

# KAWAII CAFÉ BUBBLE TEA

Classic, Fun, and Refreshing  
Boba Drinks to Make  
at Home



Stacey Kwong + Beyah del Mundo



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Founders of MILK+T







## **INTRODUCTION**

## **THE ORIGIN OF BOBA + BUBBLE TEA**



## **BOBA BASICS**

### **Essential Equipment**

#### **Tea 101**

#### **Boba 101**

### **Simple Homemade Sweeteners**

#### **Types of Bases**

#### **Nondairy Creamer 101**

#### **Lactose-Free Milk**

#### **The Science of Ice**

## FRUIT TEAS

### Homemade Fruit Jams

Strawberry (Tea + Slushie)

Mango (Tea + Slushie)

Pomelo (Tea + Slushie)

Kiwi (Tea + Slushie)

### Homemade Fruit Syrups

Lady Bug (Watermelon + Strawberry Black Tea)

Baby Bug (Watermelon + Strawberry Refresher)

Pineberry (Pineapple + Strawberry Green Tea)

Equality (Mango + Strawberry Green Tea)

Area 51 (Cucumber + Kiwi Green Tea)

UnBEElievable (Wildflower Honey Green Tea)





## **MILK TEAS**

**Classic (Black Milk Tea)**  
**Best Friend (Green Milk Tea)**  
**Prepackaged Thai Tea**  
**MILK+T Thai Tea**  
**Homemade Thai Tea**



## **SPECIALTY DRINKS**

**The Piglet (Strawberry Coconut Milk)**  
**Humanity First (Almond Butter Milk Tea)**  
**Mint Tea Lemon Mojito (Nonalcoholic)**  
**Know Your Roots (Taro + Ube Almond Milk)**  
**The Evelyn (Strawberry Milk Tea)**

## **SIP 'N' DIPS**

**Black Tea à la Mode**

**Top Shelf**

**Pink Panda**

**Guilt Trip**

**Electric Feel**

**The Night Shift**

## **TOPPINGS**

**Basil Seeds**

**Chia Seeds**

**Flavored Jellies**

**Homemade Almond Jelly**

**Homemade Egg Pudding**

**INDEX**

**ACKNOWLEDGMENTS**

**ABOUT THE AUTHORS**



## INTRODUCTION

Welcome to the underdog's guide to all things bubble tea—written by yours truly, Stacey and Beyah. While many parts of this cookbook are written from Stacey's perspective, Beyah has chimed in here and there!

But first, we should disclose a few things: We've never claimed to be experts in the industry. We didn't tour the mountains of Taiwan before opening our shop in Los Angeles, or get any special training from tea masters abroad. We don't have cowriters, we're not a franchise, and we don't have any VC or millionaires backing us. We're just two average Asian American women from Los Angeles who wanted to open a bubble tea business.

While many of the topics and recipes in this book have traditional elements of bubble tea and boba, our company, MILK+T (which started out as the world's first self-serve boba truck), was never meant to be your traditional boba shop. This book is about how we did things the “MILK+T way.”

We hope that you not only enjoy making all the delicious recipes in this book (perhaps even being motivated to experiment with your own recipes) but also maybe get inspired to pursue your own entrepreneurial dreams, no matter what they are.







## THE ORIGIN OF BOBA + BUBBLE TEA

Referred to as both “bubble tea” and “boba,” depending on where you live, this popular drink, which comes in milk and non-milk varieties, is also known as “pearl tea,” “milk tea,” and “tapioca tea,” among other names. (Throughout this book, we interchangeably use “bubble tea” and “boba.”) Bubble tea/ boba was invented in Taiwan in the 1980s. There are a few origin stories, but the one we’ve seen circulating the most is that it was created when a staff member of Taiwan’s original milk tea shop, Chun Shui Tang, combined her milk tea with tapioca balls.

It wasn’t until the 1990s that bubble tea was introduced to the United States. Both Beyah and I were born in the early ’90s, so to be born in the decade of boba, it’s truly been an honor. I grew up in the San Gabriel Valley (aka the SGV), and I remember when the first Lollicup (a popular Taiwanese American chain of boba stores started in 2000) opened in Arcadia, California, around 2001. Eventually, they opened another location within walking distance of my school, so grabbing bubble tea was an after-school must! If it wasn’t boba, then it was shaved ice, and it was like a ritual. Meeting at a café with friends was the go-to activity. But it wasn’t the fancy-schmancy drinks that you see nowadays. This was just powdered milk tea, sometimes even served in Styrofoam cups. You wouldn’t believe how much it cost—just a dollar! And it was refreshingly delicious on a hot summer day.

Later, other boba chains, most originating from Taiwan, followed suit and opened in the SGV. Ten Ren, Quickly, Tea Station, and Tapioca Express were all on the same street—and within walking distance from my house. Las Tunas Drive, which some have dubbed the “Boba Capital,” was also a twenty-minute walk away.

That was over twenty years ago, and the boba industry has shown no signs of slowing down, expanding even beyond larger urban areas. More independent stores have opened, too, each with its own unique twist on the



refreshing drink. Some shops even make their own boba in-house now! The industry has evolved, and we feel incredibly lucky to be a part of it.



# BUBBLE TEA BASICS



## ESSENTIAL EQUIPMENT

Here's the equipment we recommend you have for making the recipes. You may already have most of these items in your kitchen!

**Blender:** For slushies, smoothies, and pulsing teas, you'll need a blender to get some good drinks.





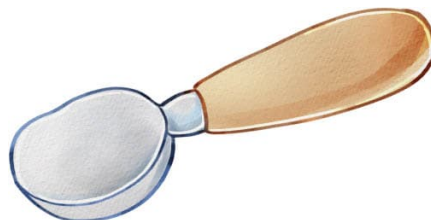
**Cheesecloth or fine-mesh strainer:** When straining loose-leaf tea, these are two of the best tools to have on hand.

**Cutting board:** You need one of these to cut up all the lovely real fruit used throughout the recipes.

**Colander:** This is used to strain the boba.



**Ice cream scoop:** A good ice cream scoop is important! Especially if you want to achieve that real **Sip 'N' Dip** look.



**Induction burner and induction-ready saucepan (optional):** Induction is great for an evenspreading heat, ensuring that everything is cooked to perfection.

**Juicer:** This is used to juice fruits and make syrups ([here](#)).



**Knife:** Make sure your knife is nicely sharpened before carefully diving into that pineapple.

**Measuring cups and spoons:** Common forms of measurement are used throughout the book.

**Milk-tea or cocktail shaker (500 ML):** Shakers are a necessity when making bubble tea.



**Muddler:** No blender for fruits? No problem. Use a muddler to make amazing jams and obtain toned arms.

**Saucepans:** Small- and medium-size saucepans are most commonly needed for the recipes in this book.

**Temperature gun or thermometer:** This is used to measure the water temperature to properly brew tea.

## ◀ TEA 101

Before we get to the chewy balls, let's start with the most important aspect (at least in our opinion) of the drink—the tea! There are so many types of

tea, and we can go on and on about them, but since this is a book about MILK+T, we'll only be covering the type of tea we use at our shops.

It wasn't until we opened our first store in Los Angeles that we had the opportunity to travel overseas and learn about the process of tea—from picking the leaves to production. In 2017, we made a trip to Taipei, Taiwan, and toured the mountains of the Pinglin District.



We sat down and had dinner with a tea master, who explained the difference between green tea, black tea, and oolong, and he later showed us how to dry and process green tea. His little house at the very top of a hill was filled with the light aroma of dried tea leaves. Stray dogs roamed his property and

sat outside while they watched us eat. There was a language barrier, but the conversation flowed effortlessly thanks to our day guide. We left more appreciative than ever of the delicate process that our tea goes through before it gets to our shops.

### **FUN FACT**

Green and black tea come from the same plant—*Camellia sinensis*. Different parts of the plant and different processing methods determine the type of tea it will become.



## **HOW TO BREW GREEN TEA**

Let's discuss jasmine green tea—and yes, we understand that there are tons of different types of jasmine, too, but for simplicity's sake, let's just lump all jasmine green tea into one category. Light, floral, beneficial for your health, and easy on the caffeine, jasmine green tea is many people's choice tea. While it's quite popular among households, few people tend to know how to properly brew the tea. Tea should never have an overly bitter taste. That bitter taste is attributed to something called “tannins,” and the tannins are released when tea is brewed. Jasmine green tea is like a sensitive . . . well . . . flower.

Its ideal brewing temperature is 175°F (80°C). Too hot, and you'll risk burning the tea. When tea is burned, it tastes bitter. (Some people actually enjoy bitter tea, and if that's you, more power to you!) The ideal steeping period for jasmine green tea is around two to four minutes. If you enjoy a more bitter tea, steep it longer; if you only want a hint of jasmine, steep it for a shorter amount of time.



While jasmine green tea goes great with milk, it's also the choice tea for creating fruity concoctions.

## MAKES

about 2 cups (475 ml) tea

- 2 cups (475 ml) purified water
- 2 teaspoons your favorite brand loose-leaf jasmine green tea

1 In a small saucepan, bring the water temperature up to 175°F (80°C).

2 Remove the pan from the stove and add the tea leaves.

3 Stir for 30 seconds to let the tea and water get to know each other.

4 Cover the pan and steep for 2 to 4 minutes.

5 Strain the tea using a cheesecloth or a fine-mesh strainer. It will keep in a sealed container in the refrigerator for up to 2 days

## HOW TO BREW BLACK TEA

Ahh, black tea. If you ever ordered a “classic milk tea” from any tea shop, you most likely had black tea. It's one of the most common teas to be combined with milk, and rightfully so! Its smooth and creamy touch leaves quite an impression. So, while there are many types of black tea, the one we use is called Assam black tea. Assam tea comes from the state of Assam in the northeastern part of India. Don't let the description scare you; it's very accessible! While we import ours from Taiwan, you can easily find bags at your local grocery store or even online.

The steeping temperature for black tea, 200°F (95°C), is much higher than green tea's 175°F (80°C). This is because black tea's processing methods allow the tea to brew at a higher temperature to become this rugged, smoky, bold yet beautiful blend—unlike its sensitive jasmine counterpart.

## MAKES

about 2 cups (475 ml) tea

- 2 cups (475 ml) purified water
- 2 teaspoons your favorite brand loose-leaf black tea

1 In a small saucepan, bring the water temperature up to 200°F (95°C).

2 Remove the pan from the stove and add the tea leaves.

3 Stir for 30 seconds to let the tea and water get to know each other.

4 Cover the pot and steep for 2 to 4 minutes.

5 Strain the tea using a cheesecloth or a fine-mesh strainer. It will keep in a sealed container in the refrigerator for up to 2 days.

### **TIP**

*Make sure the tea is completely cooled down before attempting to make any iced drinks with it. Adding ice to freshly brewed tea will water it down, and it will no longer be enjoyable!*

## **BOBA 101**

All right, how many of you just looked at the table of contents and skipped directly to this page? Ah, we can't blame you guys. After all, this book is called Boba, and you want to learn how to make boba! You have every right to be here. But before we begin, let's discuss some terminology:

**BOBA** are those delectably sweet and chewy tapioca balls.

**PEARLS/TAPIOCA** are other names for boba.

**BUBBLE TEA** is the beverage (aka delivery method) for those chewy tapioca balls.

It's true that each region has its own preferred way of naming the drink. The majority of California likes to say "boba," while other states in the United States and Canada like the term "bubble tea." But the term "bubble" has been mistakenly found to be synonymous with "boba," when in fact the "bubbles" refer to the bubbles inside the tea after the drink has been shaken.

But what exactly is “boba”? Well, it’s simply tapioca starch extracted from the cassava root. Add a bit of brown sugar or maple flavoring, along with a few other ingredients, and you get the delectable chewy balls that everyone has come to love. And great news, it’s gluten-free!

So, the next time you go into a shop, don’t just say, “I want two bobas.” The barista will most likely look at you with a puzzled face and/or charge you for a regular milk tea—thinking that you want the most popular in-store item.



