

THE DONKEY IN THE MANGER, AKA THE GENTLEMAN'S HOLIDAY MULE

Here's what you need:

- 1 cup water
- 1 cup sugar
- 1/3 cup whole cloves
- oranges
- vodka
- ginger beer**
- club soda
- orange bitters
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Combine water, sugar, and cloves in a small saucepan. Bring to a boil, reduce to simmer for 20 minutes. While that's cooking, use a vegetable peeler to take the outer skin off the orange.

At the end of the 20 minutes, add the orange peel to the saucepan and remove from heat. Allow to steep and cool. Reserve a peel or two for garnish. Strain the solids out of the syrup once cool.

Fill your mule glass with ice. A traditional mule is copper with a handle. I found this ridiculously cute one at Pier One Imports.

To the ice add:

- 1 1/2 ounces vodka
- 1 ounce cooled clove-orange syrup
- 1 ounce fresh orange juice (if not using fresh, reduce to 1/2 ounce)
- 2 ounces ginger beer**
- 3 ounces club soda
- dash of orange bitters

***ginger beer has no alcohol. Make this kid and Designated Driver friendly by simply eliminating the vodka.*

Swirl with a spoon to get everything happily married. Toss a reserved orange peel on top and chug-a-lug from that sweet copper mug!