit was also thrown into the mix. Since pirates often had a lot of wine on them, they discovered an even better way to preserve the wine by adding sugar and orange peel to the brandy and creating a candied brandy or curacao—eventually triple sec. Since it's murky

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the brandy and creating a colored brandy, or curacao—eventually triple sec. Since it's murky, dark red hue is reminiscent of blood, it's no surprise that its name comes from a mixture of the Spanish word for blood, "sangre" and the West Indian word for blood, "sangaree." The delicious concoction didn't reach the new world however until 1964 when it was first poured up at the New York World's Fair and has stuck around ever since.

TIPS & TRICKS

So you want to whip up your own batch of sangria? Here are some tips and tricks from Mat to create the perfect at-home pitcher of fruity decadence.

It's a common misconception that red sangria is more dry and white is more sweet; "it's all in in how you make it," says Mat. The first mistake people often make is to simply throw a bunch of fruit into wine, which really just soaks up a lot of the good stuff. Instead of the wine flavoring the fruit, you want the fruit to flavor the wine. To do this, Mat suggests soaking the fruit in a brandy and triple sec mixture instead. This helps pull the oils and flavors of the fruit out while preserving every drop of wine. Another option, and Mat's preferred method, is to simply make a puree by blending up seasonal fruit in a blender. This is the best way to incorporate every bit of fruit into your sangria without leaving anything behind.

If you put good stuff in, you get good stuff out; the fresher the fruit, the better the sangria, and it's no different when it comes to the quality of vino you're pouring in. "A lot of times people think when you make sangria you can use a really cheap or aggressive wine. You don't need to get boxed wine to make a good sangria," says Mat. While you don't need boxed wine, you also don't need the most expensive bottle on the shelf. "You can get relatively good \$4, \$5 bottles of wine," says Mat. But what about the type of wine? With countless options lining store shelves, do you choose a cabernet or a malbec, a Riesling or a chardonnay?

White Sangria: Opt for a New Zealand sauvignon blanc, which has tropical notes of pineapple, passion fruit, green bell pepper and some earthy notes. Or, go for a New World Riesling that has flavors of pear and honeysuckle. You can also make your own base out of pureed peach, brandy, triple sec and a little bit of citrus. Mat suggests adding a touch of sparkling wine for an amped up sangria. Stay away from French sauvignon blanc.

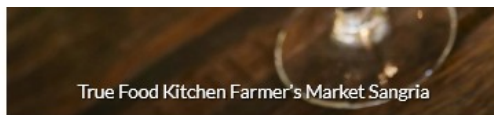
Red Sangria: If you're craving red sangria, look for a merlot, new world merlot or a Washington merlot whose soft notes of big fruit lend well to a sangria. You can also opt for an Argentinian malbec or, depending on your audience, a traditional Spanish tempranillo is ideal for those looking for a thinner, spicier sangria. Stay away from rosés.

For a simple at-home summer recipe, Mat recommends mixing some sugar and water to create a simple syrup and then blending raspberries, strawberries and red apples in a blender. Add the mixture to white wine, brandy, triple sec and lemon juice, and stir. If you're not sure which citrus juice to reach for or what to garnish your drink with, remember lime pairs better with red wine and lemon better with white.



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FOOD PAIRINGS

If hunger strikes mid-sip, consider reaching for lighter, smaller bites. With sangria having its roots in Spain, cheeses, sliced meats and tapas-style eats are best to pair with sangria. Feeling a salad? Opt for a kale salad with chicken and vinaigrette dressing, or a Mediterranean-style salad with ingredients like spinach, burrata, goat cheese, olives, feta and tomatoes.

FOX FEATURED SUMMER SANGRIAS

True Food Kitchen: Find traditional sangrias at True Foods where they add mulling spices of coriander and cardamom to their brandy along with orange peel to give it an East Indian spice market flair. Try the Farmer's Market Sangria, which is a combination of Riesling, diced pineapple, orange, spiced brandy and fresh pineapple juice. (recipe below)

NoRTH Italia: The trendy Italian restaurant is brewing up a mixture of blood orange, strawberry, brandy and red wine. (recipe below)

Culinary Dropout: Depending on the day, diners can find varying, funky takes on sangria like their blend of apricot tea, white wine and peach puree. "Peach and apricot go together so well, especially if you hit it with a little bit of honey," says Mat.

RECIPES

Farmer's Market Sangria

- .5 oz. lime juice
- 1 oz. simple syrup
- .5 oz. pineapple juice
- .5 oz. mulled brandy
- 4.5 oz. Snoqualmie Riesling
- 5 pcs. diced seasonal fruit

Directions: Add all ingredients into shaker with ice. Shake hard and dump slowly into stemmed wine glass.

Classic Red Sangria

- .5 oz. blood orange
- .5 oz. strawberry puree
- .75 oz. lime juice
- .75 oz. brandy
- .75 oz. triple sec
- .5 oz. simple syrup
- 3 oz. red wine

Directions: Add all ingredients into shaker with ice. Shake hard and dump slowly into stemmed wine glass.

For more information, visit: foxrfg.com

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