

CELEBRATE THE HOLIDAYS WITH A LATIN TWIST

BY ROCIO GUENTHER

Get ready to party, but with a Latin twist. The first book to celebrate the signature cocktails of 18 Latin American countries and Spain in one volume, “Latin Twist: Traditional & Modern Cocktails,” features recipes that can be made with easy everyday kitchen gadgets, fresh squeezed juices, and quality spirits. The 97 recipes in the book offer ample options for any occasion, from a backyard fiesta to a Super Bowl Sunday.

Gorgeous photography and an illustrated cocktail map shows the origin of every drink, while each chapter offers a brief exploration of ingredients, wines and liquors that make each country special. Learn how to infuse tequila, garnish cocktails and make wonderful holiday punches. Find a complete how-to for concocting Chile’s signature Borgoña pounce with red wine and chopped strawberries, or follow the steps to make a refreshing Brazilian caipirinha with passion fruit.

Texas born bloggers and co-authors Vianney Rodriguez and Yvette Marquez-Sharpnack met through the Internet and bonded over a shared heritage of Mexican food, drinks and traditions and a mutual fondness for entertaining.

“We knew each other three years before we met in person,” Ms. Rodriguez said. A Nestle tamalada event finally brought them together in a physical space and they instantly hit it off. Yvette suggested Vianney write a margarita book after viewing her popular margarita recipes online.

Already familiar with traditional Mexican drinks like margaritas and piña coladas, they decided to explore a variety of cocktails from other Latin American cultures, tapping into something new – and it was only natural to team up and write about it together.

“There are so many drinks in Latin America



that have been around for centuries and are now just becoming classics in the U.S., such as the Brazilian caipirinha or the mojito from Cuba,” Ms. Marquez-Sharpnack said.

The cocktail industry’s increasing focus on using real ingredients and juices is also something the authors champion in their book.

“We’ve all had that bad neon green margarita that tastes like bottled sweet and sour preservative mix, and it’s so fake,” she added.

The book features recipes that teach how to make margarita mixes, simple syrups and homemade coconut milk, which can be stored in the fridge for future cocktail preparation. Both writers agree that quality spirits and fresh produce is essential to create the ultimate, delicious cocktail.

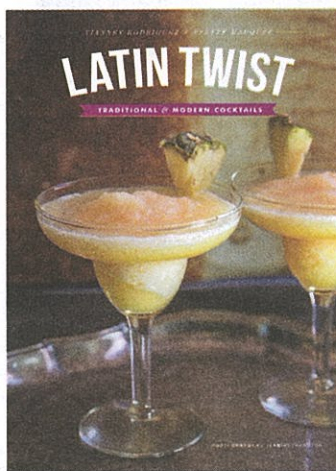
“If you add a fresh juice, it only lifts the spirit,” Ms. Rodriguez explained. “You get the pure taste, different layers and depth, the way a cocktail should be made.”

For the holidays, recipes for typical different punches, such as the quintessential ponche navideño, a Mexican fruit punch that can also be served without alcohol for the whole family to enjoy, are fully explained. The fragrant infusion will perfume your home with the holiday spirit.

Yvette explained that she always makes the ponche with her family during the holidays.

“That’s Mexico in a cup for me, it’s not a tamalada without the ponche,” she said.

“Latin Twist: Traditional & Modern Cocktails” is a great guide and gift. The book is available locally at Melissa Guerra Latin Kitchen Market at the Pearl. 🍹



Vianney Rodriguez and Yvette Marquez-Sharpnack (Photo by Jeanine Thurston)