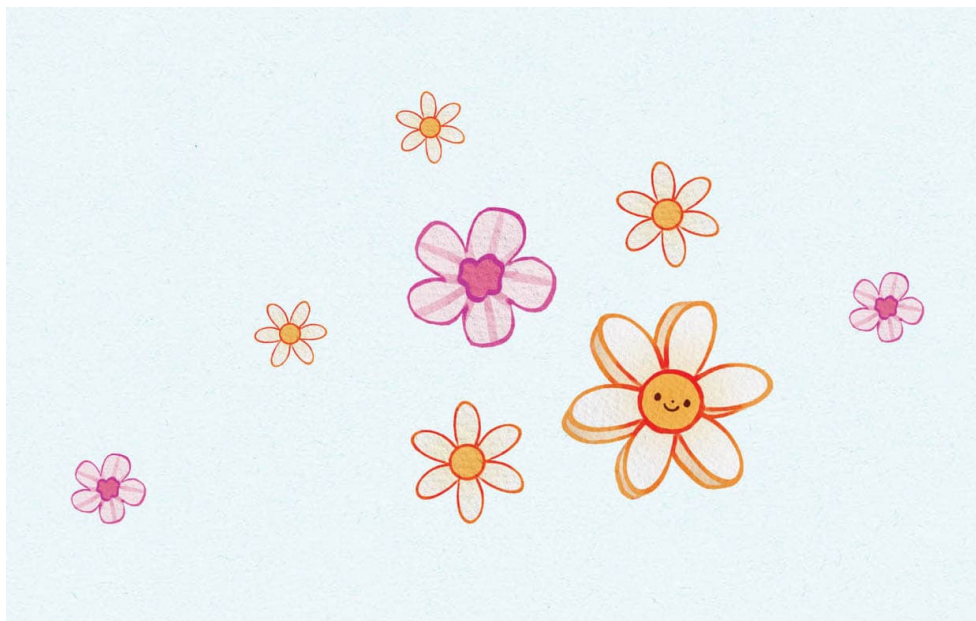
## 5-MINUTE BOBA

The boba connoisseurs reading this must be scratching their heads wondering why on earth we’re talking about 5-minute boba. You have to remember that not everybody reading this book is as well versed in boba as you guys are. Many people will have no idea what boba is made out of,

what it looks like in its raw form, good quality versus bad quality, etc. Well, we're here to teach you!

Almost anyone who has gone looking for boba at an Asian grocery store (including us) has come across the good ol' bag of boba, with the words "ready in 5 minutes" on it. Upon opening the package, you'll find rubbery-like balls that could probably bruise someone if thrown fast enough. They are hard, bouncy, gray, powdery, and made of a plethora of ingredients that you and I can't pronounce. And once cooked, the balls are grainy looking, instead of smooth like they should be. "But . . . it cooks in 5 minutes." Mmm, actually, more like 15 minutes.

We won't lie. We've experimented with 5-minute boba, and every time we have, it hasn't turned out too well. There's a reason regular **grade A boba** takes up to 2 hours to cook. Making boba is a delicate process, and when sped up, the results aren't great. Then, you may be asking, "Why do these 5-minute boba bags have thousands of four- and five-star ratings on popular online shopping outlets?" The answer is simple: it's because they're easily accessible, ship to your door, and taste mediocre in the short term. But let's be real. You bought this book to learn about how to cook real boba. So, move aside, 5-minute boba. The real players are coming to town!







## ◁ GRADE A BOBA

Have you ever cooked something so stubborn, so fickle . . . the moment you take your eyes off it, it overflows all over your kitchen counter like a relentless, angry volcano? Well, that's boba for you. Depending on which brand of boba you buy, cooking and steeping times will vary, but the cooking process is similar for these high-quality balls. Some popular shops have dubbed it "grade A balls." But the "grade A" factor all has the same common denominator: tapioca starch.

Unfortunately, most local supermarkets don't sell these grade A balls, so you have to turn to specialty wholesale stores, the internet, or your friendly neighborhood boba shop! If you ask nicely enough, they might be willing to sell you a bag of theirs.

When raw and taken out of their airtight bag, boba balls will crumble in your hand with the slightest amount of pressure. We said before that boba was delicate, and it's true. Since it's mainly made of tapioca starch, it'll do what tapioca starch does when pinched—crumble.

But that's how you know your boba is of the highest quality. Most bags come in wholesale format—5 to 6 pounds (2.25 to 2.75 kg). But don't worry! As long as you put the remaining balls into an airtight container you'll be okay for a couple weeks. And don't place it inside the fridge! Just leave it at room temperature away from direct sunlight.

Here are some things that may happen when cooking this type of boba: it may overflow, stick to the bottom of the pot, or disintegrate because the water isn't hot enough. Whatever the result, give yourself a pat on the back! While cooking it, you may notice the water turning from clear to brown, and eventually to black. This is perfectly normal! Goopy, thick, and starchy, the water turns into this molten lava-like substance. We have burned ourselves numerous times on that lava-like substance, and it wasn't fun.

## MAKES

1½ cups (216 g)

- 5 cups (1.2 L) water
- 1 cup (152 g) raw boba
- ½ cup (115 g) medium or dark brown sugar
- 1 tablespoon wildflower honey
- 1 tablespoon purified water

1 Bring the water to a rolling boil over high heat in a medium saucepan with a lid. It must be a rolling boil; any lower temperature will result in the boba becoming goopy and sticking together.

- 2 Carefully add the boba to the saucepan. Quickly stir for 15 seconds, making sure no balls are sticking to each other, then reduce the heat to medium.
- 3 Bring the water back up to a low simmer and cover the pot halfway. Set a timer for 30 to 40 minutes (the amount of time depends on the brand). Stir the boba every 5 to 10 minutes to ensure they don't stick together and/or overflow.
- 4 After the 30 to 40 minutes, take the pan off the heat and stir for another 15 seconds. Put the lid on tightly and set the timer for 35 minutes. Now the boba will steep and rest, allowing it to fully cook.
- 5 Strain the boba in a colander and rinse with lukewarm water to stop any further cooking.
- 6 Transfer the boba to a medium bowl and add the brown sugar, honey, and purified water. Mix together. Let the boba soak in the sugar bath for another 15 minutes before serving. The longer it sits in the sugar bath, the sweeter your boba will be!
- 7 Add it to your favorite drink. Make sure to consume the boba within 6 hours! Any longer and the balls will start to become hard.

#### **TIP**

*Make sure to clean everything right after you finish cooking. Dried boba goop is a pain to scrape off things. Trust us.*

## **FRESH BOBA**

From Taiwan's Xing Fu Tang to a few shops in the United States, such as One Zo and Tea Maru, fresh, handmade boba has been on the rise recently. This prompted us to do our own research, and although we had a blast experimenting with different recipes, we ultimately decided that it was too labor-intensive for our self-serve concept. That being said, the recipe we did settle on is absolutely amazing, and we couldn't wait to share it with you guys! It produces an almost-translucent ball of boba, unlike the packaged

ones that are black. It's so much softer after cooking and absorbs sweetness with ease. Give this recipe a try, and you may never visit another boba shop again!

## MAKES

1 cup (144 g)

### DOUGH

- ¼ cup (60 ml) purified water
- ¼ cup (60 g) dark brown sugar
- ¾ cup (90 g) sifted tapioca flour, divided, plus more for your workspace and dusting

### FOR COOKING

- 5 cups (1.2 L) water
- ¾ cup (114 g) raw handmade boba
- ½ cup (115 g) medium or dark brown sugar
- 1 tablespoon wildflower honey
- 1 tablespoon purified water

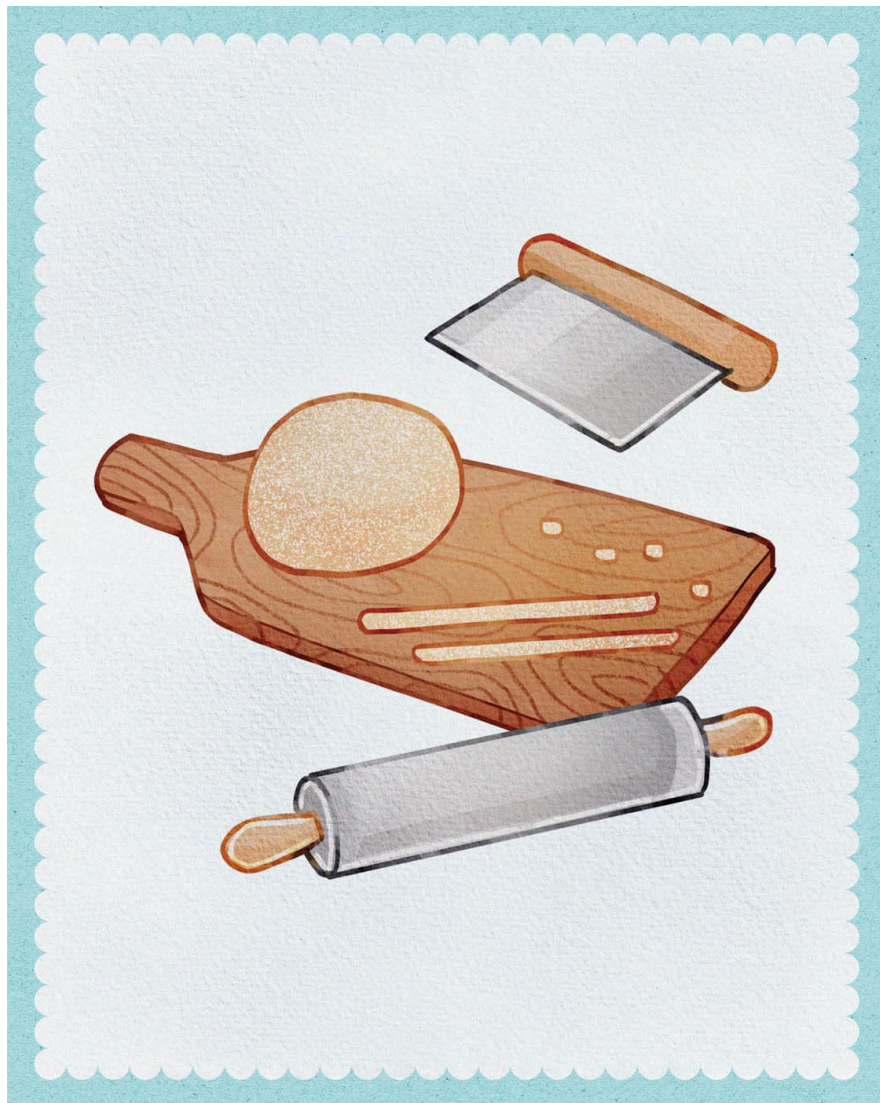
**1 To make the dough:** Add the ¼ cup (60 ml) of water and dark brown sugar to a medium saucepan. Heat the contents over medium heat and stir constantly until the brown sugar is dissolved, about 1 minute. Turn off the heat.

**2** Add 1 tablespoon (7 g) of the sifted tapioca flour and stir. Once everything is nicely dissolved (no lumps!), turn on the heat to medium. After the mixture starts to thicken, lightly stir, turn off the heat, and quickly remove the saucepan from the burner.

**3** Pour the remaining tapioca starch (83 g) into the saucepan. It will look like a lot, but don't worry; just keep mixing! Once the mixture forms into a dough, empty the saucepan onto a cutting board sprinkled with tapioca starch. Start kneading it with your hands—get down and dirty with the mixture. Keep kneading until you get a soft and supple beige dough. Add more tapioca flour to the cutting board, if needed, to prevent the dough from sticking.



