

GUASTELLO'S VILLAGE MARKET

Witches' Brew

Ingredients

2 (3-inch) cinnamon sticks
5 whole cloves
3 tablespoons finely chopped peeled ginger
1/3 cup water
1/3 cup sugar
1 (25 1/4-ounce) bottle sparkling cider (about 3 1/4 cups), chilled
4 cups cranberry juice cocktail, chilled
1 (1-liter) bottle club soda or seltzer, chilled
1 cup dark rum (optional)
Ice blocks in any shape (see cooks' note, below)

Bring cinnamon sticks, cloves, ginger, water, and sugar to a boil in a small heavy saucepan, stirring until sugar has dissolved, then simmer, covered, 5 minutes. Remove from heat and let steep, uncovered, 1 hour.

Strain through a fine-mesh sieve into a bowl, discarding solids, then chill until cold.

Combine all remaining ingredients, except ice, with syrup in a punch bowl. Add ice before serving.

Cooks' notes:

- To make hand-shaped ice, fill powder-free, latex-free rubber gloves with water and tie wrist end securely, then freeze.
- Syrup can be made 1 week ahead and chilled with spices. Strain before using.

Credit: epicurious.com