

How to Make the Perfect Punch

By THE EDITORS | November 30, 2015

We'll be making this cider- and whiskey-based drink long after the holidays.

We hope you're recovering smoothly from your Thanksgiving indulgences. It's hard to believe holiday party season starts this week, and it's even harder to imagine spending the entire night mixing cocktails at your own. Luis Antonio Thompson at Great Performances has the solution — he makes a winter solstice punch that can be refreshed throughout the night.

Inspired by the fresh ginger from Great Performances' organic farm upstate, he combines Katchkie Farms ginger with whiskey, butterscotch schnapps and mulled apple cider. We sipped this super-easy punch at our Friendsgiving celebrations last week and it was a huge hit — serve it hot or cold and adjust the proportions to taste. For a fun nonalcoholic version, make a cider ice ring using the a ring mold or a Bundt pan and serve without the liquor.

Ingredients (Serves 50):

1 gallon mulled apple cider
.5 bottle Butterscotch Schnapps
1 bottle whiskey
.5 cup ginger simple syrup (optional)
Orange slices, star anise, cinnamon
(optional for garnish)

To make the mulled apple cider:

Heat 1 gallon apple cider with juice of 3 oranges, 1 lemon, 5 cinnamon sticks and a handful of star anise on medium heat. Cover and bring to a boil; turn off heat and let steep for 20 minutes. Let cool, strain. Yields approximately 1 gallon.

To make the simple syrup:

Peel and thinly slice one 6- to 8-inch knob of ginger. Bring 1 cup sugar and 1 cup water to a boil over medium heat, stirring constantly. Add ginger; bring to a simmer. Remove from heat and let steep 20 to 30 minutes. Strain out ginger pieces before use.

To make the punch:

To serve cold, combine all ingredients in a large punch bowl. Garnish with orange slices. To serve hot, heat apple cider in a large pot. When it's hot but not boiling, add other ingredients.