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Water Cocktails



images by Phillips Photography

WHAT ARE THEY?

HOW DO YOU MAKE THEM?

WHILE THE EMERGING SOBER CURIOUS MOVEMENT GAINS MOMENTUM AND AMAZING CHOICES ABOUND, I AM A HUGE STILL-WATER DRINKER, AND I DON'T ALWAYS WANT THE LATEST NON-ALC SELTZER. I DON'T KNOW ABOUT YOU, BUT NOTHING RESONATES MORE WITH ME THAN THE INCREASED CONSUMPTION OF WATER FOR IMPROVED HEALTH.

Years ago, I started swapping my nightly glass (or two) of wine for an alternative I affectionately coined as a 'Water Cocktail'. Each night, I would whip up a water cocktail in my kitchen, using whatever fresh ingredients I had on hand. Think fruit, citrus, herbs...whatever!

I did this for two reasons: One was to have the 'feeling' of drinking but to eliminate (or drastically reduce) calories. Second, I wanted something with all the flare of a cocktail but none of the next-day regret or headache. Over the years, my water cocktails have been my mindful drinking go-to staple, and in January of 2024, at the urging of many friends (and even random strangers in bars), I decided to take to Instagram and bring my water cocktail message to millions!

Okay, I'm in with the whole water cocktail vibe; where do I start?

Here are some easy recipes you can make today, likely with what you have on hand at home. Don't be afraid to experiment either. The basics include a fruit, a citrus and a herb. If you have those three things, you can muddle them together, toss them in a shaker with ice and water, and pour them into the beautiful crystal glass you used to only pull out at Christmas but now has just become your go-to water cocktail glass.

All the while raising a cheer to a healthier, more mindful lifestyle, and to that, I say, "Hooray!!!".

Why water? It's sooooo boring!

By cutting back on alcohol consumption and opting for water instead, you're doing your body a huge favour. Alcohol can have detrimental effects on your liver, heart, and overall well-being. Drinking more water, on the other hand, helps to keep you hydrated, supports healthy digestion, and boosts your energy levels. It can also vastly improve your skin, which is the body's largest organ. I say water is the opposite of boring; it is, in fact, the best thing you could be feeding your body on a daily basis!

So, what exactly is a Water Cocktail?

My recipes leverage natural spring water and elevate it to the status of a hand-crafted cocktail, just like you would get in any swanky bar. By leveraging many of the same traditional cocktail elements like a fun garnish, a tasty rim, fresh citrus and herbs, I create recipes with water as the #1 ingredient. In addition, many of the choices I make for water cocktails include organic and clean ingredients that you can get at your local grocery. Who doesn't love that?! Not to mention, I keep the calorie count in check.



Key elements of a Water Cocktail

Every water cocktail has a few key elements, and it all starts with the glass.

The glass: The nicer the glass, the better. It's time to pull out your Nan's Waterford crystal. You know the one, that old Lismore wine glass that no one ever uses. Or that cool rocks glass that is sitting in the cabinet collecting dust. Yeah, that's the one. A killer glass is THE first step.

The flavour profile: You need to know your tastes and be able to identify what you're in the mood for. Something with a little sweetness to it for a brunch with friends. Something spicy and citrus-forward for happy hour at the pub. You get the idea. Once you know this, you can easily pull together 3-4 ingredients that make the magic happen.

The garnish: Do NOT skip the garnish. It is THE way to really elevate your water to the cocktail level. No self-respecting bartender on the planet serves a hand-crafted cocktail without a garnish, and neither should you! #youAreWorthIt



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THE PECAN FROST

Georgia Pecans are the standard of excellence in pecans in the USA. This Water Cocktail is honestly Hannah's version of a carrot cake cocktail, and it features crushed GA Pecans on the rim. This one is pure indulgence... perfect for a chilly fall evening around the fire pit.



Garnish - crushed pecan edge, cinnamon stick & ground cinnamon

Glass - Rocks

Technique - Shake

What's in it

- 115ml | 4oz natural spring water
- 15ml | 0.5oz Natalie's Carrot Ginger Turmeric Juice (or Health Honey's Carrot and Ginger Cold Pressed juice)
- 15ml | 0.5oz heavy cream
- 15ml | 0.5oz Portland Syrups Bright Chai (or 1883 Maison Routin Premium Chai Tea Syrup)
- cream cheese frosting
- crushed pecans

How to make it

1. Smear a tsp of cream cheese frosting across the side of your glass and roll in the crushed pecans
2. Add the remaining ingredients (excluding the cinnamon stick) into your shaker & give them a good shake.
3. Add ice to your rimmed glass and pour your drink in. Add a dusting of ground cinnamon for that extra autumnal touch.

THE BONAVENTURE

This Halloween-inspired Water Cocktail is named after the famous Bonaventure Cemetery in Savannah, Georgia. Spanning over 60 acres of what was originally a plantation, the land became a cemetery in 1846. The lush landscape is covered in ancient azaleas and live oak trees draped with Spanish moss. (The cemetery is also featured in the major motion picture "Midnight in the Garden of Good and Evil".)

Garnish - a sprig of sage & fresh blackberries

Glass - Rocks
Technique - Shake

What's in it

- 115ml | 4oz natural spring water
- A good handful of fresh blackberries
- 4-5 leaves of fresh sage
- ¼ tsp fresh squeezed orange juice
- squeeze of fresh lime juice
- dash of Portland Syrup
- Brown Sugar Simple Syrup (or ODK Cane Brown Sugar Syrup) to taste
- 1 very ripe black fig

How to make it

1. Add all the ingredients into your shaker and muddle them together (if you don't have a muddler, you can use the flat end of a rolling pin)
2. Add ice & your natural spring water to the shaker & give it a good shake
3. Strain into an ice-filled rocks glass
3. Add your garnish and enjoy!



FALL FLING

Perfect for the early fall days, this light and refreshing Water Cocktail evokes all the feelings of Fall you're looking for, topped off with a caramel rim. Perfection!

Garnish - Sprig of rosemary, cinnamon stick & caramel rim

Glass - Coupette
Technique - Shake

What's in it

- 115ml | 4oz natural spring water
- 15ml | 0.5oz freshly squeezed granny smith apple juice
- 10ml | 0.25oz Portland Syrups Bright Chai (or 1883 Maison Routin Premium Chai Tea Syrup)
- sprig of fresh rosemary
- 5-6 dashes of All the Bitter Orange (or Fee Brothers West Indian Orange Bitters (9%))
- squeeze of lime
- squeeze of orange
- caramel dip
- cinnamon stick

How to make it

1. Carefully squeeze your caramel dip around the rim of your glass
2. Add the remaining ingredients (excluding the cinnamon stick & rosemary sprig) into your shaker and muddle them together (if you don't have a muddler, you can use the flat end of a rolling pin)
3. Add ice & your natural spring water to the shaker & give it a good shake
4. Strain into your rimmed glass and add the other garnishes.