

Watermelon, Mint and Lime Cooler

Our fertile-window cooler: watermelon is mostly water, and fluid is exactly what this phase runs on. No alcohol, no sugar, and it still feels like a proper drink.

INGREDIENTS · MAKES 2

- ❑ ~500g watermelon flesh, cubed (about 3 cups)
- ❑ 1 lime, juiced
- ❑ 8 to 10 mint leaves, plus sprigs to garnish
- ❑ Sparkling water, to top
- ❑ Ice



METHOD

1. Muddle the mint gently, divided between two tall glasses.
2. Crush the watermelon and press it through a sieve for about 1.5 cups of juice.
3. Divide the watermelon and lime juice between the glasses, fill with ice, top with sparkling water and stir gently.
4. Garnish each with a mint sprig and a thin watermelon wedge.

MAKE IT SHARPER An extra squeeze of lime sharpens it, and a few dashes of the homemade bitters on the next page take it somewhere special. All the sweetness here is whole fruit doing the work.

All-Natural Alcohol-Free Bitters

A few dashes turn fizzy water or any mocktail into a proper drink. Bitter, aromatic, and built for us: no alcohol, no sugar, and nothing on my do-not-touch list while trying to conceive.

INGREDIENTS · ONE BATCH

- ❑ 25g dandelion root, roasted and chopped (the bitter base)
- ❑ 40g dried orange peel
- ❑ 15g coriander seeds
- ❑ 5g cardamom pods
- ❑ 4g star anise
- ❑ 2g whole cloves
- ❑ 50ml vegetable glycerin
- ❑ 500ml water

Confirm true star anise with your supplier; the Japanese lookalike sometimes turns up mislabeled in bulk spice bins and is not safe.

METHOD

1. Combine all the roots, spices, peel, water and glycerin in a small pot.
2. Bring to a boil, then cover, drop the heat to low and simmer gently for 1 hour.
3. Take off the heat and cool fully to room temperature.
4. Strain through a fine cloth or nut-milk bag, squeezing out as much liquid as you can.
5. Strain a second time through a paper coffee filter until clear.
6. Bottle in glass, refrigerate, and use within a few weeks.

YIELD One batch strains to roughly 400 to 450ml, so a 500ml glass bottle covers it, or split it across two 250ml dropper bottles. Weigh your first batch so you know your own number.

WHY THIS BLEND Dandelion root does the bittering job here because the classic bases don't belong anywhere near a TTC kitchen. It has no red flags of its own, though like most herbs it isn't formally studied in pregnancy, so I keep the pour to dashes.