

Casey at the Bat

KATHY CASEY SETS ANOTHER TREND WITH H₂O COCKTAILS

by Allison Levine



PHOTO COURTESY OF KATHY CASEY FOOD STUDIOS - LIQUID KITCHEN

Kathy Casey, touted as the “first bar-chef” by Dale DeGroff, is known for bringing the kitchen into the bar. One of the first female executive chefs in the U.S., Casey has been a pioneer in many ways, including paving the way for the use of fresh ingredients in cocktails back in the early 1990s [*Remember the way cocktails tasted back then? Thanks for the mixology revolution, Kathy!* —Ed.] Her company Kathy Casey Liquid Kitchen is known for being on the leading edge of trends; her innovative cocktail work can be seen on menus across the globe.

Casey's newest creation, Infused H₂O Cocktails, is yet another opportunity for her to spark an international beverage trend. Noticing the current cocktail movement toward

brown/bitter cocktails, Casey began to think about the opposite end of the spectrum: sophisticated, refreshingly light cocktails. After some experimenting with ratios, temperatures, ingredients and infusion times, Casey developed “infused H₂O mixes,” which work with a variety of spirits to create a refined, hydrating and (not to be overlooked) lower-cal option.

One H₂O infusion method involves the long, slow soaking of fruit, herbs or vegetables in water overnight (no muddling or juicing required). The second is the quick-infusion method, using an iSi whipper charged with N₂O. Fruits, vegetables, herbs and/or spices are added to the whipper with water, then charged with two N₂O (cream) charges and allowed to sit for 10 to 20 minutes; the gas is then let out before unscrewing the lid and straining. The clear infusion can then be carbonated in a carbonating system such as iSi's new Twist 'n Sparkle. Any purified, distilled or bottled water source can be used in combination with ripe fresh fruit; an optional pinch of salt will add flavor. The key is to use full-flavored ingredients, cutting larger fruits and vegetables into small pieces to increase “flavorful surface space” for maximum flavor infusion.

With no sugar added, H₂O infusions can be a simple cocktail solution to implement with the addition of a complex-character vodka such as Purity, but will also mix well with other light spirits such as lighter-style gin, light rum or silver tequila. Kathy's suggested ratio is one ounce of spirit plus three ounces of infused water, served over ice.

This is a new concept, so Kathy's best advice is to keep experimenting and have fun! For video demonstrations on how to make H₂O cocktails, check out **Kathy Casey's Liquid Kitchen** on www.smallscreennetwork.com/liquidkitchen. ■■

Berry Purity H2O

Berry Water H2O -Infused Cocktail

- 1 oz. Purity Vodka
- 3 oz. berry water (recipe follows)
- fresh berry for garnish
- Serve the vodka mixed with the berry water, stirred and served strained or just combined over ice. Garnish with a fresh berry on a pick.

Berry Water

makes about 4 cups or about 10 servings

- 1 to 1½ cups fresh and ripe mixed berries, such as raspberries, strawberries and blackberries
- 1 long piece lemon zest
- 4 cups filtered, distilled or bottled high-quality water
- For a quick intensive infusion method, place the ingredients in an iSi whipper and charge with two N₂O chargers. Let sit for 10–20 minutes, then release the gas with the whipper standing upright. Strain through a fine-mesh strainer. Keep refrigerated.

Created by Kathy Casey Liquid Kitchen.



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