

# Quench Your Thirst With These Cool Drink Ideas

**BY SHARON K. GHAG**  
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A cold drink on a hot day is one of summer's pleasures. Multiply your refreshment with some new drink ideas.

A soda is just a beverage, but a homemade soda is cartoon character reaction good. One sip and your eyes will pop out of their sockets and your mouth will get "WOW" big. That's how good it is.

Ripe cherries in the back yard inspired this version, but a soda made with blackberry, peach or strawberry syrup will have you dreaming of putting summer's fruits to good use. Fix and stash a batch or two in the freezer. The sugar content keeps the syrup from freezing hard, so it's always ready to mix with seltzer.

If cooking syrup seems like a tad too much work, then turn it into a chiller by combining 3/4 cup seltzer with 3 tablespoons fruit puree. For peach puree, "The Lee Bros. Charleston Kitchen" (Clarkson Potter, \$35) recommends combining 1 pound ripe peaches, peeled and pitted, with 1/4 cup lime juice (three limes), 1 teaspoon sugar and 3/4 teaspoon salt. Puree the ingredients in a blender. For each drink, pour 6 ounces (3/4 cup) seltzer water over ice into a highball glass. Stir in 3 tablespoons peach puree and garnish with a peach slice.

A squirt of lemon in water is just the starting point for refreshing the palate and quenching your thirst. Steeped and infused water, with or without tea, offers even more choices. The tamarind water is a wake-up call to go outside your comfort zone in reaching for a cold one. It's tart and sweet and — most important — refreshing. Tamarind in pliable bricks can be found in Asian markets.

Herbs add another element when slaking your thirst. Steep rosemary, lemon verbena, basil, lavender or chamomile and chill and drink, or freeze in trays and add to drinks as ice cubes.

And don't forget spices. Cinnamon sticks, a pinch of saffron and sweet fennel are more flavor options.

Finally, there's no better way to end an evening than with an ice cold egg cream. This soda, consisting of chocolate syrup, milk and seltzer, probably dates to the 19th century, according to "New York Sweets: A Sugarhound's Guide to the Best Bakeries, Ice Cream Parlors, Candy Shops, and Other Emporia of Delicious Delights," by Susan Pear Meisel (Rizzoli International, \$29.95).

"The modern versions contain neither egg nor cream, although earlier versions did include eggs in the ingredients," according to the book. Whatever its origins, it sure hits the spot.

## SOUR CHERRY SYRUP

Makes 2 cups

Ingredients:

2 quarts fresh sour cherries, pitted

2 cups sugar

Juice of 1/2 lemon

Instructions:

In a medium saucepan set over medium heat, combine the cherries, sugar and lemon juice and bring to a boil. Simmer for 30 minutes. Strain the syrup through a fine-mesh strainer and discard the fruit solids. Store the syrup in an airtight container in the refrigerator for up to seven days. Pour over ice cream or stir into milk.

Cherry soda: Fill tall glass with ice. Add 3 tablespoons syrup and add a few dashes citric acid solution or acid phosphate. Top with seltzer and mix gently.

Cherry cream soda: Fill a tall glass with ice. Add in 3 tablespoons syrup, pour in seltzer until the glass is almost full. Stir. Top with 3 tablespoons milk and serve.

Cherry lassi: Add 3 tablespoons yogurt to a pint glass. Stir until smooth. Add 3 tablespoons cherry syrup and stir until syrup and yogurt are incorporated. Fill three-quarters full with water, stir and top with ice.

Bourbon and cherry chocolate: Add 1 3/4 ounces Maker's Mark bourbon, 1 tablespoon cherry syrup and dash of chocolate bitters to a cocktail shaker half-filled with ice. Shake and strain over fresh ice cubes or into a rocks glass, or serve neat in a martini glass.

Cherry ice cream soda: Fill a tall glass with ice. Add 3 tablespoons syrup. Add enough seltzer until the glass is two-thirds full, stirring briskly. Add 1 scoop vanilla ice cream, then top with more seltzer, taking care that it doesn't run over.

The syrup recipe and most of the serving suggestions are from "Make Your Own Soda: Syrup

Recipes for All-Natural Pops, Floats, Cocktails and More," by Anton Nocito (Clarkson Potter, \$14.99).

