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Toasts of the Season

Patty Anderson
*Iowa State University*

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Toasts of the Season

by Patty Anderson, Ex. F. 3

"Love and joy come to you,
And to you your wassail, too"

Toasts are a tradition at Christmas as you gather with family and friends. The wassail bowl, a forerunner of our modern holiday punch bowl, stems from medieval Christmas celebrations. Wassail comes from an old English word meaning “be thou whole.” From this early Christmas toast a favorite holiday recipe for the wassail bowl developed.

**Wassail Bowl**

| Whole cloves | 5 oranges | 2 quarts apple cider or apple juice |
| 1/2 cup lemon juice — fresh, frozen, or canned |

Heat oven to 350 degrees (moderate oven). Poke cloves, about 1/4 inch apart, in oranges. Put in shallow pan; bake 30 minutes. Heat apple cider or juice until small bubbles show around edge. Remove from heat; stir in lemon juice. Pour into heatproof punch bowl. With ice pick pierce oranges in several places; add to cider. Makes 10-12 servings.

For a cooling Christmas drink, serve tangy spiced grape punch cooled by a glamorous ice ring.

**Spiced Grape Punch**

| 2 cups sugar | 1/2 cup orange juice, fresh, frozen or canned |
| 2 cups water | 1 1/2 cups grape juice, frozen or canned |
| 6 whole cloves | 5 cups strong cold tea |
| 3 sticks cinnamon |
| 1 tablespoon diced preserved ginger |

Cook sugar, water, cloves, cinnamon and preserved ginger about 6 minutes. Strain and cool. Just before serving stir in orange juice, grape juice and cold tea. Makes 12 servings.

**Glamorous Ice Ring**

Fill ring mold with water, leaving 1/2 inch at top. On top of frozen ring arrange lemon slices, red and green maraschino cherries and sprigs of mint or huckleberry. Freeze. Unmold; float on Spiced Grape Punch in punch bowl.

When friends drop over after a caroling party, try hot mulled cider served in giant mugs with spicy cinnamon stick stirrers.

**Hot Mulled Cider**

| 1/2 cup brown sugar | 1 teaspoon whole allspice |
| 1/4 teaspoon salt | 1 teaspoon whole cloves |
| 2 quarts cider | 3 inches stick cinnamon |

Combine brown sugar, salt and cider. Tie allspice, cloves and 3 inches stick cinnamon in small piece of cheesecloth; add to cider mixture. Cover and simmer for 20 minutes. Remove spices. Sprinkle nutmeg over top. Serve with cinnamon sticks for stirrers.