

Warm up winter with summer cocktails

Ode to Summer Cocktails:

I'm cold, so tired of winter,
Snow and ice I truly loathe.
I don't want any more hot toddies,
I don't want to wear winter clothes.
I miss my summer cocktails,
Margaritas and Long Island Iced Tea.
If only June could arrive in March
How happy I would be!

Winter can indeed be long and tedious for some of us. But fear not: spring is coming and summer right behind it.

A great way to get rid of the winter blues is to start thinking about the cocktails that remind you of warmer weather. So here are a few options to get you thinking about summertime.

Gin is a great warm weather drink. This fresh-tasting spirit is flavoured with botanicals. Juniper berries are the predominant flavour, but herbs, spices, and fruit peels also create that crisp fresh flavour that gin is famous for. Refreshing and tasty, gin can be served in a variety of cocktails.

Another favourite summer sipper is the very versatile vodka. Aside from being the best selling spirit in the world, its neutral type flavour lends itself very well to many mixed drinks. Vodka can be made from potatoes and also from grain. You can purchase vodka with or without flavouring. Fruit flavours such as blueberry, citrus, raspberry and lime are popular.

What would summer be without the margarita? Tequila is the spirit that has a very distinct black pepper aroma a vegetal flavour. You can choose from three main styles of Tequila: white, golden or anejo. White tequila is not usually aged, gold is aged for a short time in oak, anejo is usually aged for three to four years in uncharred white oak barrels. Like vodka, tequila can be flavoured with fruit; these make interesting cocktails as well.

There are also a variety of liqueurs to choose from to make your cocktails. Join the Cocktail Culture Club and receive monthly recipes by e-mailing cocktails@anbl.com.

Spring and summer are a cause for celebration so break out the bubbly; it can be your base for some really great refreshing drinks.

Here are a few cocktail recipes that are sure to take your mind off the cold.

The first is a new twist on an old favourite.

Raspberry Gin and Tonic

1 oz Chambord
2 oz Dry Gin
4 oz Tonic water

Garnish with a wedge of lime and float fresh raspberries on top.

Beachcomber

1 ¼ oz Smirnoff vodka
¼ oz Captain Morgan Parrot Bay Coconut Rum
½ oz pineapple juice
¼ oz orange juice
1 slice orange

Pour pineapple juice, orange juice, vodka and rum into a cocktail shaker with ice. Shake well. Strain into a glass filled with ice. Garnish with the orange slice.

Caribbean Mist

1 oz gold tequila
½ oz blue Curacao
1 ½ oz pineapple juice
1 ½ oz orange juice
1 lime or orange wedge

Half fill a rocks glass with ice. Next pour in the tequila, pineapple juice, orange juice and top with curaco. Garnish with fruit of your choice.

This next cocktail is so easy to make and it tastes great.

Summer Sunrise

Juice of 1 orange
½ oz raspberry liqueur
Sparkling white wine

Combine raspberry liqueur, orange juice and wine in a tall glass. Add a few cubes of ice and voila!

So go ahead; rid those winter blues by mixing a cocktail and thinking tropical thoughts!

Written by Liz Durant, a product advisor at NB Liquor's Parkway Mall store in Saint John.