



Sangria For Summer



I love Sangria! I am always so happy to find it listed on a drink menu, and if I find a place that makes it well, I'll go out of my way to go there just for the taste of this sensuous wine-based libation.

Introduced to the United States during the 1964 World's Fair in New York, Sangria is a favorite among mixologists, amateur and professional alike. Originally from Spain, this red wine punch is likely derived from Sangaree, a potent mixture popular in the 1800s, fashioned from wine, port, sherry, beer, liquor or Madeira, sugar, ice and fresh fruit, finished with a dusting of ground nutmeg. From its humble beginnings Sangria, with its infinite potential, has matured into the quintessential Spanish party drink enjoyed around the world.

Sangria's building blocks generally include red wine, fresh fruit, fruit juices, brandy and soda . . . so the fun begins. There's no limit, aside from imagination, as to the type of Sangria one can create. What's more, rarely will two batches of the same recipe yield the same drink; each one will be a new success. A few more common variations involve substitutions for the red wine base. Sangria Blanco for example is made with white wine. Sparkling wine? Rosé? Why not, as long as the rest of the ingredients are complementary?

If grilled Cuban dry-rubbed pork tenderloin is on the menu, a classic big Spanish red wine Sangria is ideal. For marinated grilled gulf prawns, think about a Pinot Grigio and fresh pear Sangria

Here's my mom's recipe and another for a white-wine based Sangria. Give them a try, or mix it up and create your own signature Sangria. And remember, Sangria tastes infinitely better if you prepare it a day in advance, allowing precious time for the ingredients to mingle. ¡Salud!

Tony's Mom's Sangria

- 2 bottles of Spanish Rioja, 750 ml. each
- 12 oz. Hennessy V.S Cognac
- 12 oz. Cointreau
- 8 oz. simple syrup
- 12 oz. freshly-squeezed orange juice
- 8 oz. freshly-squeezed lemon juice
- 2 cinnamon sticks
- 3-4 lemons, cut into thin quarters
- 12 strawberries, hulled and sliced
- 3-4 small oranges, cut into thin quarters
- Chilled Sprite as needed

Place above ingredients, excluding Sprite and fresh fruit, into a large glass container, cover and refrigerate overnight. When ready to serve, pour into an ice-filled pitcher to two-thirds full. Add fresh sliced fruits and top with chilled Sprite; stir gently to mix. Serve with fresh fruit in an ice-filled goblet. Serves approximately 15.

White Wine Sangria

- 2 bottles of Pinot Grigio, 750 ml. each
- 8 oz. calvados
- 8 oz. Cointreau
- 8 oz. simple syrup
- 12 oz. freshly squeezed orange juice
- 12 oz. fresh-squeezed lemon juice
- 12 oz. fresh-pressed Granny Smith apple juice
- 3-4 lemons cut into thin quarters
- 12 strawberries, sliced
- 2 apples, sliced
- 2 Bartlett pears, sliced
- Green and red grapes, sliced
- 3-4 small oranges, cut into thin quarters
- Chilled 7UP as needed

Place above ingredients, excluding 7UP, into a large glass container, cover and refrigerate overnight. When ready to serve, pour into an ice-filled pitcher to 2/3 full. Add fresh sliced fruits and top with 7UP; stir gently to mix. Serve in fruit-filled wineglasses. Serves approximately 15. ■■