



## Juice Drinks — They're Not Just For Breakfast Anymore

No other beverage seems quite as good for you as juice. It's fairly uncomplicated stuff—the essence of fruit rendered into a drinkable consistency. Fruit juice is about the best and most convenient means of replenishing the body's essential nutrients and is a great source of energy. It is estimated that drinking between 1/2 to 3/4 of a cup of juice is equivalent to eating a single piece of fruit. Unlike many processed beverages, most juices contain natural sugars—fructose and glucose. More importantly, many juices contain significant amounts of phytonutrients that have been proven to help in preventing diseases, especially heart disease.

Fruit and vegetable juices are typically high in vitamin C, beta-carotene and potassium. Most are also rich in antioxidants, which are essential

in mitigating the damaging affects of free radicals prevalent in the environment. If it's true that "an apple a day keeps the doctor away," then juice is like an HMO in a glass.

Drink making would be dull without the existence of juices. It's no wonder why they are such commonly relied on ingredients in mixology. They add color, flavor and consistency to drinks, and best of all, juices blend well with each other.

There are two significant marketing advantages that juice drinks possess that no other category in mixology does. Juice ranks among the few delicious beverages that make you feel healthier for having drunk it. Secondly, they have all-day appeal. Juice drinks are a click, perfectly in step with contemporary tastes.

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Consider the possibilities behind your bar alone. For instance, juice—especially cranberry, grapefruit and orange—mix beautifully with lemonade and iced herbal teas. Drop in a flavored syrup such as mango and you have a great tasting alcohol-free drink ready to be christened. Torani and Ruude, a new line of syrups by Stearns and Lehman, offer brilliant flavors ranging from passion fruit and kiwi to chai and green tea.

Another lucrative path is blending juice and fresh fruit with frozen yogurt to make a broad range of smoothies. Delicious options abound, not the least of which is tossing in some chocolate syrup and Butterfinger bits.

Juice and carbonation are also a natural pairing. A wide range of sparkling waters work, flavored or not. Juice can also be blended with ice cream, sorbet or sherbet.

It would be a gross oversight not to briefly mention adding a wee bit of spirits to juice. Alcohol-laced juice drinks have progressed far past the screwdriver. Likely the best example of which is the SANGRIA, the national drink of Spain. During the summer months it can be found on almost every table in nearly every restaurant and café in the country. It is delicious and easily crafted into a specialty of the house.

Traditional Sangria is a sensational blend of red wine, peach schnapps and a bevy of juices. Orange, lemon and lime juice are considered standard ingredients, although grapefruit, cranberry and raspberry puree are excellent additions.

So go ahead, feel free to mix various types of juice together as you see fit. They don't seem to mind and life will never get boring.

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