

QUALITIES OF LIFE: Q-TIPS

We wish you a merry ... what were we saying?
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At a holiday party last December, a Q staffer stumbled upon—and we do mean stumbled—a chilled drink called the Lucky Zartini, a glorious mix of vodka, white chocolate liqueur, Rumpleminze and Frangelico, garnished with marbits, those marshmallow bits found in Lucky Charms cereal.

The hosts who served that festive concoction, Cary Zartman and Faron Greenfield from the Chicago ad agency Z Factory, have a new drink for 2006: the Cider House Rules Zartini, a warm blend of vodka, pomegranate liqueur, apple juice and cinnamon.

Q wanted to help readers who might be searching for that special party drink—and we also wanted to brighten a slow workday—so a taste test was held. The winner: The 2006 Cider House Rules.

Here are some comments from the survivors.

Lucky Zartini

"More of a dessert drink--sippable, not sluggable."

"The marshmallows, though at first seeming like a gimmick, actually work as an interesting palate-cleansing adjunct to the flavor of the drink."

"Too rich for my blood, though I could see it as a dessert drink."

"Minty and refreshing, and the color sparkles make it the talk of the party."

Cider House Rules Zartini

"A great but dangerous party drink because it tastes like the cider of childhood."

"Very easy sipping, comforting on a cold night."

"Wayyyyyy easy to drink. It's the kind of drink where the first sign that you'd had too much would be the impact of falling on something."

"Good around the ski lodge or to keep Salvation Army bell ringers de-iced."

So choose your poison, so to speak. Here are the recipes:

THE 2005 LUCKY ZARTINI

8 servings

1 1/2 cups vodka, 2 cups Godiva White Chocolate Liqueur, 1/2 cup Rumpleminze and a splash of Frangelico. Mix well, chill, then pour into a small cereal bowl. Sprinkle in a half-dozen marbits.

THE 2006 CIDER HOUSE RULES ZARTINI

8 servings

1 cup Svedka vodka, 1 cup Pama Pomegranate Liqueur and 2 cups apple juice or cider. Warm in a pot over low heat. Serve warm with a dash of cinnamon.

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