

The 'Spotlight' Vodka Cocktail: The Refreshing 5-Minute Drink You Need Now

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INGREDIENTS

Swaps and Notes:

Triple Sec: If you don't have triple sec, you can substitute it with an orange syrup (like grenadine, but citrus-flavored) and reduce the orange juice slightly to maintain the liquid balance.

Juice: You can use bottled juices, but the recipe truly shines with freshly squeezed orange and lime. It makes all the difference in that crisp, clean flavor.

Sugar Rim: For an extra twist, swap the orange sugar for a simple salt rim if you prefer a slightly more savory profile, similar to a Classic Margarita.

Vodka Alternative: While this is a vodka cocktail, you can easily substitute it with white rum for a bright twist, or tequila for a stronger citrus punch.

DIRECTIONS

1. Follow these simple steps for the perfect drink every time.
2. **Prep the Glass (The Rim):** Take an empty highball or coupe glass. Run a lime wedge around the rim, just enough to moisten it. Pour the orange sugar mixture onto a small plate. Gently invert the glass and dip the rim into the sugar, ensuring a neat, even coating.
3. **Add Ice:** Fill your sugar-rimmed glass completely with fresh ice cubes.
4. **Combine the Liquids (Except Soda):** Pour the 2 oz of vodka, 1 oz of triple sec, 2 oz of fresh orange juice, and 1/2 oz of fresh lime juice directly over the ice.
5. **Stir Gently:** Use a cocktail spoon (or any long spoon) to gently stir the ingredients for about 5-10 seconds. You want to chill and combine the ingredients without chipping the ice or melting it too quickly.
6. **Top with Fizz:** Add a splash (about 1-2 ounces) of soda water to the top of the drink. This final step gives it that beautiful sparkling lift.
7. **Garnish and Serve:** Garnish with a fresh orange slice, nestled on the rim or dropped into the drink, and a bright green mint sprig for aroma. Serve immediately.

SWAPS & NOTES

-the smooth warmth of the vodka, the sweet tang of orange juice, the bright acidity of lime juice, and the subtle citrus complexity from the triple sec.

It's Versatile: This recipe scales perfectly.

I can make a single glass for myself, or easily batch it into a pitcher for a crowd.

It's one of the best entertaining hacks I know.

TIPS FOR SUCCESS

Freshness is King: I cannot stress this enough—using fresh orange and lime juice is the single most important factor.

The acidity is brighter, and the flavor is cleaner than anything from a carton.

The Big Batch Hack: If you're making a pitcher for a party, combine the vodka, triple sec, and juices before your guests arrive.

When it's time to serve, pour the chilled mixture over ice in individual glasses and then top each glass with soda water.

More recipes: [ChefManiac.com](https://chefmaniac.com)

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