- 4 If you don't want to cook all of the boba at once, cut the dough in half and wrap one half in plastic wrap to keep the moisture inside. It will keep for a couple of days. Do NOT refrigerate. Grab a 1-inch-square (2.5 cm) chunk of the remaining dough and roll it on the board until you get a noodle-like line of dough that is about ½ inch (13 mm) in diameter.
- 5 With a dough cutter or knife, start cutting ¼-inch (6 mm) pieces from the dough. Take the small pieces and use the palm of your hands to form them into balls. Repeat with the rest of the dough. Put the finished boba balls in a bowl, and then dust them with tapioca flour so they don't stick together.



- 6 **To cook the boba:** Bring the water to a rolling boil over high heat in a medium saucepan with a lid. It must be a rolling boil. Any lower temperature will result in the boba becoming goopy and sticking together.
- 7 Carefully add the boba to the saucepan. Quickly stir for 15 seconds, making sure no balls are sticking to each other, then reduce the heat to medium.
- 8 Bring the water back up to a low simmer and cover the pot halfway. Set a timer for 20 minutes. Stir the boba every 5 to 10 minutes to ensure they don't stick together and/or overflow. After the timer goes off, take the pot off the heat and stir for another 15 seconds.
- 9 Put the lid on tightly and set the timer for 20 more minutes. Now the boba will steep and rest, allowing it to fully cook.
- 10 Strain the boba in a colander but do not rinse it. We like the goop on fresh boba.
- 11 Transfer the boba to a medium bowl and add the brown sugar, honey, and purified water. Mix together. Let the boba soak in the sugar bath for another 15 minutes before serving. The longer it sits in the sugar bath, the sweeter your boba will be!
- 12 Add it to your favorite drink. Fresh boba only has a shelf life of about 6 hours. Any longer than that, and it'll get hard and be unpleasant to consume.



## ◁ SIMPLE HOMEMADE SWEETENERS

“Stacey, promise me you will only use high-quality ingredients. That’s very important, okay?” said my mom.

“Yes, Mom, I promise.”

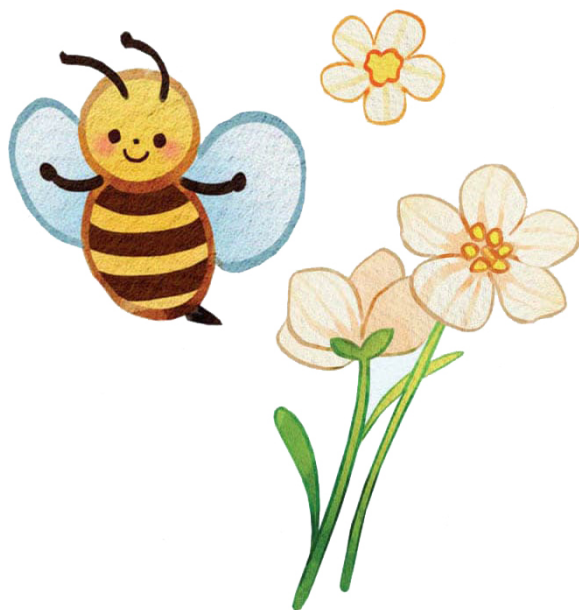
“Really. It’s very important,” she urged.

When most people visit bubble tea shops, they don’t know that different shops use different types of sweeteners. Some shops choose sugar, some

choose fructose, and some choose high-fructose corn syrup or other sweeteners. Even though there is little to no scientific backing to the claims made against high-fructose corn syrup, many people agree that high-fructose corn syrup has a negative connotation associated with it, which is the main reason we chose to avoid it. Instead, we went with making our own syrups using cane sugar. While it does help us in terms of branding, we also did it to make our moms proud.

Our moms technically didn't have a legal say in the way we ran our business, but oh, they made sure their voices were heard. From menu ideas, to flavor ideas, they managed to offer their strongly worded opinions—and we listened . . . sort of. But what my mom said that day really stuck with me, probably more than she knows. So, Mom, thank you for shaping MILK+T into what it is today. I think Dad would be proud.

The next few recipes will show you how to make your own sweeteners at home. And after learning how easy it is, you'll probably never want to buy processed syrups ever again!



## SIMPLE SYRUP

Simple syrup is exactly what it says it is—simple! It is normally made from cane sugar, and many shops, including coffee shops, offer this syrup as a sweetener. Cane sugar comes naturally from the sugarcane plant and makes up 80 percent of all table sugar you see at homes and in restaurants.

Simple syrup is so easy and cheap to make, we almost always laugh when we see it for sale at grocery stores. Just make your own!

**Disclaimer:** Despite the fact that cane sugar comes naturally from plants, the debate on whether or not it's vegan is unresolved for some people, including us. Part of the refining process that many brands of cane sugar go through involves the use of bone char. Filtering through bone char helps the sugar achieve its pure “white” color, but it doesn't mean there are any animal products inside the sugar. It simply means its refining process isn't 100 percent animal-free.

## MAKES

1½ cups (360 ml)

- 1 cup (240 ml) purified water
- 1 cup (200 g) cane sugar

- 1 Bring the water to a boil over high heat in a small saucepan.
- 2 Stir in the cane sugar, making sure all the sugar granules are dissolved.
- 3 Bring the mixture back up to a boil.
- 4 Remove from the heat and let cool.
- 5 Store in a sealed container in the refrigerator for up to 4 weeks.

## BROWN SUGAR SYRUP

Add molasses to cane sugar and you get brown sugar. The more molasses that is added while the sugar is in its processing stage, the darker the sugar becomes. Brown sugar syrup is just as simple as Simple Syrup (opposite)! It's what you'll commonly find as the sweetener for most milk teas, and the taste from the added molasses just gives the drink this extra oomph. Instead



of a light sweetener, what you get with brown sugar is this rich, caramel-like taste.

Brown sugar is not only great for drink-making, but it's also great for cooking! A bag of brown sugar in your home is a much-needed staple.

## MAKES

1½ cups (360 ml)

- 1 cup (240 ml) purified water
- 1 cup (225 g) packed medium brown sugar

- 1 Bring the water to a boil over high heat in a small saucepan.
- 2 Stir in the brown sugar, making sure all the sugar granules are dissolved.
- 3 Bring the mixture back up to a boil.
- 4 Remove from the heat and let cool.
- 5 Store in a sealed container in the refrigerator for up to 4 weeks.

### TIP

*For a thicker, denser syrup, change the 1:1 ratio by adding more brown sugar.*



## ◁ TYPES OF BASES

At MILK+T, as we're sure is the case with many other beverage shops, different bases create different drinks. The base of any drink is the main ingredient that helps tie everything together to create a singular, beautifully concocted beverage.

At our shops, we use an array of bases, including green tea, black tea, lactose-free milk, almond milk, coconut milk, and even water! Your base not only determines the flavor profile of your drink, but it can also determine the amount of caffeine, creaminess, or thirst-quenching factor.

From the **Pink Panda**, which uses a base of lactose-free milk, to the **Baby Bug**, which uses a base of water, choosing the right base for each drink was a lesson in itself.



## NONDAIRY CREAMER 101

While there are many types of milk, nondairy creamer is the go-to for 90 percent of the world's boba shops. Okay, we'll admit that that percentage is purely speculation, but if you walk into a franchise or any small mom-and-pop shop, you may notice a pyramid of coffee creamers stacked in the back room.

But what exactly is nondairy creamer? It's basically a coffee or tea "whitener" that people use to substitute milk or cream. A powder alone will not produce the fatty feel of real cream or milk, so to replicate it, a lot of nondairy creamers often contain hydrogenated vegetable oils and solidified corn syrup.

So, a common question many well-versed bubble tea customers ask nowadays is: Why do traditional shops make nondairy creamer their number-one choice? One popular reason is that it's simply a lot cheaper than fresh milk. Not only is it cheaper, but it also has a much longer shelf life and doesn't take up room inside a refrigerator. It's also lactose-free, which is a huge plus since many Asians are lactose intolerant. But the main

reason that many tea shops will give is that it's simply the traditional method. It stems from Taiwan's milk-free culture.

Many bubble tea stands today in Taiwan offer fresh milk as well. But back then, nondairy creamer was their answer to providing a creamy drink without actually using cream.

Now, we're not here to judge shops on what they use, or talk down to anyone who chooses to drink a milk tea with creamer. Sometimes, we like to enjoy a nice, refreshing milk tea with creamer too! It's all dependent on one's preference. See the recipe opposite to make a traditional milk tea with nondairy creamer.

## MAKES

one 16-ounce (475 ml) drink

- 2 to 4 tablespoons fructose or your choice of sweetener
- 6 tablespoons nondairy creamer
- $\frac{3}{4}$  cup (180 ml) hot brewed green or black tea
- $2\frac{1}{4}$  cups (545 g) ice (cubed ice works best)
- Favorite toppings (optional)

1 To a shaker, add your desired amount of sweetener:

- 4 tablespoons for “normal” sweetness
- 3 tablespoons for 75 percent sweetness
- 2 tablespoons for 50 percent sweetness

2 Add the nondairy creamer to the shaker, followed by the tea.

3 Quickly stir with a spoon until all ingredients are dissolved.

4 **Do this next step quickly:** Add the ice, cap the shaker, and shake vigorously right away. Since the tea is hot, if you take your time with this step, you will end up with a watered-down beverage that no one will want to drink.

5 Add the toppings (if using) to your serving glass.

6 Pour the tea into the glass.





## LACTOSE-FREE MILK

When choosing the type of milk to use for MILK+T, we knew we couldn't just blend in with the rest. Creamer was too heavy and caloric, half-and-half made all our friends gassy by the time they got home, and evaporated milk was just a no for us. None of the traditional ingredients felt . . . good. It was time to explore other options. That's when we saw lactose-free milk at a local grocery store and decided to try it out.

To be honest, Beyah was not a fan. She loved the creamer version of tea ([here](#)) that we had originally made.

“It’s good, but the other one with creamer tastes better,” she said, swirling the sample around in her cup.

“I know,” I responded. “But there’s something about this that just makes you feel better. You feel lighter and not as weighed down.”

“That’s true,” she agreed. “The first sample with creamer made me feel like I had just eaten a meal.”

After sampling our milk teas with other friends, we all agreed that lactose-free whole milk was the way to go. After all, no other shop at the time was using lactose-free milk, so we figured, not only did it make us feel better after drinking it, but it also made us stand out!

We’ve admitted before that MILK+T is simply not for everyone, and our online reviews will back that up. “It’s watered down.” “The milk tea was underwhelming.” “I’ve had better milk tea elsewhere.” These and similar reviews flood our pages, but we’ve stood our ground. Eventually, we learned that the route we chose wasn’t going to be an easy one— and we’re 100 percent okay with that.

## THE SCIENCE OF ICE

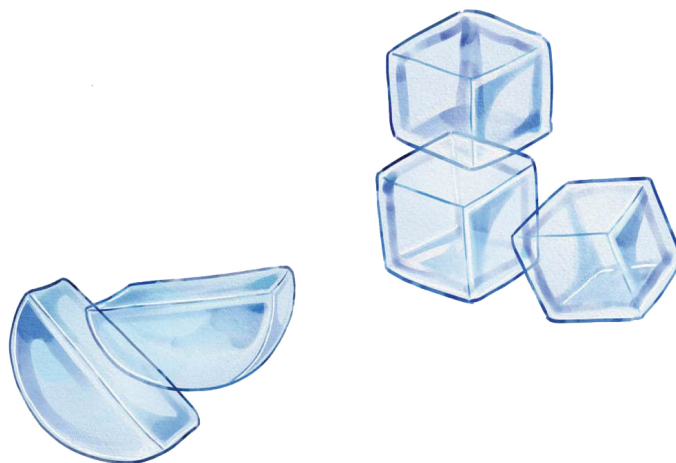
Let’s talk about ice. People have no idea that ice is a science. From crushed and crescent to half-cubed and cubed, different types of ice have different purposes when it comes to making the perfect drink.

For those of you who are of legal drinking age, you might have gone into a bar and ordered liquor “on the rocks.” You’ll notice that some bars nestle a single gigantic ice cube in your shot of whiskey. The reason for this? It melts a lot more slowly than smaller ice cubes, allowing you to enjoy your whiskey for a prolonged period of time.

