

# ¡AGUAS FRESCAS!



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## Traditional Mexican fruit-based drink sweet, refreshing

By Amy Nichol Smith and Madeleine Smither

A refreshing and delicious way to cool off when the temperatures begin to rise this spring is with the popular Mexican fruit drink *agua fresca*.

The simple concoction typically combines fruit and water, and sugar, if necessary for sweetness. The “fresh water,” as it’s translated, can be amped up by adding citrus juice, herbs and other fruits.

Use the basic recipe below and adjust the amount of water, fruit or sugar depending on what your produce yields.

A sugar syrup will work best for incorporating sweetness into an agua fresca — granulated sugar may not dissolve easily and just sit at the bottom of your pitcher.

For best results, choose fruit that’s in season and ripe. Go basic or get creative — either way, you’ll have another way to battle the hot weather as summer creeps up on the Valley.

### SUGAR SYRUP

#### Ingredients:

- 1 cup water
- 2 cups sugar

#### Directions:

In a medium saucepan, bring water to a boil. Pour sugar into water, stirring constantly, until sugar dissolves. Remove pan from heat immediately and allow to cool. Pour cooled sugar syrup into a bottle for easy measuring.

### BASIC RECIPE

#### Ingredients:

- 3 cups fruit, diced
- 2 cups water
- Juice of one lime, lemon, or half an orange
- Sugar syrup, to taste

#### Directions:

In a blender, combine fruit, 1 cup of water, citrus juice and a couple teaspoons of sugar syrup. Blend until smooth, about 30 seconds.

Pour mixture through a fine sieve into a pitcher. Use a spoon to push down on the fruit and extract all of the juice. Add the remaining cup of water and more sugar syrup, if needed.

Chill for at least an hour. Serve over ice.

### WATERMELON-LIME-MINT

Follow the basic recipe, and add 1/4 cup fresh mint leaves and use one cup less water (or none).

### MANGO-STRAWBERRY-ORANGE

Start with 2 cups each of mango and strawberry pieces and use the juice of half an orange (or the whole orange, but then reduce the water by 1/4 cup).



### BLUEBERRY-LEMON-VANILLA

Use the basic recipe, but replace the lime juice with lemon and add one teaspoon of vanilla.

