

#8

"Oh there's no place like home for the Holidays!" I love that thought, because Denny and I are still fortunate enough to have our family together, at least once, during the holidays. It takes a lot of planning, because as your family grows, they want to share their time with their spouses families also. Things can get a little hectic, so I like to serve soothing food and drink when my family arrives. The recipe I am giving you this week is absolutely great - it fills your home with the most wonderful aroma of apples and spices (better than any potpourri or candles I have used) and it seems to warm the hearts of all those who drink it. This is served in our home every Thanksgiving and Christmas, and everyone who tastes it asks for seconds. And yes, it is EASY!

WASSAIL

3 Quarts of apple cider	2 sticks cinnamon, each 3 inches long
½ teaspoon nutmeg	¼ teaspoon ground cloves
½ cup honey	⅓ cup fresh lemon juice
5 cups pineapple juice	2 teaspoons grated lemon rind

Heat cider and cinnamon sticks in large saucepan. Bring to boil; simmer, covered, 5 minutes. Add remaining ingredients and simmer, uncovered, 5 minutes longer. Pour into a crockpot, or a punch bowl and float spiced oranges on top. Makes 40 punch cup servings.

Spiced oranges: Stud 3 oranges with whole cloves, ½ inch apart; place in baking pan with a little water and bake in 325 oven for 30 minutes.

HELPFUL HINTS: I usually make this in the morning, and keep it in the crockpot, on low, all day.

If you do not have a crockpot to spare, just leave it in the saucepan, over low heat.

The oranges are just for looks - it tastes almost the same without them, but if you are serving several people in a short period of time, they add a very special touch, and look pretty in your punch bowl. Some people like to add rum or brandy to this when entertaining adults.

You can get a taste of Wassail, minus the rum or brandy, at the Independent Office, Saturday, November 21, before or after the Christmas Parade, or on Sunday, November 22, from 1:00 P.M. until 4:00 P.M., as we take part in the Merchants Open House.

Part of our responsibility to our families is to make wonderful memories for them. I hope that this will warm the hearts of your families, and become a tradition in your homes, as it has in ours.