The exact opposite of this happens to crushed ice. Since the ice pieces are much smaller, crushed ice tends to melt faster and really has no place in most boba drinks. People don't enjoy watered-down milk tea. However, there are some exceptions. With cà phê đá, aka Vietnamese iced coffee, crushed ice is the go-to, to help quickly dilute the concentrated coffee.

So, what are our favorite ice cubes? Crescent and full cubes. We might sound lame, nerding out about ice, but it's so important! We used half cubes for a few months, but the shape of the ice ended up being problematic. When dispensed, the tea would hit the ice at a certain angle, resulting in it shooting out and soaking our employees. When we finally had enough money saved up, we switched ice machines and no longer had that hilarious problem.

You might be wondering what the point of all this is, and it is this: use the right type of ice! Ice that is too small may water down your drink; ice that is too large will make it difficult for you to mix your drink properly. You'll thank us later!



**FRUIT**



**TEAS**







## ◁ **HOMEMADE FRUIT JAMS**

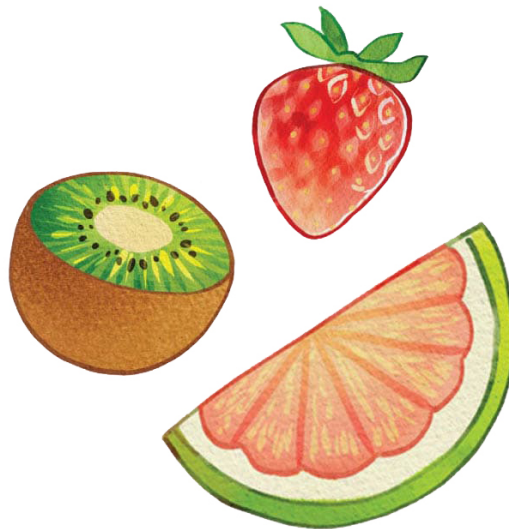
Before we started our business, we knew we had to come up with recipes for our drinks. We had simple syrup and brown sugar syrup down in the books, but what about fruit syrups? First, we tried the traditional methods that most bubble tea shops use but ultimately decided not to go that route. We had to stand out. We wanted this business to be unique, and the recipes couldn't fall short.

We did quite a lot of testing in the months leading up to our first pop-up. We bought processed fruit syrups and tested out different brands, but

nothing made us happy.

One of our first R&D projects involved going to the grocery store and buying every flavor of jam they had on the shelves. We discovered that strawberry jam with green tea was heavenly, but there was a small problem: these jams were ridiculously expensive, and while they tasted great, there was no way it would make financial sense to use them. We finally thought, Why not make our own jams?

So, in this section, you'll find recipes and instructions for some of our early methods of drink sweetening—jams!



## STRAWBERRY JAM

Upon deciding to make our own jams from scratch, strawberries were one of the first fruits to instantly pop into our minds. After all, who doesn't love strawberries? Funny fact: Back when we used to restock our supplies at grocery stores, we would look insane buying 48 pounds (22 kg) of strawberries. Imagine two short Asian girls who look no older than eighteen walking into Ralphs supermarket and just completely depleting their strawberry stock, among other fruits. It never failed to start a fun conversation with the cashier!

## MAKES

about 2 cups (580 g)

- 10 plump strawberries
- Cane sugar (amount varies)

1 Hull the strawberries.

2 Add the strawberries to a blender and blend until smooth.

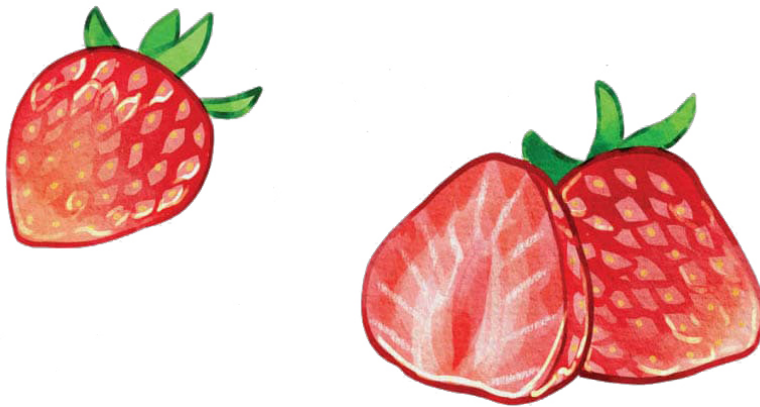
3 Add equal parts of the sugar.

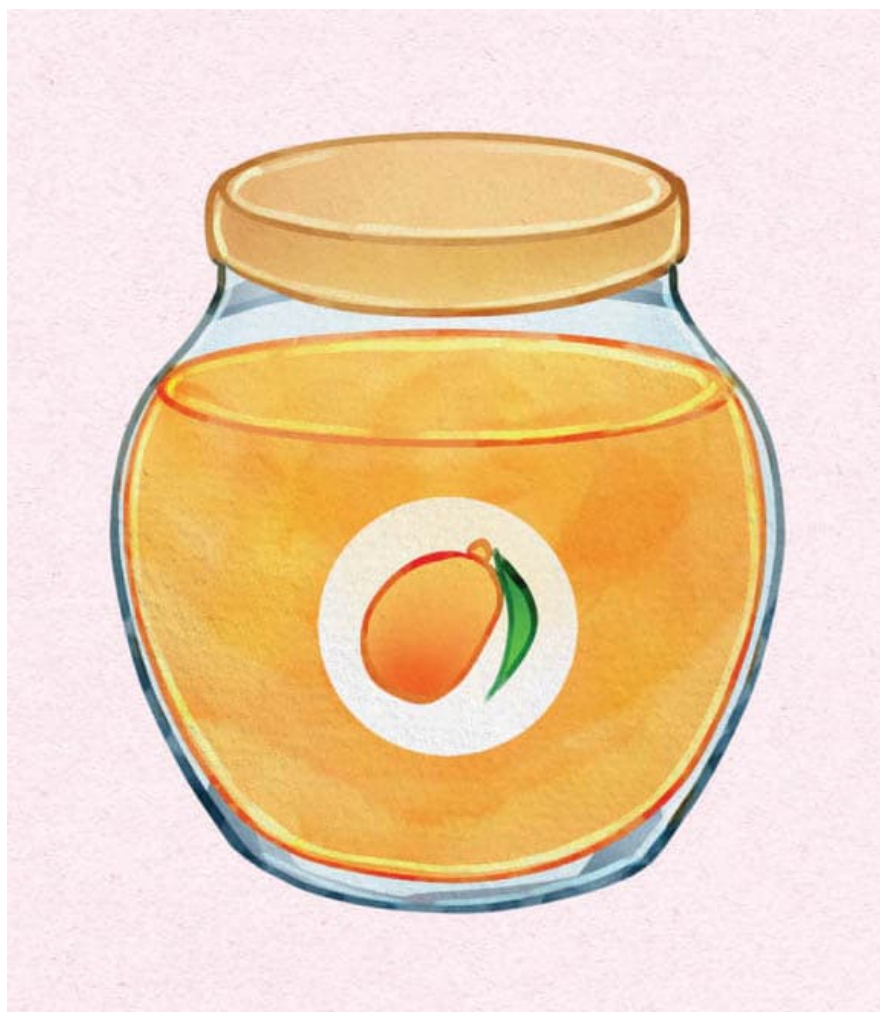
4 Transfer the contents to a medium saucepan and boil for 5 minutes over medium heat. Remove from the heat and let cool.

5 Store in a sealed container in the refrigerator for up to 1 week.

### TIP

*For chunkier jams, blend the fruits less!*





## ◁ MANGO JAM

Prior to starting MILK+T, we would have never known that there were so many different types of mangoes. Alphonso, Ataulfo, Francis, Keitt, Haden—the list goes on and on. We experimented with Manila mangoes and found out they were too soft for the juicer. We even tried frozen mangoes, which turned into a brown, goopy mush. Finally, we landed on the Kent/Keitt mangoes—you know, the pretty-looking green-and-red plump ones. Each mango has its own unique flavor profile, so you can use whichever type you like best. Just keep in mind that each season, the mangoes will have a different taste. Out-of-season mangoes will be much sourer and tarter, but still delicious!



## **MAKES**

about 2 cups (580 g)

- 2 mangoes (your favorite type)
- Cane sugar (amount varies)

- 1 Peel the mangoes and remove the pit.
- 2 Cut the mango flesh into small pieces to lessen the fibrousness.
- 3 Add the flesh to a blender and blend until smooth.
- 4 Add equal parts of the sugar.
- 5 Transfer the contents to a medium saucepan and boil for 5 minutes over medium heat. Remove from the heat and let cool.
- 6 Store in a sealed container in the refrigerator for up to 1 week.

## **POMELO JAM**

Pomelo or grapefruit? What is the difference, or are they the same? We had to find out the answer to those questions the hard way. No, they are not the same fruit. Yes, they are both citrus, but other than that, there is nothing else tying the two fruits together. Pomelos boast a sweet, slightly sour taste, while grapefruits, especially Ruby Reds, send out much more bitter notes upon touching your tongue. Not knowing this, we ended up buying ten Ruby Red grapefruits, and after making more than a gallon (4.6 kg) of jam, I gave it a taste test. The taste was something I couldn't describe better than face-puckering bitterness. After realizing our mistake, we never bought Ruby Red grapefruits ever again!

## **MAKES**

about 2 cups (580 g)

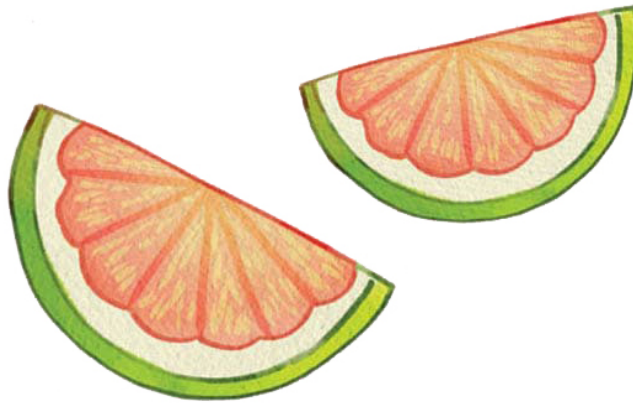
- 1 pomelo (Make sure it's a pomelo! Ruby Red grapefruits are extremely bitter.)
- Cane sugar (amount varies)

- 1 Peel the pomelo.

- 2 Separate the pomelo flesh from the membrane.
- 3 Add the flesh to a blender and blend until smooth.
- 4 Add equal parts of the sugar.
- 5 Transfer the contents to a medium saucepan and boil for 5 minutes over medium heat. Remove from the heat and let cool.
- 6 Store in a sealed container in the refrigerator for up to 1 week.

### **TIP**

*Save the pomelo peel! It makes a great natural deodorizer for your cupboards and refrigerator, or you can even dry and candy it for extra health benefits.*



## **KIWI JAM**

Kiwi wasn't really a fruit or flavor we had in mind for our drinks, but when we started to make jams, we saw that it was in season and fairly inexpensive, so we thought, Why not? People ended up really enjoying the flavor, so we added it permanently to our menu! Since there is no pit or giant seed in the middle of the fruit, it's one of the fruits that produces the least amount of "waste."

### **MAKES**

about 2 cups (580 g)

- 4 ripe kiwis
- Cane sugar (amount varies)

1 Peel the kiwis.

2 Add the kiwis to a blender and blend until smooth.

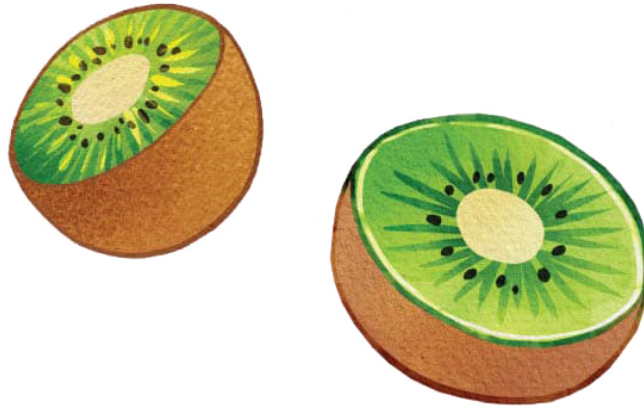
3 Add equal parts of the sugar.

