



Leadership... with a Twist!

Each spring, interest in the **Mint Julep** is renewed with the running of the Kentucky Derby thoroughbred horse race: this frosty conflagration of bourbon whiskey, shaved ice, and spearmint is the official Derby drink, and Early Times the official whiskey.

References to **Mint Juleps** can be traced back to Virginia and the Carolinas as early as 1803, when they were made with rum or with brandy. Kentucky bourbon became the spirit of choice in the second half of the 19th Century.

Like the “Run for the Roses” itself, there is great ceremony and ritual surrounding the mixing and consumption of the **Mint Julep**. Begin with a silver cup, in which are muddled mint leaves, sugar and a splash of water (or bourbon); care is taken not to shred the spearmint leaves, only to release the essential oils. To this is added a healthy scoop of shaved ice and 2-3 ounces of bourbon whiskey, topped with a sprig of mint. (Depending on the good humor -- or tolerance -- of the customer, a small amount of water may be added as well.)

Purists insist the cocktail be grasped at the bottom or at the rim of the cup, so that a white-cold frost forms on its silvery exterior. The full **Mint Julep** experience presents the earthiness of the bourbon with an icy sugar under-note, caressed by a nose of mint garnish.

As a Southern gentleman once rhapsodized, “A mint julep is not a product of a formula. It is a ceremony and must be performed [with] a true sense of the artistic; a deep reverence for the ingredients and a proper appreciation of the occasion. It is a rite that must not be entrusted to a novice, a statistician nor a Yankee!”

Mint Julep

In the bottom of an Old Fashioned glass, add:

4-6 spearmint leaves

1 teaspoon granulated sugar

1 tablespoon bourbon or water

Gently mash with a muddler; the mint leaves should only be bruised, not shredded, to release essential oils.

Strain mixture into a silver cup or Collins glass.

Fill the glass with shaved or crushed ice and add:

2-3 oz. bourbon

Splash of water (if desired)

Garnish with 1 slightly slapped mint sprig.