



GOOD-FOR-YOU COCKTAILS

BY DARYN MAYER

With the Springtime in full swing, thoughts of outdoor dining are not far behind. Garden party brunches, family barbecues, celebrations, graduations, and weddings mean lots of delicious foods and drinks that make a get-together a festive event.

Of course, we've heard the saying "We are what we drink and eat." So, how does one toast to good health and imbibe our way to radiant skin?

Easily. Take a look at gluten-free vodka which has many health benefits. Research shows that consuming vodka in moderation can help reduce stress, which can be beneficial to your mind, body, and skin. Vodka's medicinal properties have also been shown to reduce your risk of developing heart disease and could reduce your risk of ischemic stroke (when the arteries to your brain become narrowed or blocked) and your risk of diabetes. Also, unlike vodkas which are made from wheat and grain, consuming gluten-free vodka may help prevent bloating, upset stomach, and abdominal pain for those with Celiac disease or sensitive digestion.

So as we celebrate Spring, here are some luscious libations that, when consumed in moderation, have a myriad of healthful benefits.

TOMATO OYSTER COCKTAIL

- 1 Small tomato (equals about 4 oz.)
- 2 Kale leaves
- 1 tsp. Cayenne
- 1 oz. Lime juice
- 2 oz. Gluten-free, corn-based vodka
- Dash Worcestershire sauce
- 1 tsp. Fresh ginger
- 1 tsp. Turmeric
- 1 tsp. Sea salt
- 3 Shucked raw oysters
- Ice



Blend tomatoes, oysters and kale together. Pour into mixing cup add ice to the top. Fill with the rest of the ingredients. Shake ingredients well and pour into mason jar or glass of choice.

Healthful Benefits

- Tomatoes contain large amounts of lycopene, an antioxidant that is highly effective in foraging cancer-causing free radicals.
- Kale boosts the health of your skin because of its vitamin C content, which helps you make the collagen needed for skin strength.
- Lime juice helps to promote healthy skin and improved digestion.
- Cayenne pepper helps to stimulate your metabolism. It's rich in vitamins C and E, as well as several antioxidants, all of which help to reduce the appearance of acne and promote flawless skin.
- Ginger is antioxidant rich which increases blood circulation and helps cut down the toxins by fighting off free radicals to promote youthful looking skin.
- Oysters contain unique nutrients and minerals, which help boost metabolic activity, enhance the rejuvenation and growth for tissue, aid in the healing of wounds, and promote healthy growth.

A STEP IN THYME

- 2 oz. Crushed pomegranate seeds
- 2 Thyme sprigs
- ½ oz. Lime juice
- ½ oz. Agave
- 1/2 Orange wedge
- 2 oz. Gluten-free, corn-based vodka
- 1 Egg white
- Ice
- Salt (optional)



In a cocktail shaker muddle the pomegranate with the orange wedge. Add all the ingredients, but hold the ice. Give the mixture a few hard shakes. Fill with ice to the top and shake vigorously. Strain into a cocktail glass; rim with salt if you choose.

Healthful Benefits

- Pomegranate seeds are rich in vitamins C and K, which help to promote collagen and elastin production for youthful skin. They also contribute to protecting against diseases including cancer.
- Thyme is rich in vitamins C and A which helps to boost your immunity.
- Egg whites are loaded with protein, which can be good for muscle building and fat burning.
- Orange peels contain flavonoids, which have been proven to de-accelerate the growth of cancer cells.
- Lime juice contains limonoids, which may protect against cancers of the skin, breast, mouth, lung, colon, and stomach.



CHOCOLATE ALMOND HIGHBALL

2oz. Almond milk
 1/2 Orange wedge crushed
 1½ oz. Gluten-free, corn-based vodka
 1½ oz. Shaved dark chocolate

Combine all the ingredients in the cocktail glass. Strain into a highball glass on the rocks and garnish with shaved dark chocolate.



Healthful Benefits

- Almond milk contains vitamin E, an antioxidant known to protect the skin from harmful free radicals and help make the skin healthier and younger looking. It's also high in vitamin B2 (known as riboflavin) and B3 (niacin). Riboflavin helps to oxygenate the skin tissue; niacin helps hydrate the skin by trapping moisture in cells.
- Dark chocolate contains powerful antioxidants that help protect your skin from free radical damage; keeping it soft, supple, and youthful. It also provides excellent sun protection properties that help shield your skin from harmful UV rays and helps in the prevention of skin cancer.

GARDEN MARTINI

4 oz. Gluten-free, corn-based vodka
 1 Lime squeezed
 6 Slices of seedless cucumber muddled or pureed
 3 Sprigs mint
 Ice

Place all ingredients in a shaker and add one cup of ice. Shake for 1 minute. Strain and pour into martini glass, garnish with one cucumber slice and lime.



Healthful Benefits

- Cucumbers are a natural detoxifier which helps eliminate toxins from your body. They also contain the skin-friendly nutrients of magnesium, potassium, and silicon. Magnesium helps to minimize fine lines and wrinkles. Studies have shown that potassium can have a positive impact on tissue regeneration, cell growth, and an overall balanced metabolism. Silicon prevents the skin from becoming flabby and restores the natural glow of the skin.
- In addition to containing limonoids, the vitamin C, and flavonoids in lime juice help to rejuvenate the skin, keep it shining.
- Mint leaves act as a natural digestive aid. When your body processes food easily, it's able to rid itself of the toxins that can have an impact on your skin and well-being.

So here's to a healthful Spring! Just remember to drink responsibly and include healthful ingredients that not only taste great but will help to fortify you inside and out. •

Recipes developed by Manhattan-based Mixologist, Blanca Yungaicela, for you fortified™.