4 Transfer the contents to a medium saucepan and boil for 5 minutes over medium heat. Remove from the heat and let cool.

5 Store in a sealed container in the refrigerator for up to 1 week.

### **TIP**

*If white peaches are in season, grab some! They make a delicious jam and an even more delicious drink when paired with green tea. Now that you have the basics for these jams down, get creative and experiment with your own favorite fruits!*





## ◁ STRAWBERRY TEA + SLUSHIE

### MAKES

one 16-ounce (475 ml) drink

- 2 to 4 tablespoons **Strawberry Jam**
- 1 to 2 tablespoons **Simple Syrup** (for a slushie only)
- 2 cups (435 g) ice for a tea (cubed ice works best) or 2¼ cups (545 g) ice for a slushie (cubed or crushed ice will work)
- 1 cup (240 ml) brewed green or black tea
- Favorite toppings (optional)

1 To a blender (if making a tea, you can also use a shaker), add your desired amount of jam:

- 4 tablespoons for “normal” sweetness
- 3 tablespoons for 75 percent sweetness
- 2 tablespoons for 50 percent sweetness

2 If making a slushie, also add your desired amount of simple syrup:

- 2 tablespoons for “normal” sweetness
- 1½ tablespoons for 75 percent sweetness
- 1 tablespoon for 50 percent sweetness

3 Add the ice, followed by the tea.

4 For a tea, if using a blender, briefly pulse the drink (do not blend!) until all ingredients are nicely combined. (If using a shaker, shake until the jam is combined with the tea.)

5 For a slushie, blend until smooth.

6 Add the toppings (if using) to your serving glass.

7 Pour the tea or slushie into the glass.

### **TIP**

*You can substitute the simple syrup with more jam, or with any sweetener of your choice! With slushies, the drink will require more sugar to make it taste “normal,” because you’re also blending the ice.*





## ◁ MANGO TEA + SLUSHIE

### MAKES

one 16-ounce (475 ml) drink

- 2 to 4 tablespoons **Mango Jam**
- 1 to 2 tablespoons **Simple Syrup** (for a slushie only)
- 2 cups (435 g) ice for a tea (cubed ice works best) or 2¼ cups (545 g) ice for a slushie (cubed or crushed ice will work)
- 1 cup (240 ml) brewed green or black tea
- Favorite toppings (optional)

1 To a blender (if making a tea, you can also use a shaker), add your desired amount of jam:

- 4 tablespoons for “normal” sweetness
- 3 tablespoons for 75 percent sweetness
- 2 tablespoons for 50 percent sweetness

2 If making a slushie, also add your desired amount of simple syrup:

- 2 tablespoons for “normal” sweetness
- 1½ tablespoons for 75 percent sweetness
- 1 tablespoon for 50 percent sweetness

3 Add the ice, followed by the tea.

4 For a tea, if using a blender, briefly pulse the drink (do not blend!) until all ingredients are nicely combined. (If using a shaker, shake until the jam is combined with the tea.)

5 For a slushie, blend until smooth.

6 Add the toppings (if using) to your serving glass.

7 Pour the tea or slushie into the glass.

**TIP**

*To make a creamy smoothie, replace the tea with your favorite type of milk!*



## ◁ POMELO TEA + SLUSHIE

### MAKES

one 16-ounce (475 ml) drink

- 2 to 4 tablespoons **Pomelo Jam**
- 1 to 2 tablespoons **Simple Syrup** (for a slushie only)
- 2 cups (435 g) ice for a tea (cubed ice works best) or 2¼ cups (545 g) ice for a slushie (cubed or crushed ice will work)
- 1 cup (240 ml) brewed green or black tea
- Favorite toppings (optional)

1 To a blender (if making a tea, you can also use a shaker), add your desired amount of jam:

- 4 tablespoons for “normal” sweetness
- 3 tablespoons for 75 percent sweetness
- 2 tablespoons for 50 percent sweetness

2 If making a slushie, also add your desired amount of simple syrup:

- 2 tablespoons for “normal” sweetness
- 1½ tablespoons for 75 percent sweetness
- 1 tablespoon for 50 percent sweetness

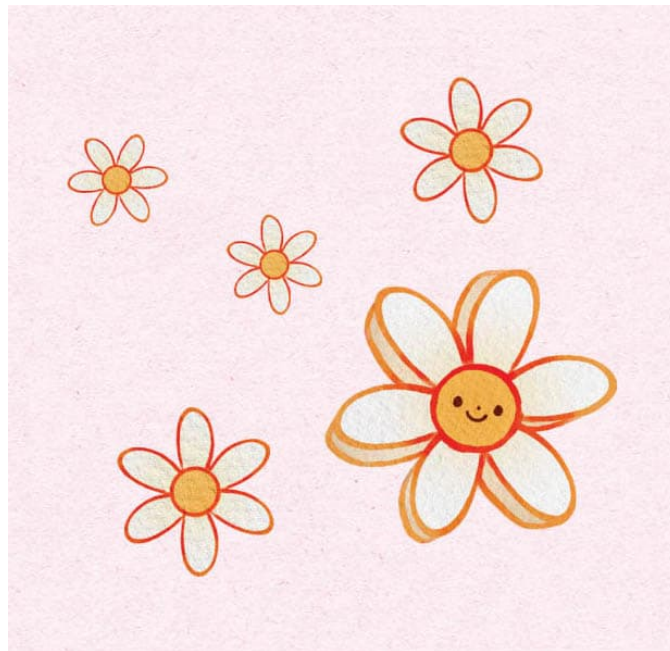
3 Add the ice, followed by the tea.

4 For a tea, if using a blender, briefly pulse the drink (do not blend!) until all ingredients are nicely combined. (If using a shaker, shake until the jam is combined with the tea.)

5 For a slushie, blend until smooth.

6 Add the toppings (if using) to your serving glass.

7 Pour the tea or slushie into the glass.







## ◁ KIWI TEA + SLUSHIE

### MAKES

one 16-ounce (475 ml) drink

- 2 to 4 tablespoons **Kiwi Jam**
- 1 to 2 tablespoons **Simple Syrup** (for a slushie only)
- 2 cups (435 g) ice for a tea (cubed ice works best) or 2¼ cups (545 g) ice for a slushie (cubed or crushed ice will work)
- 1 cup (240 ml) brewed green or black tea
- Favorite toppings (optional)



1 To a blender (if making a tea, you can also use a shaker), add your desired amount of jam:

- 4 tablespoons for “normal” sweetness
- 3 tablespoons for 75 percent sweetness
- 2 tablespoons for 50 percent sweetness

2 If making a slushie, also add your desired amount of simple syrup:

- 2 tablespoons for “normal” sweetness
- 1½ tablespoons for 75 percent sweetness
- 1 tablespoon for 50 percent sweetness

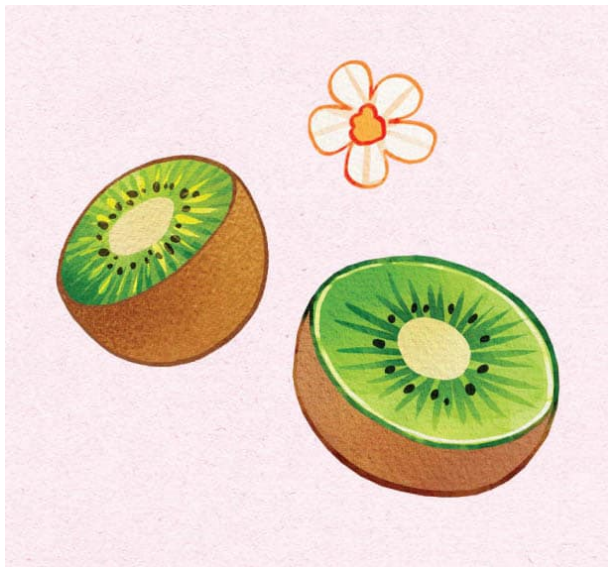
3 Add the ice, followed by the tea.

4 For a tea, if using a blender, briefly pulse the drink (do not blend!) until all ingredients are nicely combined. (If using a shaker, shake until the jam is combined with the tea.)

5 For a slushie, blend until smooth.

6 Add the toppings (if using) to your serving glass.

7 Pour the tea or slushie into the glass.



## HOMEMADE FRUIT SYRUPS

As we said before, we were amateurs who had no clue what we were doing, but honestly, that was probably the best possible way we could've learned. To this day—whether or not it's a smart thing to do—we just jump into a lot of opportunities and smooth out the wrinkles as we go along. Some people get stuck in overplanning, meticulously mapping out everything that could go wrong, and, sadly, that's what stops a lot of people from just trying out what they want to do in life.

The “wrinkle” in our business was our jams. We realized that they were spoiling far too quickly, difficult to scoop, and too messy. We had to think of a more streamlined way of producing the same, high-quality fruit flavor in an easier-to-dispense version for making drinks. That's when we turned our jams into syrups. *Voilà!*





## ◁ STRAWBERRY SYRUP

### **MAKES**

about 2 cups (475 ml)

- 15 plump strawberries, hulled
- Water (amount varies)
- Cane sugar (amount varies)
- Pinch of salt

1 Put the strawberries through a juicer to extract the juice.

2 Measure the amount of juice yielded and add half the amount of water. Add equal parts of the cane sugar. (For example, if you yielded 1 cup/240 ml strawberry juice, add ½ cup/120 ml water and 1½ cups/300 g cane sugar.)

3 Transfer all the ingredients to a medium saucepan and bring the mixture to a boil over medium heat. (Do not leave your syrup unattended. It will

overflow!)

4 Add a tiny pinch of salt to help preserve the syrup.

5 Boil the mixture for 5 minutes, then remove from the heat and let cool.

6 Store in a sealed container in the refrigerator for up to 1 week.

### TIP

*Save the pulp when juicing fruits and add it to a drink for a healthy topping!*



## ◁ KIWI SYRUP

### MAKES

about 2 cups (475 ml)

- 4 ripe kiwis, peeled
- Water (amount varies)

- Cane sugar (amount varies)
- Pinch of salt

1 Put the kiwis through a juicer to extract the juice.

2 Measure the amount of juice yielded and add half the amount of water. Add equal parts of the cane sugar. (For example, if you yielded 1 cup/240 ml kiwi juice, add ½ cup/120 ml water and 1½ cups/300 g cane sugar.)

3 Transfer all the ingredients to a medium saucepan and bring the mixture to a boil over medium heat. (Do not leave your syrup unattended. It will overflow!)

4 Add a tiny pinch of salt to help preserve the syrup.

5 Boil the mixture for 5 minutes, then remove from the heat and let cool.

6 Store in a sealed container in the refrigerator for up to 1 week.





## ◁ MANGO SYRUP

### MAKES

about 2 cups (475 ml)

- 2 mangoes (your favorite type), peeled and pitted
- Water (amount varies)
- Cane sugar (amount varies)
- Pinch of salt

- 1 Cut the mangoes into pieces small enough to fit through a juicer. (Don't forget to cut all the meat off the pit! We don't want to waste anything. Or hey, eat the meat off the pit; that works too!)
- 2 Put the mango pieces through the juicer to extract the juice.
- 3 Measure the amount of juice yielded and add half the amount of water. Add equal parts of the cane sugar. (For example, if you yielded 1 cup/240 ml mango juice, add ½ cup/120 ml water and 1½ cups/300 g cane sugar.)
- 4 Transfer all the ingredients to a medium saucepan and bring the mixture to a boil over medium heat. (Do not leave your syrup unattended. It will overflow!)
- 5 Add a tiny pinch of salt to help preserve the syrup.
- 6 Boil the mixture for 5 minutes, then remove from the heat and let cool.
- 7 Store in a sealed container in the refrigerator for up to 1 week.



