



By the editors of *Cook's Illustrated*

A close-up shot of a hand holding a nutmeg grater, grating a nutmeg nut onto a frothy beverage in a green glass. The grater is a long, thin metal rod with a textured surface, and the nutmeg is a small, dark brown, oval-shaped nut. The beverage is a light-colored, frothy liquid, possibly a latte or a smoothie, and the glass is a vibrant green. The background is a soft, out-of-focus wooden surface.

Satisfied with the sterility of the drink, we set out to produce an equally safe (but less potent) nog. Our solution? Waiting until serving time to add the dairy. This way, we could use enough alcohol to properly sterilize the eggs during storage and then temper the booze-egg base with dairy for serving. We stirred

together a dozen eggs, 1 1/2 cups of bourbon, 1/2 cup of cognac, and 1/3 cup of dark rum; added 1 1/2 cups of sugar; and refrigerated the 18-percent-alcohol mixture in an airtight container. After three weeks, we poured the base through a sieve to remove any egg solids and then mellowed out the mixture with 6 cups of whole milk and 1/2 cup of cream, bringing it down to about 8 percent alcohol.

**THE UNANIMOUS VERDICT:** Alongside a fresh batch, which tasted comparatively boozy and harsh, our aged nog went down more smoothly. To age your favorite eggnog recipe, be sure to use 1 1/2 ounces of 80 proof liquor for every egg, and leave out the dairy until serving.