

Entertaining Ideas

What's Brewing This Holiday Season? Tea

(NAPSA)—If you're looking for a fresh idea for holiday entertaining, why not try a new twist to an old favorite: punch. Served with a tempting selection of home-baked goods or an assortment of store-bought pastries and cookies, punch makes an elegant centerpiece for any special occasion or party.

According to the makers of Bigelow Tea, adding a flavored tea base to punch recipes is a great way to boost taste. When selecting a tea punch for holiday entertaining, be sure to incorporate some of the flavors of the season. For a simple-to-prepare recipe with lots of seasonal flavor, Spiced Apple Toddy Punch is a sure crowd pleaser.

Spiced Apple Toddy Punch

6 Bigelow "Constant Comment" tea bags

1 quart water

2 Tbsp. sugar

2 cups natural apple juice or apple cider

Apple slices*, for garnish (optional)

Bring 1 quart water to a boil. Place tea bags in 3-quart heat-resistant container and pour boiling water over bags. Let tea steep for 5 minutes. Remove tea bags. Add sugar to tea base, stirring to dissolve. In a separate saucepan, heat apple juice or cider. Do not boil. Pour heated juice/cider into tea base. Stir to mix. Transfer heated liquid to heatproof punch bowl. Garnish with apple slices, if using. Serve hot. Reheat as needed.

*** If using apple garnish, rub slices with lemon juice to reduce browning.**

Makes 16 three-ounce servings



Punch made with a tea base can be a festive part of any holiday celebration.

Another way to incorporate tea into the celebration is through thoughtful gifts. When the "perfect gift" eludes you, try this simple and affordable approach: Combine small tokens with carefully selected tea bags to create delightful holiday gestures.

For example, for a neighbor who loves gardening, you can prepare a flower motif mug filled with an assortment of herbal teas. Business associates might enjoy a top-selling book or CD paired with a selection of fruit-flavored black teas. Green tea with a relaxation tape or scented candle is another good combination.

Adding tea and tea treats makes a simple gift seem more thoughtful and personal. To keep it festive, wrap combination gifts with holiday-themed ribbon, garland or a candy cane.

Want a more substantial gift? Pair a canister of exotic loose tea with a porcelain teapot or hand-painted serving tray. For more ideas, along with a wide selection of prepackaged tea gifts, visit www.bigelowtea.com.