



The Mint Julep Story

As the story goes....

President Franklin Delano Roosevelt and General Douglas MacArthur had arrived at West Point to give the commencement address.

They were at the home of Colonel Simon Bolivar Buckner where General William D. Connor would welcome the group with a cocktail reception. It was a hot day in New York.

As Buckner was well known for his family recipe for mint juleps, he was in charge of making them. They must have been very nice, quenching the thirsts of the guests quite nicely on that hot day.

Later a waiter came to Buckner at the reception and said, "Sir, Colonel, the President wants another drink, but I don't think he oughta!"

General MacArthur turned down a second julep, saying (as the story goes), "No, thank you. I think I will stop now while I still know who is President."



It was sometime after this reception that General Connor wrote to General Buckner requesting his mint julep recipe.

This is the recipe given in a letter written back to him:

“Go to a spring where cool, crystal-clear water bubbles from under a bank of dew-washed ferns. In a consecrated vessel, dip up a little water at the source. Follow the stream through its banks of green moss and wildflowers until it broadens and trickles through beds of mint growing in aromatic profusion and

waving softly in the summer breezes. Gather the sweetest and tenderest shoots and gently carry them home. Go to the sideboard and select a decanter of Kentucky Bourbon, distilled by a master hand, mellowed with age yet still vigorous and inspiring. An ancestral sugar bowl, a row of silver goblets, some spoons and some ice and you are ready to start.

In a canvas bag, pound twice as much ice as you think you will need. Make it fine as snow, keep it dry and do not allow it to degenerate into slush.

In each goblet, put a slightly heaping teaspoonful of granulated sugar, barely cover this with spring water and slightly bruise one mint leaf into this, leaving the spoon in the goblet. Then pour elixir from the decanter until the goblets are about one-fourth full. Fill the goblets with snowy ice, sprinkling in a small amount of sugar as you fill. Wipe the outsides of the goblets dry and embellish copiously with mint.

Then comes the important and delicate operation of frosting. By proper manipulation of the spoon, the ingredients are circulated and blended until Nature, wishing to take a further hand and add another of its beautiful phenomena, encrusts the whole in a glittering coat of white frost. Thus harmoniously blended by the deft touches of a skilled hand, you have a beverage eminently appropriate for honorable men and beautiful women.

When all is ready, assemble your guests on the porch or in the garden, where the aroma of the juleps will rise heavenward and make the birds sing. Propose a worthy toast, raise the goblet to your lips, bury your nose in the mint, inhale a deep breath of its fragrance and sip the nectar of the gods.

Being overcome by thirst, I can write no further.

Sincerely,

S.B. Buckner, Jr.”

