

SOME LIKE IT HOT

A recipe for a pear brandy hot toddy

BY BRIAN MEDFORD

I've never been the kind of person that gets chilly. If there's snow outside, I'll put on a coat, but adding a scarf and gloves makes me feel like I am approaching well-done steak territory. One of my biggest fears is an activated heated car seat.

Since I've moved to the North Coast, things have changed. There is an October chill in the air that's new to me. It's a mixture of the Columbia River, the drizzle, the fog and the wind.

Plus, I'm older and I believe that makes my bones slower to warm up. I tell myself that fine wine has this problem as well.

I once had a household rule that my gas fire logs could not come

on until Oct. 15 and would go off on April 15, whether I was cold or not.

This dismayed my friend, Nancy, who simply says "the frost is on the pumpkin" when she is chilly. I've let go of my arbitrary rule and have embraced generating warmth and comfort when it's needed.

While there are many baking possibilities that are thrillingly warming, a new favorite of mine is a hot toddy. While bourbon is my liquor of choice, I have enjoyed tinkering with brandy for a hot beverage that isn't overly sweet.

I'm not a trained barkeep, but I'm a fan of Oregon-based Clear Creek Distillery's Pear Brandy. This will be a surprise to the Clear Creek folks (they have no idea who I am). Also, they may cringe that their local product is being used in a toddy, but it's what I do.

So when the frost is on the

pumpkin, make a hot drink, sit by a roaring fire and warm yourself — no matter when it's needed.

Pear Brandy Hot Toddy

Serves two. Use the brandy or bourbon of your choice, or even a non-alcoholic cider would be lovely.

- 4 ounces pear brandy
- 2 tablespoons honey
- 2 tablespoons fresh lemon juice, plus two sliced lemon rounds
- Small knob of fresh ginger, peeled and thinly sliced
- Four whole cloves

Bring 2 cups water to a boil in a small saucepan or tea kettle. Remove from heat and divide between two large mugs. Divide brandy, honey, lemon juice, fresh ginger and cloves between mugs. Let stand for 2 to 3 minutes, then stir and serve with the sliced lemon rounds.



Brian Medford

Brian Medford serves hot toddies with a garnish of lemon rounds.

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