

So, you're having a party

From weddings to baby showers, long weekend celebrations, anniversaries, impromptu gatherings and elegant affairs, there is a wine cocktail for every occasion.

Wine cocktails may be made with a variety of wines: red, white, rosé, sparkling, sweet or dry. When selecting which wine to use consider the aromas and flavors in the wine, because if, for example, you choose a white wine with notes of tropical fruit you can complement the wine-infused blend with the addition of mango, melon and pineapple. Sauvignon Blanc's profile is intensified by the addition of citrus and tropical fruit, where Riesling is enhanced by green apple, peach, pear and nectarine. Red wine-infused drinks made with Pinot Noir improve with the addition of raspberries, strawberries and cherries, flavors that mimic those in the wine.

Undoubtedly the most popular wine-infused cocktail is Sangria which may be made with white, rosé or red wine, although traditional Sangria recipes call for a dry red table wine from Spain or Portugal. If you prefer ripe and fruity red Sangria select one of the many off-dry "New World" red blends such as Apothic Red, Diabolica, Gnarly Head Authentic Red or Fetzer Crimson.

Although it is not necessary, if you prepare Sangria or wine-infused punch a day ahead it is well worth the effort, as this allows the flavors to meld together. Also, it is best to keep all ingredients refrigerated as cool temperatures enhance and enliven the drink. Serve drinks in cooled frosty stemware and add a special touch with garnish. A

slice of orange, lime or lemon, mint leaf, flower or sprig of rosemary make the drink more appealing.

There are many ways to alter a recipe to suit your taste and budget by adjusting or substituting ingredients. Sweetness may be adjusted by the addition or omission of sugar but also by substituting a beverage such as club soda (dry) for ginger ale (sweet) or dry wine with off-dry (slightly sweet) wine. For cocktails calling for Champagne, you may substitute less expensive dry sparkling wines made using the same wine-making method. Try Cava from Spain, wines labeled "Crémant" from France or any sparkling wine labeled as having been "made by the traditional or ancestral method".

The following recipes were selected not only because they are refreshing and beautiful, but also quick and easy to prepare.

Billini

The classic recipe, invented in Harry's bar in Venice, calls for white peaches but either yellow or white may be used.

- 2 ripe peaches, peeled, halved and pit removed (or canned peaches in natural juice)
- chilled Champagne

Puree peaches until smooth. Fill Champagne flutes 1/3 full with peach puree, top with Champagne. Garnish with a peach slice.

White Sangria

1 26 ounce (750 ml) bottle of white wine – Sauvignon Blanc, Riesling, Gewurztraminer unoaked Chardonnay, Vinho Verde

- 2/3 cups white sugar
- 3 oranges - thinly sliced
- 1 lemon – thinly sliced
- 1 lime – thinly sliced
- 2 ounces brandy (optional)
- 1/2 litre ginger-ale
- Combine all ingredients other than the ginger-ale. Chill. Add the cooled pop just prior to serving.

Pink Sangria

- 2 – 10 ounce packages of frozen sliced strawberries, thawed
- 1 – 12 ounce frozen lemonade concentrate, thawed
- 2 bottles of rosé – White Zinfandel for a sweeter blend or Provincial Rosé for a drier blend
- 2 cups pineapple juice
- 1 litre ginger-ale

Mix the first 4 ingredients together. Cool. Add ginger-ale just prior to service.

Mimosa

There have been adaptations to this recipe over the years but here is the tried and true (and easy) original.

- Orange juice
- Champagne

Fill one-half of a Champagne flute with sparkling wine and top off with orange juice.

Traditional Sangria

- 1/2 cup brandy
- 1/4 cup lemon juice
- 1/3 cup frozen lemonade
- 1/3 cup orange juice
- 1 bottle dry red table wine from Spain or Portugal
- 1/2 cup orange-flavored liqueur – triple sec or Grand Marnier (optional)
- 1 lemon – thinly sliced
- 1 lime – thinly sliced
- 1 orange – thinly sliced
- 1/4 cup white sugar (optional)
- 2 cups of carbonated water (optional – use only if “fizz” is desired)

Combine all ingredients other than carbonated water and refrigerate overnight. If you want a fizzy beverage add cooled carbonated water just prior to serving.

Kate Wagner Zeke, Sommelier(ISG)

Certified Specialist of Wine, Certified Wine Educator(SWE)
wineadviser@wcgwave.ca



Wine Pick

19 Crimes Shiraz Durif, 2012, Australia

Is it a crime to drink red wine in the summer? Absolutely not. This full-bodied and intense red blend is smooth and juicy with generous dark red fruit, black pepper, spice and a whiff of eucalyptus. Nice ripe tannins and moderate acidity carry thru on the lengthy and appealing finish.

Sileni Cellar Selection Sparkling Sauvignon Blanc, NV, New Zealand

New Zealand is world renown for its quality Sauvignon Blanc and this sparkling wine is no exception. It is bright and light-bodied with a fine smooth mousse, vibrant acidity and aromas and flavors of pineapple, fresh cut grass, gooseberry, lemon and lime. Pair this racy wine with a fresh seasonal salad with goat cheese.

Design Your Home

House-Cottage-Condo-Apartment



Western Manitoba

Increase the
Value of
Your Home
Today

MORE ARTICLES AT DESIGNYOURHOME.CA!

**Outdoor Living
Here to Stay**

**Water
Safety**