

“Dock Time”

There are few things like planning to spend a picture perfect day with dear friends to inspire a host or hostess. Once you’ve conjured up creative hors d’oeuvres and chosen the perfect dinner menu, you naturally turn an enthusiastic eye to what drinks to serve. A dear friend of mine raised the cocktail hour to new heights several years ago when I paid her a visit at her lakeside summer getaway. After we ceased our water play for the day, we staked out our front row chairs on the dock in anticipation of the sunset. My hostess treated me to array of fine eats and drinks. As the sun landed on the western horizon, we lifted our glasses for a toast. “To Dock Time.” Needless to say, Dock Time has now become a tradition.

By far, my favorite elixir at Dock Time is a strawberry daiquiri. They’re the perfect companion with shrimp, crabs, nachos, or just about any hors d’oeuvres or light fare. They’re also great all by themselves. And if you’re looking for something unique to offer your guests, they’ll remember this summertime treat long into winter.

The problem is that there are not any good recipes for making a truly great strawberry daiquiri. Some of the store-bought concoctions are too sweet, too tart, too watered down, or taste too pre-fabricated. Their instructions tell you to simply “add water and ice.” That approach, combined with my old run down blender, left large pieces of ice cubes throughout the drink. Texture is just as important as taste. I wanted a

daiquiri that not only had a distinctive sweet yet tart taste, but a drink that had a smooth thick consistency, yet was just a bit crunchy.

I began to experiment with all sorts of different recipes. After many attempts, I learned the first secret is to have a decent blender. I’ve been using an Osterizer Dual Range 10 Pulsematic for years now and have never had any trouble. As long as you have something that can shatter ice cubes, you’ll be fine. The volume of the pitcher must be at least 32 ounces.

The second secret is knowing *how* to add the ingredients together. Not only is the order in which one adds them critical, but timing is important as well. This recipe keeps the mixture thin enough to assure thorough blending right up until you add the final ingredient. Working as quickly as possible to mix the strawberries before the batch “sets up” will result in the desired thick even consistency.

Strawberry Daiquiris

Six ounces frozen MinuteMaid Concentrated LimeAde
Six ounces Bacardi Dark Rum
1/3 to 1/2 cup of sugar
Ten ice cubes
Sixteen ounces unsweetened frozen whole strawberries

1. Add six ounces of frozen limeade, six ounces of rum (using empty limeade can), and 1/3 to 1/2 cup of sugar. Do not take the lime concentrate out of the freezer to thaw ahead of time!
2. Blend at low speed for five seconds.
3. Add ten ice cubes.

4. Blend at the highest speed for ten seconds. Stop and wait for two seconds. Repeat blend-wait cycle as many times as necessary to get rid of any large ice chunks.
5. Immediately add only ten ounces of frozen strawberries. Do not take the strawberries out of the freezer to thaw ahead of time!
6. Blend at the highest speed for 15–20 seconds.
7. Immediately add remaining six ounces of strawberries. Use a spatula to push the last strawberries down to the bottom of the blender. Blend until there is no more crunching sound. Remove the top and again use the spatula to locate unblended strawberries and push them to the bottom. Replace the top and blend again. You will probably have to repeat this cycle two or three times.
8. Remove the pitcher part of the blender from the base and place in the freezer for ten-to-fifteen minutes. The temperature of the daiquiris will drop to well below the freezing point of water. But because of the presence of alcohol and sugar, the contents will merely thicken, not freeze solid.
9. At serving time, pour into large margarita glasses. Garnish with a fresh strawberry or slice of lime. Put in a plastic palm tree swizzle stick for laughs.

Yield: Four large servings.

A Couple Of Interesting Options You Might Try

When making these drinks for guests, I usually add six ounces of rum. I have, however, on occasion used eight ounces for a little extra “zing”. You can use as little as four ounces without adversely affecting the “set up” time. Unfortunately, leaving out the rum altogether can cause the mixture to freeze before all of the strawberries can be

blended into the mixture. This is because the alcohol in the rum is one of the two ingredients that lowers the freezing point of water.

Another option you might consider is substituting two ounces of Triple Sec for two ounces of rum. This adds a pleasant, yet subtle citrusy dimension to the drink.

You might try this variation to the recipe if you're serving Mexican food. Substitute the same amount of light tequila (Montezuma) for the rum. You may opt for the addition of Triple Sec just as described earlier. With this version, however, you must reduce the amount of sugar used to 1/3 of a cup.

Lastly, no matter what your favorite restaurant does—do not ruin this wonderful drink by adding whipped cream! Dairy products do not belong in daiquiris!

Again, the secret to the drink's success is in adding the raw materials in the proper sequence. All you need is a good blender and a willingness to keep your eye on the clock.

If you and your guests will be watching the sun set over the waters of your favorite lake or seashore, and if you're in search of something truly special to serve them at “Dock Time,” consider trying this recipe. The results will be well worth the effort and your friends will be delighted! Make certain that you offer a toast to Dock Time and, of course, do enjoy!