

# CELERY-CITRUS SPRITZ

Makes 6-8 cocktails; scales up or down easily

**REMEMBER, BEST PRACTICE: READ THE RECIPE ALL THE WAY THROUGH BEFORE YOU START COOKING!**

The celery simple syrup has a long shelf life. Use any leftovers all summer long.

**Feel free to play with the ratios.** Prefer more sour and less sweet, or the other way around? Do your thing. A salted rim is fun here, too.

**Mocktail? Yestail!** Increase the syrup and lemon juice, omit the vodka, and top with sparkling water.

**1 cup granulated sugar**

**1 cup water**

**1 (firmly packed) cup of celery leaves (in a pinch, or if your bunch doesn't have many leaves, chop the innermost stalks and leaves to measure 2 cups), plus extra leaves or small stalks for garnishing**

**12 ounces ( $\frac{3}{4}$  cup) freshly squeezed lemon juice, plus additional lemon wedges for garnishing**

**16 ounces (1 cup) vodka, preferably chilled straight from the freezer**

**Kosher salt**

**1 bottle dry sparkling wine, chilled**

1. Make the celery simple syrup: In a medium pot, combine the sugar and the water. Place over high heat and bring to a boil, stirring to dissolve the sugar. Add the celery leaves and reduce heat to maintain a brisk simmer. Let cook, 5 minutes. Remove from heat, transfer to a jar, and chill in the refrigerator. Strain and discard the leaves before using.

(To make the syrup for more immediate consumption, use only  $\frac{1}{2}$  cup of water and simmer the leaves for a few minutes longer to simulate the steeping. Remove from the heat and transfer to a jar. Add the remaining  $\frac{1}{2}$  cup water in the form of ice cubes (you can approximate this- don't stress it) to chill the syrup quickly.

2. **If batching out the cocktail for a bigger crowd**, combine 1 cup of chilled simple syrup, the 12 ounces of lemon juice, the 16 ounces of vodka, and a big pinch of salt in a pitcher. Stir. Divide among 8 lowball glasses filled with ice, being sure to leave room for the bubbles!

**If making drinks in smaller batches**, distribute the following proportions among individual lowball glasses filled with ice: 1 ounce celery syrup to 1  $\frac{1}{2}$  ounces lemon juice to 1 ounce vodka. Tip: 1 ounce equals 2 tablespoons. Again, leave room for bubbles.

3. Give a quick stir to each glass with a cocktail spoon or chopstick, top with sparkling wine, celery leaves, and a lemon wedge. Gulp away.

# NOODLE