

California Citrus Negroni 4 Ways

By Jeanne Kelley '81

Late winter brings an abundance of citrus to California's farmers markets and gardens. My own backyard boasts blood orange, tangerine, lemon, lime and kumquat trees and I love to add the juicy citrus to cocktails and mocktails. A classic Negroni mixes gin with Campari and sweet Vermouth resulting in a very stiff drink—adding fresh squeezed juice makes the tipples a little more “sessionable.” If you’re looking for a low alcohol version of the drink, you can skip the gin, and a virgin Negroni gets its’ characteristic bitterness from grapefruit juice and bitters. And because Mezcal has become the spirit of choice for many during quarantine, I’ve included a smoky Mezcal Negroni too.



2 servings

Citrus Negroni

2 strips of orange zest removed with a sharp vegetable peeler
3 ounces (1/3 cup plus 1 tablespoon) freshly squeezed orange juice, preferably blood orange
2 ounces (1/4 cup) gin
1 ounce (2 tablespoons) freshly squeezed lemon juice
1 ounce (2 tablespoons) Campari
1 ounce (2 tablespoons) Sweet Vermouth

Run strips of zest around the rim of two old-fashioned glasses and place zest strips in glasses. Stir the orange juice, gin, lemon juice, Campari and Vermouth together in a small pitcher. Fill the glasses with ice, pour over cocktail and serve.

Low Alcohol Negroni

2 strips of orange zest removed with a sharp vegetable peeler
3 ounces (1/3 cup plus 1 tablespoon) freshly squeezed orange juice, preferably blood orange
1 ounce (2 tablespoons) freshly squeezed lemon juice
1 ounce (2 tablespoons) Campari
1 ounce (2 tablespoons) Sweet Vermouth
6 to 8 ounces (3/4 to 1 cup) Grapefruit Flavored Sparkling Water (such as La Croix)

Run strips of zest around the rim of two old-fashioned glasses and place zest strips in glasses. Stir the orange juice, lemon juice, Campari and Vermouth together in a small pitcher. Fill the glasses with ice. Divide the cocktail between glasses, top with sparkling water and serve.

No Alcohol Negroni

2 strips of orange zest removed with a sharp vegetable peeler
3 ounces (1/3 cup plus 1 tablespoon) freshly squeezed orange juice, preferably blood orange
3 ounces (1/3 cup plus 1 tablespoon) freshly squeezed grapefruit juice
1 ounce (2 tablespoons) freshly squeezed lemon juice
A few dashes of bitters, such as Angostura
6 to 8 ounces (3/4 to 1 cup) Grapefruit Flavored Sparkling Water (such as La Croix)

Run strips of zest around the rim of two old-fashioned glasses and place zest strips in glasses. Stir the orange, grapefruit and lemon juices together with the bitters in a small pitcher. Fill the glasses with ice. Divide the cocktail between glasses, top with sparkling water and serve.

Mezcal Negroni

2 strips of orange zest removed with a sharp vegetable peeler
3 ounces (1/3 cup plus 1 tablespoon) freshly squeezed orange juice, preferably blood orange
2 ounces (1/4 cup) Mezcal
1 ounce (2 tablespoons) freshly squeezed lemon juice
1 ounce (2 tablespoons) Campari
1 ounce (2 tablespoons) Sweet Vermouth

Run strips of zest around the rim of two old-fashioned glasses and place zest strips in glasses. Stir the orange juice, mezcal, lemon juice, Campari and Vermouth together in a small pitcher. Fill the glasses with ice, pour over cocktail and serve.