MIXmagic

The Low Jack

A Low Country Jack o' Lantern



- 3 oz Blood Orange Juice or fresh orange juice blended with a splash of tart cherry juice.
- ¾ oz Fresh Lemon Juice
- 1 oz **Spiced Apple-Honey Syrup*** (see prep below, or sub vanilla-honey syrup)
- 2 dashes Orange Bitters
- 2–3 oz Ginger Beer
- Glass Rim: 1 tsp smoked sea salt mixed with ½ tsp raw sugar and a pinch of smoked paprika
- Garnish: A blood orange wheel, a cinnamon stick "stem", and a fresh sprig of slapped mint or rosemary.

'Spike Station'

While the drink is refreshing, bubbly, sweet, and tangy on its own, guests can kick it up a notch as desired: they can pour 1 or 2 oz of aged Bourbon or Spiced Rum into their chilled glass before the shaken juice mixture.

Preparation

Prepare the Rim: *Rub the rim of a rocks or highball glass with a fresh lemon wedge and dip into the smoked salt-and-paprika mixture to create a dark, savory border* • ***Spiced Apple-Honey Syrup:*** *In a small saucepan over low heat, combine ½ cup honey, ½ cup apple cider, and 2 cinnamon sticks. Warm for 5–10 minutes until honey is fully dissolved and infused. Allow to cool completely before using* • ***Build the Spirit (Optional):*** *If spiking, add 1 to 2 oz of Bourbon or Spiced Rum directly into the salted glass over fresh, clean ice* • ***Shake the Base:*** *In a cocktail shaker filled with ice, combine the blood orange juice, fresh lemon juice, spiced apple-honey syrup, and orange bitters. Shake vigorously for 15 seconds until thoroughly chilled* • ***Strain & Top:*** *Strain the mixture over the ice into your prepared glass. Top with 2–3 oz of chilled ginger beer for a bubbly top layer* • ***Garnish & Serve:*** *Float the blood orange wheel on top, insert the cinnamon stick like a pumpkin stem, and tuck in a mint or rosemary sprig* • ***Serve immediately*** *alongside a piping-hot bowl of* ***Datil Shrimp & Grits!***

The 'Low Jack' offers a bright, sweet-tart, and smoky-spiced balance. The initial sip delivers the zesty burst of citrus, which cuts straight through the cheese and butter of the grits. Next, the warm, velvety sweetness of honey and apple-cinnamon delights, while the ginger beer finish provides a lively pepper-like effervescence.

RECIPE & PHOTO: EDITOR