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RECIPE: Triple Crown Cocktails

CREATED BY: Various Chefs

The Triple Crown, consisting of the Kentucky Derby, Preakness Stakes and Belmont Stakes, kicks off this Saturday with the Kentucky Derby. For the equestrian enthusiasts who can't make it to the track this year, there are ways to take part in the celebration in your hometown. Each leg of the Triple Crown features a unique signature cocktail, which has become as intrinsic to the festivities as floppy hats on millionaire's row.

Kentucky Derby, May 3, 2008

Mint Julep

For nearly a century, the mint julep has been the traditional beverage of the Kentucky Derby.

2 cups sugar

2 cups water

Sprigs of fresh mint

Crushed ice

Kentucky Whisky

Silver Julep Cup

Make a simple syrup by boiling sugar and water together for five minutes. Cool and place in a covered container with six or eight sprigs of fresh mint, then refrigerate overnight. Make one julep at a time by filling a julep cup with crushed ice, adding one tablespoon mint syrup and two ounces of whiskey. Stir rapidly with a spoon to frost the outside of the cup. Garnish with a sprig of fresh mint.

Preakness Stakes, May 17, 2008

Black-Eyed Susan

Named for the official flower of Maryland, the Black-Eyed Susan is the cocktail of choice for the Preakness Stakes.

1 part Cointreau
1 part Rum
1 part Vodka
Pineapple Juice
Orange Juice

Fill a highball glass with shaved ice, add the liquors first, then top with equal parts of orange and pineapple juice. Stir and garnish with a lime wedge.

Belmont Stakes, June 7, 2008

The Belmont Breeze

Created in 1998 by Dale DeGoff to replace the White Carnation, the Belmont Breeze is the official drink of the Belmont Stakes.

1 1/2 ounces Makers Mark
3/4 ounce Harveys Bristol Cream Sherry
3/4 ounce Fresh Lemon Juice
3/4 ounce Simple Syrup
1 1/2 ounce Fresh orange juice
1 1/2 ounce Ocean Spray Cranberry Juice

Shake all ingredients with ice and top with half 7up and half soda, approximately one ounce of each. Garnish with fresh strawberry and a mint sprig and a lemon wedge.