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TUESDAY, MARCH 8, 2011

## Spicy Ginger Citrus Cocktail, with Kale Chips



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ABOUT ME

THE CILANTROPIST

I am a research scientist turned foodie and amateur chef. I am often fearless when it comes to cooking, eating, and life in general, and I will try almost anything at least once. My love of cooking comes from my grandmother who taught me that feeding others well means loving them well. This blog shares my adventures in the kitchen and in life as I cook what I love for the people I love.

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When I was in San Francisco last fall for Foodbuzz Festival, I went with some of my best buds to [Cantina](#) for pre-party drinks. The evening was predictably chilly, but a little cold weather will never stop lovely ladies from wearing their best party dresses. So naturally, when we were huddled over the drink menu perusing the options, I was craving something with a little warmth. I didn't want an actual hot beverage, but something with a little spice... some kick that would warm me from the inside-out. As luck would have it, my eyes landed on the Laughing Buddha: *hangar one buddha's hand vodka, lime, crushed ginger & serrano chiles, ginger brew.*

Yes, that was the drink I wanted.

It was cool and spicy all at the same time, but best part was that there was a distinct spice from the ginger and ginger brew that was totally different than the heat from the serrano chile. The chile was like an aftershock of warmth that surprised you with each sip. It was amazing, and I haven't stopped thinking about it since.

## today's top 9



1 Butter Paneer Curry Naan...  
by: Sixbittersweets



2 Sending Love From My Oven  
by: In Katrina's Kitchen



After the new year, I decided I needed to stop thinking about this cocktail and try to recreate it at home. Being a cocktail beginner, I wasn't totally sure about two of the ingredients - the buddha's hand vodka, and the ginger brew - so I did a little researching on the internet. Turns out the buddha's hand vodka is made with none other [Buddha's Hand citrus](#) (surprise, surprise), which has an appearance that is both intriguing and terrifying, but a taste that is extremely fragrant. Next, I found that the ginger brew is an all-natural soda made with roots and spices. Fantastic! The ginger brew that seemed to be the most popular was [REED's](#), and I thrilled to discover that I could pick some up at my local Henry's.



Whole Wheat Pearl Cousco...  
by: The Enchanted Cook

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And while I picked up my first four-pack of REED's to do some 'practice' for making my cocktail, I have gotten it many more times just because I love the clean, spicy taste. It is like a little treat that rejuvenates me at the end of the day. I think I prefer the Extra Ginger to the regular flavor, but both are tasty and I would highly recommend you try one.

When it came to cocktail-making, I decided to mimic the Cantina recipe using REED's, lime juice, citrus vodka (I didn't quite want to invest in a bottle of Buddha's hand just yet), and the serrano chile. I tried it once by also adding fresh ginger, and I decided it wasn't worth the effort because I couldn't taste the difference *that* much. I decided my recipe was as close as I was going to get to the original, and I loved it.

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While I was making this cocktail more recently, I had a stroke of genius and realized that some salty kale chips would be fantastic to munch on while sipping my drink. I had just picked up some dinosaur kale from the farmer's market so fate was on my side. It seems everyone is jumping on the kale chip bandwagon these days, and although the baking is a little finicky (the chips burn very easily) the final product is undoubtedly worth it: a crispy, crunchy veggie chip that is healthy and earthy.



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I made my kale chips with some Ethiopian curry salt that I got from the San Diego-based salt company Salt Farm. The salt didn't quite lend as spicy of a flavor as I would have liked, but the hint of flavor was just enough.

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On this particular occasion, I also realized I didn't have any serrano chiles on hand to spice up my cocktail. I thought about running up to the store, but the idea of wasting all that time and energy just for a little chile seemed silly. (And hm, that rhymes.) So instead I opened my refrigerator and grabbed out my handy bottle of fire-red Sriracha. If you don't own a bottle of Sriracha, hurry out and get one, this condiment is most definitely worth a trip to the store because you can put it on *everything*.

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In lieu of the serrano chiles I added a few drops of Sriracha... and it almost did the trick. A few more drops and it was decidedly spicy. The drink was distinctively different than when I had used the serrano, both in the flavor and the timing of when you feel the kick of the heat. With the Sriracha, it is more a slap-you-in-the-face spicy that you can taste immediately and the drink has a more red pepper flavor. The serrano is a sort of sneak-up-behind-you spicy and the green pepper flavor almost goes unnoticed. But whether this ginger citrus cocktail is spiced up with Serrano or Sriracha, I love anything with a kick.

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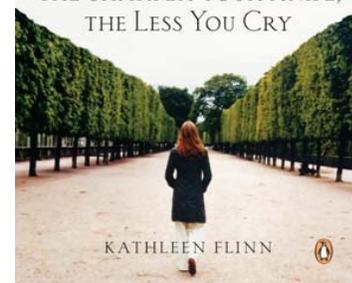
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KATHLEEN FLINN



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SAN DIEGO SLOW FOOD



I enjoyed this cocktail with kale chips... and ultimately a burger (I am powerless to resist a good burger) but I also think it would be fantastic with thai food or for your next backyard barbecue. Another boon is that manly men can rest easy knowing this isn't some foo-foo girly drink, yet, I think any gal worth her salt would love this. But the best part for me is that I don't have to go all the way up to San Francisco to get this drink, because I can make one at home that is just as good.

