Raise Your Glass: 24 New Year's Eve Cocktails

Whether you're hosting a gala event or just snuggled with your family on the couch watching the ball drop, add some spark to your New Year's Eve party with one of these festive cocktail recipes.

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By the time you hit your mid-twenties, there's really no excuse for celebrating the New Year with a red Solo cup in your hand. Time to class it up! Whether you prefer an elegant champagne cocktail, a sparkling party punch, or a classic mixed drink, these New Year's recipes have you covered.

Pop The Cork!

The New Year's Staple: Champagne

Nothing says "celebration" like champagne — and nothing will make your friends feel so spoiled. While true champagne is specific to the Champagne region of France, any sparkling wine is perfectly acceptable to use in these recipes. Whether it be a fruity cava from Spain, a sweet Italian prosecco, or Californian sparkling wine, just choose a quality bottle, and it will be a happy New Year indeed.

The Language of Champagne

Brut, sec, cuveé… what does it all mean? And what do you need to know so you don't spend more time poring over labels than pouring drinks for your party guests?

The most important lingo to learn are the terms that are directly related to the taste. Champagnes and sparkling wines fall along a spectrum from dry (i.e. low sugar content) to sweet. Where a particular wine falls within this spectrum is indicated by the following designations on the label, from driest to sweetest: **Extra-brut**, **Brut**, **Extra-Dry**, **Demi-Sec**, and **Doux**.

You may see a bottle described as "Brut NV" or "Demi-Sec NV." The **NV** stands for "non-vintage," which means the wine was made from grapes harvested in different years. **Cuveé** is another word you may run across on a sparkling wine bottle. This word is a little trickier — it can refer to the first pressing of a grape *or* can indicate a particular house blend of different style grapes. Finally, French champagnes may be labeled as either **Premier Cru** or **Grand Cru**. The cru refers to a specific growing region in France and is ostensibly an indicator of superior wine.

Like anything in the wine world, whether any of these qualities are "good" or "bad" is really a matter of personal taste. Your best bet? Taste, and choose a bottle you like!

Final note: If you're going to spend big bucks on champagne, serve it straight up. Let your punch bowl be a place to feature less expensive options.

The Recipes

Champagne Cocktails

Like a classic little black dress, it's hard to imagine anything more elegant than a simple glass of champagne in a tall, tapered flute. But what would a little black dress be without accessories? A champagne cocktail gives you the opportunity to gild the lily with some visually stunning garnishes. Be it a tuft of cotton candy, a delicate edible flower, some bobbing berries, or a wheel of lime, these New Year's cocktails are fully dressed to impress.

Cotton Candy Champagne Cocktails

Cotton Candy Champagne Cocktail Recipe by Kirbie's Cravings

Elderflower French 75

Elderflower French 75 Recipe by Garnish With Lemon

Blackberry Lavender Champagne Cocktail

Blackberry Lavender Champagne Cocktail Recipe by Adventure Bite

Sparkling Margaritas (Champagne Margaritas)

Sparkling Margaritas Recipe (Champagne Margaritas) by Gimme Some Oven

Chambord Kir Royale

Chambord Kir Royale Recipe by A Nerd Cooks

For The Punch Bowl

Take advantage of in-season citrus for these tasty winter champagne punch recipes. Choosing to go the punch route has many benefits: a big batch in the bowl keeps you from playing bartender all night, gives your guests a place to congregate and meet, and, most importantly, is easy to put together. At its simplest, you can make a tasty punch with nothing but a bottle of sparkling white wine, some ginger ale, and any combination of fruit juice — cranberry juice, orange juice, apple cider, and pineapple juice all work well. For a more complex punch, add some Grand Marnier, or try one of these recipes:

New Year's Eve Champagne Punch

New Year's Eve Champagne Punch Recipe by Sugar And Soul

Sparkling Tropical Mimosa Punch

Sparkling Tropical Mimosa Punch Recipe by Noble Pig

Winter Champagne Punch

Winter Champagne Punch Recipe by With Food And Love

Spiced Blood Orange Champagne Punch

Spiced Blood Orange Champagne Punch Recipe by Spoon Fork Bacon

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Mixed Drinks, Part One: Light And Herbal

Part of the appeal of champagne-based drinks is the light, bubbly nature of the wine. But what if you want something different, more versatile, or simply don't care for sparkling wine? Try one of these refreshing holiday cocktails with herbal notes as a festive alternative to champagne.

Pear and Elderflower Martini

Pear and Elderflower Martini Recipe by Kitchen Swagger

Lime Grapefruit and Rosemary Gin Gimlet

Lime Grapefruit and Rosemary Gin Gimlet Recipe by Fox Valley Foodie

Blackberry & Meyer Lemon Gin & Tonics

Blackberry & Meyer Lemon Gin & Tonic Recipe by Spoon Fork Bacon

Bergamot Iced Tea Cocktail

Bergamot Iced Tea Cocktail Recipe by Baked Bree

Salted Meyer Lemon and Sage Pressé

Salted Meyer Lemon and Sage Pressé Recipe by Bon Appetit

Gin & Ginger Cocktail

Gin & Ginger Cocktail Recipe by Sweet Paul

Mixed Drinks, Part Two: Hollywood Glamour

Is your New Year's Eve party more of a black tie affair? If you're trying to channel a sophisticated vibe, you can't go wrong with a classic cocktail. As an added perk, serving a whiskey, vodka, or gin-based drink gives you the ability to easily create other classic cocktails by swapping out an ingredient here or there. Better yet, put out an array of bitters, some lemon wedges, and Luxardo cherries, and let your guests customize their own festive drink, be it shaken or stirred. Don't forget the ice bucket!

Maple Bourbon Cocktail

Maple Bourbon Cocktail Recipe by Jelly Toast

Aviation Cocktail

Aviation Cocktail Recipe by Honestly Yum

Rosewater Manhattan

Rosewater Manhattan Recipe by Country Cleaver

Escape from Alcatraz Cocktail

Escape from Alcatraz Cocktail Recipe by Food Republic

Maple Meyer Lemon Whiskey Sour

Maple Meyer Lemon Whiskey Sour Recipe by Healthy Seasonal Recipes

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Beyond The Maraschino: Fruit-laden Cocktails

Looking for something a little sweeter for your New Year's party? Try one of these fruity cocktails. These recipes start with a classic cocktail — the cosmo, margarita, cape-codder, or a Moscow mule — then add some pizzazz with a splash (or bite) of fruit.

Pomegranate Cosmopolitan

Pomegranate Cosmopolitan by The Comfort of Cooking Recipe

The French Margarita

The French Margarita Recipe by Cooking Channel

Ginger Cranberry Cocktail

Ginger Cranberry Cocktail Recipe by Cooking Channel

Blackberry Moscow Mule

Blackberry Moscow Mule Recipe by Eat Boutique

Holiday Party Food Wine Winter New Year's Drinks

Cocktail