## ◁ CUCUMBER SYRUP

### **MAKES**

about 2 cups (475 ml)

- 1 fine-looking cucumber (peeling optional)
- Water (amount varies)
- Cane sugar (amount varies)
- Pinch of salt

1 Put the cucumber through the juicer to extract the juice.

2 Measure the amount of juice yielded and add half the amount of water. Add equal parts of the cane sugar. (For example, if you yielded 1 cup/240 ml cucumber juice, add ½ cup/120 ml water and 1½ cups/300 g cane sugar.)

3 Transfer all the ingredients to a medium saucepan and bring the mixture to a boil over medium heat. (Do not leave your syrup unattended. It will

overflow!)

4 Add a tiny pinch of salt to help preserve the syrup.

5 Boil the mixture for 5 minutes, then remove from the heat and let cool.

6 Store in a sealed container in the refrigerator for up to 1 week.



## ◁ WATERMELON SYRUP

### **MAKES**

about 2 cups (475 ml)

- 2 cups (300 g) cut-up watermelon pieces
- Water (amount varies)
- Cane sugar (amount varies)
- Pinch of salt

1 Put the watermelon chunks through the juicer to extract the juice.

- 2 Measure the amount of juice yielded and add half the amount of water. Add equal parts of the cane sugar. (For example, if you yielded 1 cup/240 ml watermelon juice, add ½ cup/120 ml water and 1½ cups/300 g cane sugar.)
- 3 Transfer all the ingredients to a medium saucepan and bring the mixture to a boil over medium heat. (Do not leave your syrup unattended. It will overflow!)
- 4 Add a tiny pinch of salt to help preserve the syrup.
- 5 Boil the mixture for 5 minutes, then remove from the heat and let cool.
- 6 Store in a sealed container in the refrigerator for up to 1 week.



## ◁ PINEAPPLE SYRUP

**MAKES**

about 2 cups (475 ml)

- ½ ripe pineapple
- Water (amount varies)
- Cane sugar (amount varies)
- Pinch of salt

- 1 Carefully shave off the skin of the pineapple with a knife, then cut the flesh into pieces small enough to fit into a juicer. (Avoid using the core. Depending on the juicer you have, it may or may not be strong enough to push the core through.)
- 2 Put the pineapple chunks through the juicer to extract the juice.
- 3 Measure the amount of juice yielded and add half the amount of water. Add equal parts of the cane sugar. (For example, if you yielded 1 cup/240 ml pineapple juice, add ½ cup/120 ml water and 1½ cups/300 g cane sugar.)
- 4 Transfer all the ingredients to a medium saucepan and bring the mixture to a boil over medium heat. (Do not leave your syrup unattended. It will overflow!)
- 5 Add a tiny pinch of salt to help preserve the syrup.
- 6 Boil the mixture for 5 minutes, then remove from the heat and let cool.
- 7 Store in a sealed container in the refrigerator for up to 1 week.

**TIP**

*When choosing pineapples, give one of the leaves a tug. If it pops right off, you'll know that the pineapple is nice and juicy!*





## ◁ HONEY SYRUP

There are hundreds of different kinds of honey, so you may be wondering what type of honey we use. While clover honey is arguably the most popular on the American market, we chose to exclusively use wildflower honey because of its distinct flavor profile. It's the honey we use in our drinks and in our boba, and it's amazing. But what's the difference?

Clover honey is collected by bees whose main nectar is clover. Because there are many different types of clover, most store-bought honey will be a blend of different types of clover honey. It has a mild taste with little to no bitterness. Just as the name states, wildflower honey comes strictly from wildflowers. Wildflower honey is bolder and stronger in taste than clover honey. During our R&D process, we experimented with clover honey, and it just didn't taste right. Taste buds do differ from person to person, so we encourage you to throw on your chef's apron and try it out for yourself!

## **MAKES**

about 2 cups (475 ml)

- 1 cup (340 g) your favorite honey
- 1 cup (240 ml) purified water

- 1 Combine the honey and water in a small saucepan over medium heat, making sure all the honey is dissolved.
- 2 Keep the heat at medium and bring the mixture to a boil.
- 3 Remove from the heat and let cool.
- 4 Store in a sealed container in the refrigerator for up to 2 weeks.

### **FUN FACT**

The season the honey is harvested determines its flavor profile!



## ◁ LADY BUG

### **Watermelon + Strawberry Black Tea**

After a few months, we started noticing that the combo of watermelon and strawberry seemed to be everyone's pick of the day, and we found ourselves constantly running out of the two syrups. Soon after, we figured it was time to officially add a watermelon and strawberry drink to the menu.

"What's next, the Bumblebee?" I said, jokingly. "Mango black tea?"

“That’s not a bad idea!” Beyah said excitedly. “Doesn’t it make sense?! Ladybugs are red and black. Watermelon and strawberry black tea. Red and black!”

## **MAKES**

one 16-ounce (475 ml) drink

- 1 to 2 tablespoons **Watermelon Syrup**
- 1 to 2 tablespoons **Strawberry Syrup**
- 2 cups (435 g) ice (cubed ice works best)
- 1 cup (240 ml) brewed black tea
- Favorite toppings (optional)

1 To a shaker or blender, add your desired amount of syrup:

- 2 tablespoons watermelon syrup + 2 tablespoons strawberry syrup for “normal” sweetness
- 1½ tablespoons watermelon syrup + 1½ tablespoons strawberry syrup for 75 percent sweetness
- 1 tablespoon watermelon syrup + 1 tablespoon strawberry syrup for 50 percent sweetness

2 Add the ice, followed by the tea.

3 If using a shaker, shake until the syrup is combined with the tea. If using a blender, briefly pulse the drink (do not blend!) until all ingredients are nicely combined.

4 Add the toppings (if using) to your serving glass.

5 Pour the tea into the glass.





## ◁ **BABY BUG**

### **Watermelon + Strawberry Refresher**

Even though Beyah strongly dislikes any crawly creature of the bug category, it makes for fun drink names! As you guessed it, the Baby Bug was a spin-off from the [Lady Bug](#). Parents would request noncaffeinated drinks, and since we originally didn't have any, we started to come up with kid-friendly options to expand our clientele. When we mixed the syrups with water instead of black tea, we created a fun caffeine-free drink for kids. The pink hue of the drink also started to draw in foodies and looked



quite attractive on Instagram and other social-media sites. To this day, we still have the Baby Bug on our menu, and it is one of our most popular drinks!

## **MAKES**

one 16-ounce (475 ml) drink

- 1 to 2 tablespoons **Watermelon Syrup**
- 1 to 2 tablespoons **Strawberry Syrup**
- 2 cups (435 g) ice (cubed ice works best)
- 1 cup (240 ml) purified water
- Favorite toppings (optional)

1 To a shaker or blender, add your desired amount of syrup:

- 2 tablespoons watermelon syrup + 2 tablespoons strawberry syrup for “normal” sweetness
- 1½ tablespoons watermelon syrup + 1½ tablespoons strawberry syrup for 75 percent sweetness
- 1 tablespoon watermelon syrup + 1 tablespoon strawberry syrup for 50 percent sweetness

2 Add the ice, followed by the water.

3 If using a shaker, shake until the syrup is combined with the water. If using a blender, briefly pulse the drink (do not blend!) until all ingredients are nicely combined.

4 Add the toppings (if using) to your serving glass.

5 Pour the drink into the glass.



## ◁ PINEBERRY

### **Pineapple + Strawberry Green Tea**

Did you know there's actually a fruit called the pineberry? It looks like and is a strawberry, but it tastes like a pineapple. Its exterior is white with red seeds. Amazed by this newfound knowledge, we decided to name our drink the Pineberry. Its blend of strawberry and pineapple is sweet and thirst-quenching and incredibly refreshing on a hot summer day. In our opinion, it goes best with green tea but also works well with black tea for all the black tea lovers out there!

## MAKES

one 16-ounce (475 ml) drink

- 1 to 2 tablespoons **Pineapple Syrup**
- 1 to 2 tablespoons **Strawberry Syrup**
- 2 cups (435 g) ice (cubed ice works best)
- 1 cup (240 ml) brewed green tea
- Favorite toppings (optional)

1 To a shaker or blender, add your desired amount of syrup:

- 2 tablespoons pineapple syrup + 2 tablespoons strawberry syrup for “normal” sweetness
- 1½ tablespoons pineapple syrup + 1½ tablespoons strawberry syrup for 75 percent sweetness
- 1 tablespoon pineapple syrup + 1 tablespoon strawberry syrup for 50 percent sweetness

2 Add the ice, followed by the tea.

3 If using a shaker, shake until the syrup is combined with the tea. If using a blender, briefly pulse the drink (do not blend!) until all ingredients are nicely combined.

4 Add the toppings (if using) to your serving glass.

5 Pour the tea into the glass.



## ◁ EQUALITY

### **Mango + Strawberry Green Tea**

Strawberry and mango are a couple of my all-time-favorite fruits. Not only was this drink on the original menu when we first launched, but it was also named after something very important to us—equality. On June 26, 2015, a few months before we hit the ground rolling with our boba truck, same-sex marriage was legalized in all fifty US states. As an LGBTQ+ company, we remember the feelings that swept over us—overwhelming relief and happiness. We now hang pride flags at all our locations to not only show

our pride, but also to let customers know that no matter what sex, gender, race, or religion you are, you are welcome here.

## **MAKES**

one 16-ounce (475 ml) drink

- 1 to 2 tablespoons **Mango Syrup**
- 1 to 2 tablespoons **Strawberry Syrup**
- 2 cups (435 g) ice (cubed ice works best)
- 1 cup (240 ml) brewed green tea
- Favorite toppings (optional)

1 To a shaker or blender, add your desired amount of syrup:

- 2 tablespoons mango syrup + 2 tablespoons strawberry syrup for “normal” sweetness
- 1½ tablespoons mango syrup + 1½ tablespoons strawberry syrup for 75 percent sweetness
- 1 tablespoon mango syrup + 1 tablespoon strawberry syrup for 50 percent sweetness

2 Add the ice, followed by the tea.

3 If using a shaker, shake until the syrup is combined with the tea. If using a blender, briefly pulse the drink (do not blend!) until all ingredients are nicely combined.

4 Add the toppings (if using) to your serving glass.

5 Pour the tea into the glass.





## ◁ AREA 51

### **Cucumber + Kiwi Green Tea**

Extremely fascinated with aliens and all things supernatural, Beyah decided to name this green drink after the highly classified United States Air Force facility. Known as Area 51, the facility is located within the Nevada Test and Training Range, famously the source of many alien conspiracies. Just like the **Lady Bug**, this drink name made sense based on the color of the fruits and the base. In Beyah's mind, green meant aliens! We're simple people.

## MAKES

one 16-ounce (475 ml) drink

- 1 to 2 tablespoons **Cucumber Syrup**
- 1 to 2 tablespoons **Kiwi Syrup**
- 2 cups (435 g) ice (cubed ice works best)
- 1 cup (240 ml) brewed green tea
- Favorite toppings (optional)

1 To a shaker or blender, add your desired amount of syrup:

- 2 tablespoons cucumber syrup + 2 tablespoons kiwi syrup for “normal” sweetness
- 1½ tablespoons cucumber syrup + 1½ tablespoons kiwi syrup for 75 percent sweetness
- 1 tablespoon cucumber syrup + 1 tablespoon kiwi syrup for 50 percent sweetness

2 Add the ice, followed by the tea.

3 If using a shaker, shake until the syrup is combined with the tea. If using a blender, briefly pulse the drink (do not blend!) until all ingredients are nicely combined.

4 Add the toppings (if using) to your serving glass.

5 Pour the tea into the glass.



## ◁ UnBEElievable

### Wildflower Honey Green Tea

Haha, get it? UnBEElievable? BEE. Okay, sorry . . . moving along.