So, what are you waiting for? Go get yourself some REED's and spice up your day.



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## ***Spicy Ginger Citrus Cocktail***

*Inspired by the Laughing Buddha Cocktail from [Cantina in San Francisco](#)*

*I love this drink because it is a little spicy from the ginger, but also spicy because of added heat from chiles. I have made this with both serrano peppers and Sriracha sauce, and although I prefer the lingering heat of serranos, I don't always have them on hand and they are hard to handle. The Sriracha sauce gives it a more distinct red chile taste which is really awesome with the citrus and ginger...plus it is always in my fridge. With either the Sriracha or the serrano, add enough to suit your tastes.*

Serves 4

*2 bottles (24 fl. oz.) of [REED's Extra Ginger Brew](#), or other real ginger ale*

Juice from 2 large limes

About 6 shots (7.5 - 9 fl. oz) of [Citron Vodka](#) or [Citrus Vodka](#)

About 32 drops of Sriracha sauce

OR

1/2 serrano chile, finely sliced

For serving, ice cubes and 1 lemon, sliced in wedges

**If you are making this with Sriracha**, you can simply combine all the ingredients in a large pitcher with ice and mix. Serve in a highball glass with extra ice and garnish with a lemon wedge.

**If you are making this with serrano chiles**, use a cocktail shaker to make 2 drinks at a time: put the 1/2 chiles in the bottom of a cocktail shaker with 1/2 the vodka and use a muddler or something similar to crush the chiles to release the heat. Add 1 bottle of REED's and the lime juice, swirl to mix (don't cover and shake vigorously like a martini, Reed's is carbonated), and then strain into two glasses with ice. Garnish with a lemon wedge and serve.

## Roasted Kale Chips

1 bunch kale, washed thoroughly and dried

About 1 tbsp extra virgin olive oil

Salt to taste, use gourmet flavored salt if you like

Preheat oven to 350 degrees Fahrenheit. Slice the tough ribs from the center of the kale leaves, and slice each kale leaf in half (or to your preferred size). In a large bowl, toss kale with olive oil and salt until well coated. Add salt to taste, but beware of adding too much!

Spread the kale on a baking sheet lined with parchment or a [silicone baking mat](#), and bake for about 10 minutes. Check the kale and see if it is crispy, it can burn easily! If it is not done yet, toss the kale on the sheet to mix, and bake for another 3-5 minutes.

POSTED BY THE CILANTROPIST AT [TUESDAY, MARCH 08, 2011](#) 

LABELS: [BIRTHDAY](#), [CANTINA](#), [COCKTAIL](#), [GINGER](#), [GINGER ALE](#), [LEMON](#), [LIME](#), [MIXED DRINK](#), [SAN FRANCISCO](#), [SERRANO CHILE](#), [SRIRACHA](#), [VODKA](#)

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### 30 COMMENTS:

[Rosa's Yummy Yums](#) said...



What a lovely appetitive!

Cheers,

Rosa

[MARCH 8, 2011 12:30 AM](#)

Jessica's Dinner Party said...

I've never had Reed's before! Thanks for the recommendation.

MARCH 8, 2011 3:18 AM

Lindsay @ Pinch of Yum said...

You have me dreaming of summer... and a cocktail... all before 7am. Wow, that's talent.

MARCH 8, 2011 4:41 AM

Molly said...

I too, fell in love with a ginger beer-based drink. I was a woman on a mission when I came up with this

<http://cheapbeets.wordpress.com/2010/11/22/genuine-ginger-beer/>

Enjoy!

MARCH 8, 2011 5:52 AM

Jason Phelps said...



If you love ginger beer cocktails I would definitely recommend exploring them. I love a good Dark 'N Stormy, and just had a Moscow Mule for the first time at this past New Years. Ginger beers definitely range in flavors and textures so finding one you like will ensure that part of the drinks isn't going to dissappoint!

Kale Chips are a great snack with or without the drink!

Jason

MARCH 8, 2011 5:56 AM

Peggy said...



This sounds like one tasty and unusual drink! Love the addition of the Sriracha in here because I love putting it on everything!

MARCH 8, 2011 6:16 AM

Emily Malloy said...



If this isn't perfection, I'm not sure what is!

MARCH 8, 2011 6:56 AM

Sandra said...



I love your presentations, and photos are just wowww..great recipes!

MARCH 8, 2011 7:27 AM

Carolyn Jung said...

Wow, this cocktail has quite the bite. Love all that ginger in it.

MARCH 8, 2011 8:36 AM

[Eliotseats](#) said...



