

**Sharing of food and drink**

Celebrations are an important part of our lives. We share together in each other’s joys – and sorrows too.

There are the 'rites of passage' – births, marriages and deaths. There are religious celebrations for festivals such as Christmas, Easter, Diwali and Eid. There are celebrations for achievements such as passing exams or the driving test, gaining a place at university, engagements, or even retirements.

Whatever the celebration there is a coming together of a group of people all sharing in the same event. And that means a sharing of food and drink!

Lockdown has given an opportunity to get ahead with the making of Christmas cakes and puddings to share with friends and family.

But what about the drinks we serve? Many people are unable to have alcoholic drinks because of medication or inclination, though it can look churlish not to accept a drink when offered. Here is a solution! A hot fruit punch with absolutely no alcohol in it.

This makes enough for 40 servings but quantities can be scaled up or down – you can experiment with different flavours too. You can enjoy any leftovers yourself when all the guests have gone.

**Ingredients**

4 litres of apple juice

1 litre of 'red' fruit juice, such as red grapefruit, cranberry, or purple grape juice – depending on medications!

3 tea bags of 'red' tea, such as rose hip, strawberry, raspberry or similar

3 cinnamon sticks

12 cloves

200 g demerara sugar

1 litre water

Fruit such as oranges, lemons, apples cut up small.



**Method**

1. Put all ingredients (except fruit pieces) into a large pan, such as a jam pan, and warm up slowly. Stir now and then.
2. When it is hot and looks and smells good, fish out the cinnamon and cloves with a sieve and add the fruit pieces to the brew.

Serve using a large jug and heatproof mugs, glasses, cardboard beakers, etc. Be aware, the heat of the drink could cause your best crystal glasses to shatter!

Enjoy your drinks. Guests will have to be persuaded that it is non-alcoholic!

**Rosemary**