
TODDY

INGREDIENTS

1/2 ounce dark rum
1/2 ounce rye or bourbon whiskey
1/2 ounce fresh-squeezed lemon juice
1 ounce honey syrup (page 247)
3 to 4 ounces hot tea or hot water
Lemon peel, for garnish

☛ In a large goblet, mix together the rum, whiskey, lemon juice, and honey syrup. Add the hot liquid and stir a few times. Garnish with the lemon peel.

☞ **T**he toddy category—sugar, water, and a strong spirit of any kind—preceded the cocktail category (which is the same ingredients, plus biters; slings had the same ingredients, but with the addition of a spice like nutmeg). The original toddies were served either hot or cold, more often the former, and that's the primary form in which they've endured. The name probably comes from something called a toddy stick, similar to a muddler, which was used in taverns and inns for smashing spices. In the colonial era, sugar usually came in loaves that had to be chipped. Then the chips were mashed into powder, and this may have been done with the toddy stick. (Legend has it that both the stick and the drink were named after Robert Toddy, the proprietor of a colonial tavern in New York called the Black Horse Tavern.) Anyway, the hot toddy that survives to this day isn't so much an exact recipe as it is a general idea, and I think of it mostly as a loose family recipe. It's hot tea or hot water or even hot apple cider; plus a sweetener that's usually honey but can also be maple syrup; plus lemon juice or lemon peel or both; and, finally, a spirit, most commonly rum but sometimes brandy up north and bourbon down south, and maybe applejack. The toddy is not a cocktail that many people order in bars, although it may appear on the menus of the more historically minded bartenders. But it is a cocktail you may want to find in your hand as you sit in front of a roaring fire, in a deep comfortable sofa, surrounded by friends and family in late December.