Hmm...have citrus, have kale, need ginger beer! Cocktails tonight!

MARCH 8, 2011 8:40 AM

[Lisa](#) said...



I love that you're local and share all these great San Diego gems. Salt Farm?! Have to check it out, thanks for sharing.

MARCH 8, 2011 10:05 AM

[Lynds](#) said...



Wow - this looks great! At first when I looked at the photo I thought of a warm summer night but then when I read it I thought perfect for cold, snowy days - i.e now!! Can't wait to try it!

I also wanted to let you know that I passed on the 'Stylish Blogger Award' to you - <http://vanillacloudsandlemondrops.blogspot.com/2011/03/pink-champagne-truffles-and-awards.html>

MARCH 8, 2011 11:11 AM

[Medifast Coupon Code 2011](#) said...

I am thinking sun, warmth a nice drink and a great snack.

MARCH 8, 2011 11:12 AM

[Jennifurla](#) said...



Oh wow, I cant even imagine the taste. Cool recipe.

MARCH 8, 2011 11:35 AM

[NicoleD](#) said...



I love that brand of ginger beer so much. I love the kick from the ginger and the deep honey flavor. We love Moscow Mules (I see that was mentioned in a comment above) and it's a very similar recipes without the chile. I'm sure that lingering heat is a nice touch. A special treat!

MARCH 8, 2011 12:39 PM

[Evan @swEEts](#) said...

This looks like the perfect little cocktail for an afternoon sitting on the back porch and munchin on kale chips! Everything sounds so good.. now it just has to stay warm outside for my plan- I love ginger beer!

MARCH 8, 2011 2:40 PM

[Bren](#) said...

ay que rico! I just scheduled a ginger cocktail for one of my columns... i looove it. i should share with you an authentic Jamaican recipe that will blow your mind! let me

know if you're interested! :)

B-

MARCH 8, 2011 5:48 PM

Healthy Mamma said...



You are a genius! This is fabulous and totally my kind of cocktail! Have you tried a dehydrator for your kale chips? I'm thinking of buying one.

MARCH 8, 2011 7:06 PM

MegSmith @ Cooking.In.College said...



Mmm love kale and that cocktail looks so unique! I love the pictures, they are so summery :-)

MARCH 8, 2011 9:11 PM

kita said...

Ive always wanted to try making kale chips. They sound like fun and I love kale - just call me lazy. Now as far as that ginger cocktail, go ahead and pour me one. I love the flavor of ginger and don't nearly find enough to drink (wow, that doesn't make me sound good). So... I'd love to try it ;D

MARCH 8, 2011 9:16 PM

A little bit of everything said...

your cocktail makes me dream of summer. stunning photos.

MARCH 8, 2011 9:38 PM

Tiffany said...

Who needs summer when you can just turn the heat up in your apartment and drink this cocktail!?!?!? :)

MARCH 9, 2011 5:10 AM

Emily said...

I love Barritt's ginger beer, it has the best ginger flavor of the brands I have tried, super zingy and delicious!

MARCH 9, 2011 6:49 AM

Melissa@EyesBigger said...

I have to try making kale chips - I keep seeing them everywhere but I've never tried them. They sound really easy!

MARCH 9, 2011 10:00 PM

epicurious erin said...



I just did a post on kale chips too! I bake them at 275 for 20 minutes. You never have to worry about burning it that way.

MARCH 10, 2011 10:47 AM

The Cilantropist said...



Molly: Thanks for the suggestion on making your own ginger brew, yours looks awesome!

Jason: Your drink recommendations are always right on, and although I have heard of a Moscow Mule (but yet to actually try one!) I have not had a Dark n' Stormy. Next on my list!

Lisa: Glad you are enjoying the SD finds! Salt farm is at both the Hillcrest Farmers Market on Sundays, and also at the Little Italy Farmers Market on Saturdays. But sometimes things change, so check with the vendor list before going.

Bren: I am VERRRY interested in your recipe. I will shoot you an email to discuss. :)

Healthy Mama: Not tried a dehydrator for kale chips, let me know how it works out for you!

Epicurious Erin: Great suggestion for baking the kale chips so they don't burn, thanks for the tip!

MARCH 10, 2011 11:09 AM

Rebecca said...



Kale chips look great! Need to try this healthy alternative :) Love the buddha's hand :)

MARCH 10, 2011 8:42 PM

spiceblogger said...

Beautiful photography! And I love your site and your name--very clever! :-D

MARCH 17, 2011 12:34 PM

Sandy - Everyday Southwest said...

Wow! Kale chips? I had never heard of them before your beautiful post. I must run... not walk, to get my hands on some kale. Do other varieties work well?

Refreshing looking drink as well.

MARCH 28, 2011 10:39 AM

The Cilantropist said...



Sandy: I have tried both dinosaur kale and russian kale, and I found the russian kale is too thin for making chips. You could give it a try, but be warned that it will burn a bit more easily than the larger dinosaur kale.

MARCH 29, 2011 11:46 PM

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