

fresh pineapple-coconut martinis

SERVES 4, WITH PINEAPPLE-INFUSED VODKA LEFT OVER

By now we've all heard how good coconut water is for us: It's hydrating, it has potassium, and so on. Well, did you know that pineapple makes you feel calm? Yep, it's high in serotonin, which helps you feel calm and can aid in sleep (much like melatonin). So, I figure, why not combine the two and add vodka for good measure? Plan ahead for this recipe, as you'll be infusing vodka with pineapple, which takes at least three days. You can use the pineapple vodka for these martinis or you can just serve it on ice with a splash of club soda.

For the pineapple vodka:

- 1 fresh pineapple, peeled, cored, and cut into rings
- 1 (750-ml) bottle of your favorite vodka

For the martinis:

- 1 cup (240 ml) unsweetened pure coconut water
- 2 teaspoons light agave syrup or simple syrup
- 1 cup (240 ml) homemade pineapple vodka

Pineapple wedges

Make the pineapple vodka: Put the pineapple slices in a tall, narrow pitcher with a lid or beverage dispenser and pour the vodka over it. Be sure the pineapple is completely submerged. Cover tightly and set aside at room temperature for at least 3 days and up to 1 week.

Make the martinis: In a pitcher, stir the coconut water and agave together until dissolved. Add the vodka and stir. Pour half of the mixture into an ice-filled cocktail shaker and shake vigorously until very cold. Strain into two chilled martini glasses, garnish with pineapple wedges, and serve. Repeat with the remaining martini mixture and fresh ice.

cucumber with chile flakes, flaky sea salt, and lemon

SERVES 4

It's a challenge to come up with a dish that's spicy, salty, and refreshing all at once, but these cucumbers do just that. Pair with a cocktail on a sultry evening and you've got yourself a winner!

- 1 English cucumber, cut into 1/4-inch (6-mm) rounds
- Red chile flakes
- Flaky sea salt (I like Maldon)
- 1/2 lemon

Put the cucumber slices on a platter and sprinkle with chile flakes, sea salt, and a squeeze of lemon juice.