## TRADITIONAL CHOCOLATE EGG CREAM

Serves 1

Ingredients:

3/8 cup (3 ounces) whole milk

About 3/4 cup (6 ounces) very cold seltzer

3 tablespoons (1 1/2 ounces) chocolate syrup

Straight pretzel rod for garnish

Instructions:

Pour the milk into a 12-ounce glass and add the seltzer. Using a long spoon, stir vigorously for a few seconds. Gently pour the chocolate syrup into the glass, then stir again, taking care to stir mostly at the bottom of the glass to incorporate. Garnish with a straight pretzel rod.

This recipe is from "New York Sweets: A Sugarhound's Guide to the Best Bakeries, Ice Cream Parlors, Candy Shops, and Other

Emporia of Delicious Delights," by Susan Pear Meisel (Rizzoli International, \$29.95).

## INFUSED AND FLAVORED WATERS

Cool cucumber, pungent rosemary and tart tamarind.

Ingredients/instructions:

Cucumber water: 1 cucumber, peeled and seeded; juice of 1 lime; 5 cups water; sugar, to taste; 1 lime, sliced, for garnish

In the jar of a blender, blend the cucumber and lime juice and then strain through a fine-mesh sieve for an hour. Add the juice to the water, along with a little sugar to taste. Serve garnished with a lime slice.

Rosemary lemon iced tea: 1 bunch rosemary, well washed; zest of 2 lemons; juice of 2 lemons; 1 cup sugar; 5 cups water

Put the rosemary, lemon zest, lemon juice and sugar in a heatproof container. In a small saucepan, bring the water to a boil and then pour it over the rosemary. Stir and let infuse for two hours. Strain and serve cold.

Tamarind tea: 5 cups water; 1 cup tamarind paste; 1 cup sugar

In a small saucepan, bring the water to a simmer over medium heat. Add the tamarind and sugar and stir for about five minutes, then let soak for two hours. Strain through a fine-mesh sieve and serve cold.

This recipe is from "Mediterranean Cooking," by The Culinary Institute of America and by Lynne Gigliotti (Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, \$34.99).

## LEMON AND MINT INFUSION

Serves 1

Ingredients:

2 slices lemon and 2 sprigs fresh mint

Instructions:

For a refreshing start to the day, place the lemon and mint into a heatproof glass and cover with boiling water. Allow to steep for two minutes before drinking.

This recipe is from "Share: The Cookbook That Celebrates Our Common Humanity" (Kyle Books, \$35).



SHARON K. GHAG/MODESTO BEE/MCT

Cool cucumber, pungent rosemary and tart tamarind add refreshing twists to flavored water.

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3n16 '12 GMC Acadia SLT, awd, quad seats, p. windows-doors-seat liftgate, remote start, rear camera, cd, alum whls, black, leather seats, 15,870 miles .....	\$43,370	<b>\$33,687</b>
1p112a '11 Mitsubishi Endeavor LS 4x4, AWD, p. windows-doors, keyless, alum whls, am/cd/cd stereo, diamond white, low miles .....	\$24,995	<b>\$19,449</b>

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2n80 '12 GMC Acadia SLT, awd, p. windows-doors-seat,rear camera, quad leather seats, p. liftgate, remote start, silver .....	\$43,970	<b>\$30,944</b>
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- 3n27 '12 Chevrolet Impala LTZ, auto, air, cruise, power doors-windows-seat, power sunroof, heated leather, rear deck spoiler, aluminum wheels, white
- 3n7 '12 Chevrolet Capitva, LTZ, AWD, power doors-windows-seats-mirrors, power sunroof, remote start, rear back up camera, heated leather seats, polished aluminum wheels, low miles, black
- 3n42a '09 Pontiac Torrent, 4dr, power doors-windows-seat-mirrors, remote start, aluminum wheels, am/fm cd stereo, low miles, gray
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- 2n106a '01 Pontiac Montana Extended Passenger Van, auto, air, cruise, leather, quad seats, aluminum wheels, am/fm cd stereo, power-windows, green
- 2p14b '01 Chevrolet All Wheel Drive LS Astro Van automatic, air conditioning, cruise, power doors-windows, Pewter, very clean
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