

Holiday Cheer

Add CÎROC coconut, coconut water, and pomegranate juice in a long glass. Stir and top off with Champagne. Garnish with a flamed orange twist and a few pomegranate seeds.

With the holiday season in full swing, most of us will be enjoying a toast or two as part of the festivities. Although I can't fairly say that drinking is beneficial to maintaining a trim figure, with a little know-how, we can confidently navigate the bar at all our soirees with no regret.

The bottom line is that alcohol is a calorie dense, nutritionally void substance, and drinking it is counterproductive to fat loss. That said, some choices are substantially better than others. Where most people run into trouble is not with the alcohol, but with everything that is mixed in with it. Cocktails usually begin with 1.5 ounces of distilled spirits (vodka, whiskey, rum). 100 calories, not bad. But, if you combine it with soda, juice, liqueurs, sugary pre-made mixes (the worst) or heavy cream, that cocktail is now hundreds and hundreds of calories. A couple of those, and you have doubled your calorie consumption for the day.

So what to do? The absolute best choices are: Champagne (95 calories/ 5 ounce glass), vodka, tequila (or any distilled spirit of your choice) with club soda (100 calories), light beer (100 calories), or wine (120 calories).

If you love a mixed cocktail, infused vodkas add flavor without extra calories, and satisfy a wide variety of tastes from savory (jalapeno or ginger) to sweet (blueberry or mango). Sipping it with club soda and a squeeze of citrus is a smart choice (especially if you are going to have more than

one). Martinis are fun, just be sure to control the ingredients. A simple and decadent chocolate martini can be made with 1 1/2 ounces of chilled vodka and 1/2 ounce of chocolate Liqueur, all for 167 calories.

Tips:

- Have a game-plan: decide ahead of time, how many drinks you plan to enjoy, and never go to a party hungry.
- Always alternate between an alcoholic drink and water. It is an effortless strategy to pace yourself.
- Because of its bitter taste, many people mistakenly assume tonic is a low-cal mixer. It is loaded with sugar and calories- stick to club soda.
- Dance!
- Regardless of what your best friend says, ending the night with greasy drive-through fare will not make you feel better, and McDonalds does not cure a hangover. Get a bottle of water, (and maybe a couple aspirin) and go to bed!
- A shot of Rumchata has 10 grams of sugar- it is a dessert.
- Steer clear of the eggnog. Without adding spirits, 1 cup has 343 calories. If you love the taste, the Boutique ladies have been enjoying Silk Nog this season. (I like it with a little whiskey)

Happy Holidays!!!

Mix up this tasty concoction from Shape.com for a little Holiday Cheer!