

Herby Summer Beverages

Herb Syrup

This is an easy recipe for an herb syrup base that you can use to make some tasty beverages. Good choices for this recipe are basil, lemon balm, lemon verbena, and peppermint.

1 1/2 cups leaves
1/2 cup sugar
1/2 cup water
1/8 tsp baking soda

Blanch leaves for 10 seconds. Drain and puree in along with the sugar, water, and baking soda. At this point you can use it as is or strain it to eliminate any pulp. It will store for 2-3 days in the refrigerator. Make a simple cooler with seltzer or tonic water or use the syrup in a mixed drink.

Yield: A generous half cup of syrup

Ginger-Mint Lemonade

2 cups fresh squeezed lemon juice – about 6 lemons
1 cup fresh mint leaves
1 2 inch piece of fresh ginger, sliced thinly
1 cup sugar
8 cups water

Mix together 2 cups of water and the cup of sugar in a pot. Bring to a simmer, stirring to dissolve the sugar. Add the mint leaves and ginger slices. Remove from the heat and allow to infuse for at least 1 hour to overnight. Strain.

Mix the syrup with the lemon juice and add 6 cups of cold water.

Yield: 6-8 servings

Spiced Lassi

3 cups of whole milk yogurt – preferably organic
1 cup whole milk – preferably organic
1/2 tsp freshly ground cinnamon
1/4 tsp freshly ground cardamom
Handful of ice cubes

Combine everything in a blender and puree.

Feel free to adjust the spices to your taste, add a bit of cloves or vanilla, whatever turns you on.

Yield: 4 servings