Red Wine Hot Chocolate

Mulled wine is easy to make, and the smell of it gently simmering is almost as delicious as the drink itself. This version, made with pomegranate and fresh citrus and topped with more of the same, is truly Californian.

Serves 4-8

Ingredients

- 3 cups pomegranate juice
- Peel and juice of 2 oranges (divided)
- 2 tablespoon honey
- 2 cinnamon sticks
- 5 whole cloves
- 2 star anise
- 1 I -inch piece fresh ginger, sliced
- 1 750-ml bottle full-bodied California red wine, such as Cabernet Sauvignon
- Pomegranate arils, orange slices and cinnamon sticks for serving

Instructions

Slow Cooker Method

Add the pomegranate juice, orange juice, honey, spices and ginger to a stockpot over medium heat and bring to a simmer. Cook for 8-10 minutes, until honey has dissolved and spices are releasing their flavors and scent.

Reduce heat to low and add orange peel and wine, stir and cover, and allow to cook for at least 15 minutes. Do not allow the mixture to rise above a low simmer.

Ladle the mulled wine into mugs and serve with fresh orange slices, cinnamon sticks and a few pomegranate arils.