

Rum Recipes

from Cynthia Clampitt

Here are two historic rum recipes, to help you get into the spirit of the 1700s.

Hot Buttered Rum

It was in New England that hot buttered rum evolved. Also known as a rum toddy, this is one of my favorite cold-weather comforts. It is easy to make with simple, common ingredients.

gold rum
brown sugar
butter
cinnamon
hot water

For each serving: Place 1 tsp. brown sugar, firmly packed, into a mug or Irish coffee glass. Add 1/4 cup rum, generous dash or two of cinnamon, and 1 tbsp. butter. Add boiling water to fill. Stir well. Drink hot.

If you will be serving a lot of hot buttered rum, you can prepare a mixture of sugar, butter, and spice in advance, and then just spoon about 1-1/2 tablespoons of that into the cups before adding rum and hot water.

As with most historic recipes, there are numerous variations. Alternative preparations might include powdered sugar instead of brown, light or dark rum instead of gold, and nutmeg instead of cinnamon, or try a blend of cinnamon, nutmeg, and/or cloves.

Dark rum gives the beverage a deeper flavor, while light is milder. This is largely a matter of preference. Gold rum is a nice middle ground that will be liked by almost everyone. While nutmeg can be added to taste, the simple brown sugar and cinnamon combination is my favorite. However, it's hard to go too far wrong when you're using rum, butter, spices, and sugar. Enjoy.

(over for Martha Washington's Rum Punch)

Martha Washington's Rum Punch

Martha Washington was a tremendously gifted hostess, which was a great asset for her husband before, during, and after his presidency. During the 1700s, punch was all the rage for parties on both sides of the Atlantic, and from Martha's journal we gain this recipe for the rum punch she made for festive events at Mount Vernon. (If you don't know how to make simple syrup, a recipe follows. And it is simple.)

3 lemons, quartered
1 orange, quartered
1/2 tsp. grated nutmeg
3 cinnamon sticks, broken
6 cloves
4 oz. simple syrup
4 oz. lemon juice
4 oz. fresh orange juice
12 oz. boiling water
3 oz. white rum
3 oz. dark rum
3 oz. orange Curaçao

In a container, mash the orange and lemon pieces, cinnamon sticks, cloves, and nutmeg. Add the simple syrup and lemon and orange juices. Pour the boiling water over the mixture. Let it cool, then add the white rum, dark rum, and orange Curaçao. Strain well into a pitcher or punch bowl, and serve over ice in goblets. Decorate with wheels of lemon and orange.

Simple Syrup

2 parts sugar
1 part water

Bring the water to a boil. Add sugar and stir constantly, until sugar is completely dissolved. Remove pan from heat as soon as sugar is dissolved (boiling too long will make it too thick—and will eventually caramelize). Allow to cool completely, then bottle.

Alternatively, if you need the syrup in a hurry, you can put the sugar and water in a jar, seal, and shake until the sugar dissolves. It will not be as thick as the boiled syrup, but you don't have to wait for it to cool.

This syrup is used in a wide range of cocktails, and so will not go to waste even if you make more than you need.