

Title:

Mojitos Offer A Taste Of Sophistication

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Summary:

When you're entertaining, say sophisticates, Mojitos should be on your list.

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Article Body:

When you're entertaining, say sophisticates, Mojitos should be on your list. This refreshing cocktail of lime, mint and rum, which hails from Cuba, is the rage from coast to coast and everywhere in between. The mojito has been called the new cosmo.

"Of course, being a Latina, I am familiar with the mojito," said Carolina Buia, co-author, "Latin Chic: Entertaining with Style and Sass" (HarperCollins). "It is a favorite among socialites and designers," she continued. "When we went to shoot our photos for 'Latin Chic,' the mojito was the 'it' cocktail everywhere."

The "mojito," which means "to cast a little spell," has its roots in Cuba and rose to fame with the development of Bacardi rum on the island.

"Good mint is essential for a great mojito," said Dennis Dalponte of Dalponte Farms, where he grows mint and has seen demand increase in the past two to three years.

One secret to a great mojito is muddling the mint and the lime. Muddling refers to combining ingredients in the bottom of a cocktail glass with an instrument that looks like a small baseball bat. It extracts the great oils and flavors of both. If you don't have a muddler, use the back of a spoon.

Further evidence of this cocktail's star-spangled status: The mojito plays a role in the new "Miami Vice" movie.

Mojito

12 fresh spearmint leaves

1/2 lime

2 Tbsp. simple syrup (mixture of 2 parts sugar to 3 parts hot water, chilled) or just sugar

1 1/2 oz. Bacardi rum

Club soda

Muddle mint leaves and lime in tall glass. Cover with simple syrup or sugar and fill glass with ice. Add rum, top off with club soda and stir well. Add crushed ice to tall glasses when ready to serve. Garnish glass with lime wedge and sprigs of mint.

Note: Can also be made by the pitcher.