

Fresh Ideas For Making Infused Water

By Vanessa Greaves

No problem staying hydrated when water looks and tastes like a summertime treat. Here's what to know when you fancy up your H₂O.



1) Strawberry+cucumber+lime+mint. 2) Grapefruit+blackberry+basil. 3)Raspberry+lemon+rosemary.

The Super Soak

Infusing water with the essence of fruits, herbs, and other botanicals helps you **drink plenty of liquids** without the downside of excess calories, sugars, and artificial flavorings. It's beneficial hydration in every refreshing sip.

But before you get started, there are **a few essentials you should know** to make sure that drink of infused water is as good—and good for you—as it can be.



Keep fruit-infused water on hand instead of sugary sodas.

Best Practices

Ingredients

Choose organic when you can. Wash produce and rinse herbs to remove chemicals, pesticides, and other residues.

Water

Use cold or room temperature filtered water. Hot water makes produce fall apart faster and can compromise the nutrients you're trying to coax out of the ingredients.

Vessels

Glass, plain and simple. You can splash out for purpose-built infusing pitchers and bottles, but you don't have to. Spend on fresh produce instead.

Prep Tips

- Softer fruits like citrus and strawberries can be sliced thick, thin, halved, or quartered. Harder fruits like apples should be sliced very thinly because they take longer to release flavors.
- Crush fibrous ginger root, rosemary, and lemongrass with a muddler or wooden spoon; tear or crush leafy herbs like mint, basil, and cilantro to release their oils.
- Loose herbs and flowers—lavender, rose petals, dried hibiscus—can be corralled in a tea infuser or cheesecloth.

Soak Time and Temperature

- Infuse water at room temperature for no more than 2 hours. After that, put it in the fridge to prevent bacterial growth.
- Cucumbers, citrus fruits, melons, and mint flavor water almost immediately. Apples, cinnamon, fresh ginger root, and rosemary need an overnight soak in the fridge.
- Melons and sliced strawberries start looking waterlogged after a few hours; citrus, and whole berries look pretty good even after hours in the fridge.
- After 4 hours, unpeeled citrus can make water taste bitter. To make a big jug of infused water for a party, peel the citrus before soaking. Or you can soak it unpeeled for 4 hours, remove it, and add fresh slices for looks. (And keep that water icy cold for food safety.)
- If you don't drink the water within 24 hours, strain out the solids and refrigerate for up to 3 days.
- To keep sipping all day long, refill your infused water container when it's half full. It will be weaker than your first drink, but still flavorful.



Just some of the ingredients you can use to make refreshing and delicious infused water.

What to Throw in Your H₂O

Fruits and Vegetables

- apples • beets • bell peppers • blackberries • blueberries • cantaloupe • carrots • celery • cherries • cucumbers • fennel • grapefruit • grapes • honeydew • jalapenos • kiwi • lemons • limes • mangos • nectarines • oranges • peaches • pears • pineapples • plums • raspberries • strawberries • tangerines • watermelon

Herbs, Spices, and Florals

- basil • cardamom • cilantro • cinnamon • cloves • ginger root • lavender • lemon verbena • lemongrass • mint • rosemary • thyme • parsley • rose petals • star anise • vanilla bean

Try These Combinations: ... see next page.

Infused Water

IDEAS

Try These Refreshing Combinations



Lemon

+



Thyme



Cucumber

+



Lime

+



Strawberry

+



Mint



Orange

+

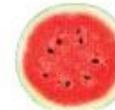


Star Anise

+



Hibiscus



Watermelon

+



Honeydew

+



Mint



Lime

+



Ginger Root

+



Basil



Cucumber

+



Mint

+



Jalapeno



Lemon

+



Raspberry

+



Rosemary



Orange

+



Blueberry

+



Basil

Gather loose herbs and flowers in a tea infuser.

Crush ginger and leafy herbs to release flavors.

Keep it simple. Think of flavor combos you like in other recipes and build from there.

allrecipes!

Keep it simple. Think of flavor combos you like in other recipes and build from there. Here are some ideas to get you started:

- Cucumber + lime + strawberry + mint
- Lemon + raspberry + rosemary
- Orange + blueberry + basil
- Lime + ginger root + basil
- Watermelon + honeydew + mint
- Cucumber + mint + jalapeno
- Lemon + thyme
- Orange + hibiscus + star anise
- Orange + cinnamon + cardamom + cloves
- Pear + fennel

Stay hydrated, my friends.

Photos by Vanessa Greaves

<http://dish.allrecipes.com/fresh-ideas-for-making-infused-water/>