

Cool mojitos

The secret to a good mojito is lots of fresh mint. Habana Restaurant in San Francisco goes through 100 pounds of mint a week to make 1,000 mojitos. The finest leaves get muddled for the drink; imperfect leaves go into a simple syrup. Levende Lounge, also in San Francisco, crushes even more fresh mint leaves for each drink. Inspired by both recipes, we developed this simplified home-style mojito that follows their minty lead.

Mojito

In an 8- to 10-ounce glass, combine 20 rinsed **fresh mint leaves** (each about 1½ in. long) and 2 teaspoons **superfine sugar**. With a wooden spoon, pound mint leaves with sugar to coarsely crush. Add 4 to 5 tablespoons **light rum**, 3 tablespoons **fresh lime juice**; mix well. Fill glass with ice cubes and 4 to 6 tablespoons **chilled soda water**. Garnish with a sprig of fresh mint. Makes 1 serving.

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