#### **MAKES**

one 16-ounce (475 ml) drink

- 1 to 2 tablespoons **Simple Syrup**
- 1 to 2 tablespoons **Honey Syrup**
- 2 cups (435 g) ice (cubed ice works best)

- 1 cup (240 ml) brewed green or black tea
- Favorite toppings (optional)

1 To a shaker or blender, add your desired amount of syrup:

- 2 tablespoons simple syrup + 2 tablespoons honey syrup for “normal” sweetness
- 1½ tablespoons simple syrup + 1½ tablespoons honey syrup for 75 percent sweetness
- 1 tablespoon simple syrup + 1 tablespoon honey syrup for 50 percent sweetness

2 Add the ice, followed by the tea.

3 If using a shaker, shake until the syrup is combined with the tea. If using a blender, briefly pulse the drink (do not blend!) until all ingredients are nicely combined.

4 Add the toppings (if using) to your serving glass.

5 Pour the tea into the glass.





# CLASSIC MILK TEAS







## ◁ CLASSIC

### **Black Milk Tea**

After going with lactose-free whole milk over creamer ([here](#)), we quickly realized that it was not going to be easy selling the idea to seasoned bubble tea addicts. After years of consuming milk teas with creamers, boba-goers were accustomed to the creamy mouthfeel that a traditional milk tea offered. What MILK+T brought to the masses was a healthier alternative, and as a start-up, we were afraid people weren't going to like that. Five years later, we've had our fair share of dislikes, but we've also had more

than our fair share of compliments and loyal customers! We've learned that our milk tea is not everyone's "cup of tea" (haha, pun intended), and we're okay with that.

Our black milk tea has a different flavor profile compared to other milk teas, but it will definitely leave you feeling refreshed.

## **MAKES**

one 16-ounce (475 ml) drink

- 2 to 4 tablespoons **Brown Sugar Syrup**
- 2 cups (435 g) ice (cubed ice works best)
- $\frac{2}{3}$  cup (160 ml) cool brewed black tea
- $\frac{1}{4}$  cup (60 ml) lactose-free milk
- Favorite toppings (optional)

1 To a shaker or blender, add your desired amount of brown sugar syrup:

- 4 tablespoons for "normal" sweetness
- 3 tablespoons for 75 percent sweetness
- 2 tablespoons for 50 percent sweetness

2 Add the ice, followed by the tea and milk.

3 If using a shaker, shake until the syrup is combined with the tea. If using a blender, briefly pulse the drink (do not blend!) until all ingredients are nicely combined.

4 Add the toppings (if using) to your serving glass.

5 Pour the tea into the glass



## ◁ BEST FRIEND

### Green Milk Tea

“Ehh, I don’t like the name,” Beyah said, staring at the menu I had come up with. “Why ‘Best Friend’?”

“’Cause it’s milk tea’s best friend!” I said, laughing. “Honestly, I had no idea what to call it, so that was the best I could come up with. It’s black milk tea’s best friend.”

“All right, I guess that makes sense!” she said.

When comparing the Best Friend to the **Classic**, you’ll notice right away that the Best Friend has a much softer and lighter floral taste. The green tea produces a paler drink, and the Best Friend is lower in caffeine and a great choice for those who don’t want something too strong!

## **MAKES**

one 16-ounce (475 ml) drink

- 2 to 4 tablespoons **Brown Sugar Syrup**
- 2 cups (435 g) ice (cubed ice works best)
- $\frac{2}{3}$  cup (160 ml) cool brewed green tea
- $\frac{1}{4}$  cup (60 ml) lactose-free milk
- Favorite toppings (optional)

1 To a shaker or blender, add your desired amount of brown sugar syrup:

- 4 tablespoons for “normal” sweetness
- 3 tablespoons for 75 percent sweetness
- 2 tablespoons for 50 percent sweetness

2 Add the ice, followed by the tea and milk.

3 If using a shaker, shake until the syrup is combined with the tea. If using a blender, briefly pulse the drink (do not blend!) until all ingredients are nicely combined.

4 Add the toppings (if using) to your serving glass.

5 Pour the tea into the glass

## **HOW TO BREW PREPACKAGED THAI TEA**

Creamy, sweet, and freakishly orange, Thai tea is one of the most popular drinks that people in the United States associate with bubble tea. As with many origin stories, there is more than one theory as to how Thai tea acquired its notable orange color. First off, Thai tea is not naturally orange.

There is no tea (at least that we know of) that naturally produces such a robust orange color. The color comes from—you guessed it—food coloring! Aside from the food coloring, Thai tea is a strongly brewed black tea that contains an array of spices, including cinnamon and star anise.

One origin story tells a tale of servants in 1850s Thailand serving their leaders black tea. Since black tea wasn't a popular item back then, servants would then take the used tea leaves home to rebrew them. When you steep any type of tea more than once, the flavor and color aren't as strong, so to add color and flavor, the servants added spices and food coloring to make it more appealing. Thus, Thai tea was born. Whether or not the above story is true, Thai tea has a strong presence around the world. While it's more of a street-cart item in Thailand, it's nonetheless loved by all kinds of people!

Many boba shops, including ours, use prepackaged Thai tea! Thai tea mix is easily found at Asian grocery stores and even other common online retailers.

## MAKES

about 2 cups (475 ml)

- 2 cups (475 ml) purified water
- 2 teaspoons your favorite brand of loose-leaf Thai tea

- 1 Bring the water to a boil in a small saucepan.
- 2 Remove the pan from the stove and add the tea leaves.
- 3 Stir for 30 seconds to let the tea and water get to know each other.
- 4 Cover the pot and steep for 2 to 4 minutes.
- 5 Strain into a cup using a cheesecloth or a fine-mesh strainer.

### TIP

*Double-strain the tea to make sure no tiny tea particles are left over.*

## MILK+T THAI TEA



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We prefer to use prepackaged Thai tea in our shops, but if you want to use homemade Thai tea, try the recipe on [this page](#). While traditional Thai tea from Thailand, as well as most boba shops, is made with condensed milk, creamer, or half-and-half, we decided to stick with lactose-free milk. We figured that since our lactose-intolerant customers were enjoying our milk teas without fear of needing to find a bathroom, it was only fair that our Thai tea should follow suit.

## MAKES

one 16-ounce (475 ml) drink

- 2 to 4 tablespoons [Simple Syrup](#)
- 2 cups (435 g) ice (cubed ice works best)
- $\frac{2}{3}$  cup (160 ml) cool brewed Thai tea (opposite or [here](#))
- $\frac{1}{4}$  cup (60 ml) lactose-free milk
- Favorite toppings (optional)

1 To a shaker or blender, add your desired amount of simple syrup:

- 4 tablespoons for “normal” sweetness
- 3 tablespoons for 75 percent sweetness
- 2 tablespoons for 50 percent sweetness

2 Add the ice, followed by the tea and milk.

3 If using a shaker, shake until the syrup is combined with the tea. If using a blender, briefly pulse the drink (do not blend!) until all ingredients are nicely combined.

4 Add the toppings (if using) to your serving glass.

5 Pour the tea into the glass



## ◁ **HOMEMADE THAI TEA**

Even though many boba shops use prepackaged Thai tea, it's possible to make your own! While we don't make our own Thai tea, we've experimented with it before and figured you might want try it out for yourselves!

### **MAKES**

about 2 cups (475 ml)

### NATURAL ORANGE COLORING (OPTIONAL)

- 1 teaspoon turmeric (see [Tip](#) below)
- ½ cup (120 ml) purified water

### TEA

- 2 cups (475 ml) purified water
- 2 tablespoons your favorite loose-leaf black tea
- 1 piece star anise
- 2 pods green cardamom
- ½ cinnamon stick

**1 To make the natural orange coloring (if using):** Combine the turmeric with the water in a small saucepan and bring to a boil. Cook until the mixture is reduced by half to create a darker coloring.

**2** Remove from the heat and let cool.

**3 To brew the tea:** Bring the water to a boil in a small saucepan.

**4** Add the tea, star anise, cardamom, and cinnamon stick, and steep for 5 minutes.

**5** Strain the tea using a cheesecloth or a fine-mesh strainer and let it cool.

**6** After adding milk and sugar (see the [MILK+T Thai Tea](#) recipe), add the natural orange coloring to turn it into the bright orange color we all know and love! (Use a little bit to make it yellow, or use more to make it orange.)

### TIP

*Leave the turmeric out in the open for a few days to allow it to get “stale.” Stale turmeric adds little to no taste when combining it with foods. That way, you only get the color effect!*

# SPECIALTY



# DRINKS





## ◁ THE PIGLET

### Strawberry Coconut Milk

After trying the highly coveted “pink drink” at a certain popular coffee chain, we were determined to create a similar drink. We knew that the coffee chain used coconut milk as a base, but could it really be that simple? After trying it out, we discovered just how simple it was! Now that you know how to make strawberry syrup, you can finally make your own pink drink at home!



## MAKES

one 16-ounce (475 ml) drink

- 2 to 4 tablespoons **Strawberry Syrup**
- 2 cups (435 g) ice (cubed ice works best)
- $\frac{2}{3}$  cup (160 ml) coconut milk
- $\frac{1}{4}$  cup (60 ml) purified water
- Favorite toppings (optional)

1 To a shaker or blender, add your desired amount of strawberry syrup:

- 4 tablespoons for “normal” sweetness
- 3 tablespoons for 75 percent sweetness
- 2 tablespoons for 50 percent sweetness

2 Add the ice, followed by the coconut milk and water.

3 If using a shaker, shake until the syrup is combined with the liquid. If using a blender, briefly pulse the drink (do not blend!) until all ingredients are nicely combined.

4 Add the toppings (if using) to your serving glass.

5 Pour the drink into the glass.



## ◁ HUMANITY FIRST

### **Almond Butter Milk Tea**

People. Over. Profits. As entrepreneurs, these core values have shaped the way we built our company. Admittedly, it wasn't smooth sailing from the get-go. We've had our differences with team members, and some relationships didn't end all that well. But as time went on, we learned, grew, and matured. We are still learning and growing. We make mistakes from time to time, and we are human. This drink is dedicated to our role models.

## MAKES

1½ cups (320 ml) syrup and one 16-ounce (475 ml) drink

### HUMANITY FIRST SYRUP

- ½ cup (130 g) all-natural 100% almond butter (no salt or sugar added)
- ½ cup (120 ml) water
- 1 cup (200 g) cane sugar
- 1½ teaspoons almond extract

### DRINK

- 2 to 4 tablespoons Humanity First Syrup
- 2 cups (435 g) ice (cubed ice works best)
- ⅔ cup (160 ml) cool brewed black tea
- ¼ cup (60 ml) lactose-free milk
- Favorite toppings (optional)

1 **To make the syrup:** In a medium saucepan, combine the almond butter and water, stirring until nicely mixed.

2 Add the sugar and almond extract and bring the mixture to a boil over medium heat, stirring constantly.

3 Remove from the heat and let cool for 2 to 3 hours at room temperature.

4 **To make the drink:** To a shaker or blender, add your desired amount of syrup:

- 4 tablespoons for “normal” sweetness
- 3 tablespoons for 75 percent sweetness
- 2 tablespoons for 50 percent sweetness

5 Add the ice, followed by the tea and milk.

6 If using a shaker, shake until the syrup is combined with the tea and milk. If using a blender, briefly pulse the drink (do not blend!) until all ingredients are nicely combined.

7 Add the toppings (if using) to your serving glass.

8 Pour the drink into the glass.

**TIP**

*Do not take your eyes off the syrup while it's cooking! It burns very easily, so make sure to keep stirring.*





## ◁ MINT TEA LEMON MOJITO

### Nonalcoholic

This refreshing combination was curated by our very own operations lead, Liz, in Portland, Oregon. What we love about running a small company is the ability to allow our team to come up with drinks. They love experimenting, and in return, we get new flavors to add to our menu—win-win! Unfortunately, the Mint Tea Lemon Mojito (or should we say “no”jito? heh heh) never made it onto our menu because of the 2020 pandemic. But we still wanted to pay homage to our amazing PNW team—always pushing



through with a smile and an upbeat attitude. We always get asked how we're able to manage a store in another state. It's simple: we can't do it without our amazing team!

