

ICE COLD This fruity apéritif and grated espresso ice are refreshing, unexpected ways to start and end a summer meal. **RIGHT:** Seasonal fruit and fresh herbs lend an enticing twist to Prosecco. **BELOW:** This cool dessert is a warm-weather version of coffee and cream.



ESPRESSO GRANITA

MAKES 6 SERVINGS

Serve this on a hot summer afternoon as a treat or as a finish to a meal. Topped with a dollop of whipped cream and a few chocolate shavings, it makes a very light and satisfying dessert. This icy dessert utilizes a technique of raking the ice crystals as they form in the freezer, which can be used with citrus juice and many other flavors. We used to go to an Italian shop in Utica, New York, where the kids ate lemon ice and the grown-ups got to have this mysterious treat.

- 2 cups strong brewed espresso coffee
- $\frac{1}{4}$ cup sugar
- 1 cup water
- 1 cup heavy whipping cream
- 8 ounces bittersweet chocolate, shaved into curls (optional)

1. While the coffee is still warm, stir in 3 tablespoons of the sugar until it is dissolved. Blend with the water.
2. Pour the mixture into a 13-by-9-inch freezer-safe glass dish. Place in the freezer. Every 30 minutes, rake the surface with a fork to dislodge and distribute the ice crystals to form a granular texture. The granita will be ready in 2 hours.
3. Whip the cream with the remaining 1 tablespoon of sugar to form soft peaks.
4. Scoop about 5 ounces of granita into each parfait glass. Top with a dollop of whipped cream and shaved chocolate. Serve immediately.

FRUIT AND FRESH HERB CARAFE

MAKES 6 SERVINGS

While dining at one of my favorite Tuscan restaurants, I mentioned to the chef, Cesare Casella, that I remembered having a drink in Italy where fruit was crushed with herbs, and liquor and Prosecco sparkling wine were added. He wasted no time going behind the bar to make a batch, saying that he'd always had such a drink, which he called "carafe," on the menu of his family's restaurant, Vipore, in Lucca, Italy. This is my version of what Cesare made for me that day. Choose the freshest, ripest available fruit.

- 4 cups fresh fruit, such as sliced peaches or strawberries
- 3 tablespoons sugar
- 5 sprigs fresh basil, plus more for garnish
- $\frac{3}{4}$ cup vodka
- 1 bottle (750 mL) Italian sparkling wine, such as Prosecco or Lambrusco, chilled

In a large pitcher, place the fruit, sugar, and basil. Using a wooden spoon, crush the mixture until it forms a rough mash. Stir in the vodka. Just before serving, pour the Prosecco over the mixture and serve immediately over ice. Garnish with a sprig of fresh basil.



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