



Kitchen Cheat Sheet: Friendship Tea Mix

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Tips and Time Savers

- Make this sugar free by using sugar free Tang, sugar free iced tea powder, unsweetened Koolaid, and your favorite cup for cup sugar substitute. Be sure to leave the candies out!
- Put the mix in Mason jars or other pretty jars and add a cute label. You can [print this one](#) that I've made if you like.
- If you want the candies to dissolve better just give them a whirl in your blender until they are all chopped up before stirring them in the tea mixture. I like to leave them whole because I like how they look.
- I like to garnish the cups with fresh orange slices.
- You can simmer this in a slow cooker for a hot, holiday punch. Add some whole cloves and stick cinnamon.
- Make this Christmas tea into a cocktail with an ounce or two of bourbon.

Storage

Russian spice tea mix keeps indefinitely in an airtight container or covered glass jars in the pantry. Shake before using.

Variations

- Add a packet of unsweetened lemon Koolade
- Sometimes I add a pinch of cayenne to spice it up
- I like the Red Hots whole in the jar because they're pretty but you can grind them up in the blender so that they mix in well.
- Some people don't add Red Hots at all. :::shrugs:::
- You could try another orange drink mix but Tang has always worked best for me.

FAQs

Can I make a sugar-free version?

Sure, swap in your favorite sugar substitute, sugar free tang, and leave out the red hots. Just know it won't taste exactly like the mix that got passed around in Tupperware at every church social from 1965 onward.

What is Russian tea made of?

This 1960's mixture is a combination of Tang, sugar, instant iced tea powder (with or without lemon), unsweetened lemon Koolaid (optional) cinnamon, cloves, and nutmeg.

Is it really Russian?

Nope. It was made popular in the south during the 1950's and 1960's! It is the perfect warm drink, though!

How long does this mix last?

Months. Maybe years. It's basically immortal. Store it airtight, and you'll probably have Friendship Tea longer than you have patience for your in-laws.

What's the best way to package it for gifts?

Mason jars, zip-top baggies, or whatever container you can slap a bow on. Add an orange slice when serving if you want bonus "wow, you're so thoughtful" points.

Can I use fresh-brewed tea instead of instant?

You could, but then it wouldn't be Friendship Tea — it'd just be you reinventing hot tea. Instant is the whole retro point.

Do I have to add the Red Hots?

Technically no. But if you skip them, don't come crying to me when it tastes like something's missing.

Nice to have

As an Amazon Associate, I earn commission from qualifying purchases.

✨ Keep your Friendship Tea (or whatever else you're hoarding) fresh in these 32oz glass storage jars. The airtight clamp lids lock in flavor, they look classy on your counter, and they're big enough to hold a serious stash. Bonus: nobody has to know it's just Tang and Red Hots in there. [See them here.](#)