## MAKES

8 cups (1.9 L) tea, ½ cup (120 ml) syrup, and one 16-ounce (475 ml) drink

### MINT TEA

- 8 cups (2 quarts/1.9 L) water
- 10 mint leaves, each the size of your thumb

### LEMON SYRUP

- 1 lemon
- Cane sugar (amount varies)

### DRINK

- 1 to 2 tablespoons Lemon Syrup
- 1 to 2 tablespoons [Simple Syrup](#)
- 2 cups (450 g) ice (cubed ice works best)
- ⅔ cup (160 ml) brewed Mint Tea
- Favorite toppings (optional)
- Lemon wedge (optional)

1 **To make the mint tea:** Place the water in a large saucepan and bring to a boil over high heat.

2 Add the mint leaves to the pan. Turn off the heat and let the tea steep, covered, for 20 minutes.

3 Strain the tea with a cheesecloth or fine-mesh strainer. Chill the tea in the fridge for at least 2 hours before making the drink.

4 **To make the lemon syrup:** Cut the lemon in half. Squeeze the juice out of both halves into a measuring cup, removing any seeds.

5 Add an equal amount of sugar to the measuring cup. (For example, if 1 lemon yields ½ cup/60 ml) of juice, add in ½ cup/100 g of sugar).

6 Transfer the mixture to a small saucepan and bring to a boil over low heat, stirring until all the sugar is dissolved. Chill the syrup in the fridge

for at least 2 hours before making the drink.

7 **To make the drink:** To a shaker or blender, add your desired amount of syrup:

- 2 tablespoons lemon syrup + 2 tablespoons simple syrup for “normal” sweetness
- 1½ tablespoons lemon syrup + 1½ tablespoons simple syrup for 75 percent sweetness
- 1 tablespoon lemon syrup + 1 tablespoon simple syrup for 50 percent sweetness

8 Add the ice, followed by the cooled tea.

9 If using a shaker, shake until the syrup is combined with the tea. If using a blender, briefly pulse the drink (do not blend!) until all ingredients are nicely combined.

10 Add the toppings (if using) to your serving glass.

11 If you want to be fancy, garnish the edge of the glass with the lemon wedge (if using).

12 Pour the tea into the glass





## ◁ KNOW YOUR ROOTS

### **Taro + Ube Almond Milk**

It wasn't until we were three months deep into our LA store when we finally added taro to our menu. Customers had been asking us to add it for a while, but we just weren't sure how. Other boba shops in the area were using artificial powders to make their taro drinks, but we prided ourselves on using natural ingredients, so how could we use a powder? After a month of R&D, it was actually Beyah's mom who finalized our taro recipe. With a touch of her mom's Filipino background and culture, we had finally settled

on a recipe. Now all we needed was a name. Monique, our store manager at the time, suggested “Know Your Roots,” and we loved it! The “roots” not only referred to the taro and ube roots, but also to our culture and heritage.

**WARNING:** Taro cannot be eaten raw because it contains calcium oxalate, the same chemical compound that makes rhubarb leaves inedible, but cooking it in water eliminates the chemical.

## **MAKES**

approximately 1½ cups (315 g) taro paste, 1 cup (210 g) ube paste, and one 16-ounce (475 ml) drink

### **TARO PASTE**

- 1 large taro root (some stores will sell them halved, which is enough for this recipe)
- 5 cups (1.2 L) water + 1 cup (240 ml) room-temperature water, divided

### **UBE PASTE**

- 1 ube, 3 x 4 inches (7.5 x 10 cm)
- 5 cups (1.2 L) water

### **DRINK**

- 2 tablespoons Taro Paste
- 2 tablespoons Ube Paste
- 2 to 4 tablespoons **Simple Syrup**
- ⅔ cup (160 ml) almond milk
- ⅓ cup + 4 teaspoons (100 ml) purified water
- 2 cups (450 g) ice (cubed ice works best)
- Favorite toppings (optional)

**1 To make the taro paste:** Wash and peel the taro, then cut four 2-inch (5 cm) cubes. (You only need 4 cubes for this recipe, so store the remaining taro by vacuum sealing it or wrapping it in plastic wrap. Store it in a cool, dark, well-ventilated place. Do NOT refrigerate. Use it as soon as possible, as taro tends to soften quickly.)

**2** Place the 5 cups (1.2 L) water in a medium saucepan and bring to a boil over high heat.

- 3 Carefully add the 4 taro cubes to the pan and boil it for 30 to 40 minutes, until the cubes are soft and mashable. Use a fork to see if the taro cubes are tender.
- 4 Drain the water from the pan. Add the remaining 1 cup (240 ml) room-temperature water to the pan with the taro. Mash the taro and water until everything is combined into a nice paste. If you're having trouble mashing it, put the pan over low heat to help soften the taro. Once everything is nicely combined, set it aside and let cool at room temperature.
- 5 **To make the ube paste:** Wash the ube well (no need to peel it). Place the 5 cups (1.2 L) water in a medium saucepan and bring to a boil over high heat. Carefully add the ube to the pan and boil for 30 to 40 minutes, until soft. The water will have a green tinge when it's done.
- 6 Turn off the heat and let the ube sit in the hot water for an additional 10 minutes, covered. Drain the water from the pan and let the ube cool down for 10 minutes. Mash the ube in the pan until it is a nice paste with little-to-no lumps.
- 7 **To make the drink:** To a blender, add the taro and ube pastes. Add your desired amount of simple syrup:
- 4 tablespoons for “normal” sweetness
  - 3 tablespoons for 75 percent sweetness
  - 2 tablespoons for 50 percent sweetness
- 8 Add the almond milk and  $\frac{1}{3}$  cup + 4 teaspoons (100 ml) purified water. Blend for about 30 seconds, until all ingredients are mixed together. Add the ice to the blender and pulse two or three times. Add the toppings (if using) to your serving glass.
- 9 Pour the drink into the glass.

#### **TIP**

*You can find both taro and ube at local Asian grocery stores.*







## ◁ THE EVELYN

### Strawberry Milk Tea

Tita Evelyn, we call her. But at home, she's sometimes referred to as "Strawberry." When Beyah's phone lights up with her mom calling, "Strawberry" comes up as the contact name. Beyah's mom has been a huge help since day one of MILK+T. From picking up inventory to helping us wash dishes, mopping the store down, and taking orders, she's truly become a part of the MILK+T family. From Jollibee to homemade chicken adobo,

she never hesitates to bring food for the team. This drink is dedicated to her and her favorite song: “Strawberry Fields Forever.”

## **MAKES**

one 16-ounce (475 ml) drink

- 2 to 4 tablespoons **Strawberry Syrup**
- 2 cups (435 g) ice (cubed ice works best)
- $\frac{2}{3}$  cup (160 ml) brewed black tea
- $\frac{1}{4}$  cup (60 ml) lactose-free milk
- Favorite toppings (optional)

1 To a shaker or blender, add your desired amount of strawberry syrup:

- 4 tablespoons for “normal” sweetness
- 3 tablespoons for 75 percent sweetness
- 2 tablespoons for 50 percent sweetness

2 Add the ice, followed by the tea and milk.

3 If using a shaker, shake until the syrup is combined with the milk and tea. If using a blender, briefly pulse the drink (do not blend!) until all ingredients are nicely combined.

4 Add the toppings (if using) to your serving glass.

5 Pour the drink into the glass.

## SIP 'N' DIPS







## ◁ BLACK TEA À LA MODE

Though French in origin, à la mode was coined in nineteenth-century America to mean “served with ice cream.” We were working on our very first menu, and we had yet to come up with any fun names.

I had gone to San Francisco a few months earlier and had tried an ice cream black tea at a very popular franchise. I absolutely fell in love with the creaminess that the ice cream added and instantly knew it had to be a part of our menu. But we couldn’t just call it “ice cream black tea” . . . no, that’s boring! After searching for some ideas on good ol’ Google, I came across a



menu item at a local pie shop: apple pie à la mode. *Perfect*. And Black Tea à la Mode was born.

## MAKES

one 16-ounce (475 ml) drink + ice cream on top

- 2 to 4 tablespoons **Simple Syrup**
- 2 cups (435 g) ice (cubed ice works best)
- 1 cup (240 ml) brewed black tea
- Favorite toppings (optional)
- ½ cup (70 g) your favorite vanilla ice cream

1 To a shaker or blender, add your desired amount of simple syrup:

- 4 tablespoons for “normal” sweetness
- 3 tablespoons for 75 percent sweetness
- 2 tablespoons for 50 percent sweetness

2 Add the ice, followed by the tea.

3 If using a shaker, shake until the syrup is combined with the tea. If using a blender, briefly pulse the drink (do not blend!) until all ingredients are nicely combined.

4 Add the toppings (if using) to your serving glass.

5 Pour the tea into the glass.

6 Add the ice cream on top.

### TIP

*Substitute the vanilla ice cream with strawberry ice cream for our Strawberry Avalanche drink. Our customers have told us it tastes like strawberry Nesquik!*



## ◁ TOP SHELF

Coffee ice cream ended up being the second ice-cream flavor we brought onboard. With the success of vanilla ice cream, we had to try another flavor, and coffee is my favorite. Top Shelf is what we dubbed the creation, a **Classic** with coffee ice cream, and to this day, it is our second bestselling drink! The coffee ice cream adds a creamy kick of coffee flavor to the drink and complements the brown sugar and black tea.

### MAKES

one 16-ounce (475 ml) drink + ice cream on top

- 2 to 4 tablespoons **Brown Sugar Syrup**
- 2 cups (435 g) ice (cubed ice works best)
- $\frac{2}{3}$  cup (160 ml) brewed black tea
- $\frac{1}{4}$  cup (60 ml) lactose-free milk
- 1 cup (140 g) your favorite coffee ice cream, divided
- Favorite toppings (optional)

1 To a shaker or blender, add your desired amount of brown sugar syrup:

- 4 tablespoons for “normal” sweetness
- 3 tablespoons for 75 percent sweetness
- 2 tablespoons for 50 percent sweetness

2 Add the ice, followed by the tea and milk.

3 If using a shaker, shake until the syrup is combined with the tea. If using a blender, briefly pulse the drink (do not blend!) until all ingredients are nicely combined.

4 Add  $\frac{1}{4}$  cup (35 g) of the ice cream to your serving glass, followed by the toppings (if using).

5 Pour the drink into the glass.

6 Put your straw in the glass before adding the scoop of ice cream on top.

7 Add the remaining  $\frac{3}{4}$  cup (105 g) ice cream on top.



## ◁ PINK PANDA

As one of the early Sip 'N' Dips we introduced, this noncaffeinated drink has become a favorite with kids. Similar to [The Piglet](#) but made with lactose-free whole milk, this drink packs a punch of strawberry flavor and cookies-and-cream ice cream. It's sweet, creamy, and perfect for anyone who loves dessert-type drinks! As with many other drink names, Beyah named it Pink Panda because the drink itself is pink, and pandas are black and white—like cookies and cream!

**MAKES**

one 16-ounce (475 ml) drink + ice cream on top

- 2 to 4 tablespoons **Strawberry Syrup**
- 2 cups (435 g) ice (cubed ice works best)
- 1 cup (240 ml) lactose-free milk
- 1 cup (140 g) your favorite cookies-and-cream ice cream, divided
- Favorite toppings (optional)

1 To a shaker or blender, add your desired amount of strawberry syrup:

- 4 tablespoons for “normal” sweetness
- 3 tablespoons for 75 percent sweetness
- 2 tablespoons for 50 percent sweetness

2 Add the ice, followed by the milk.

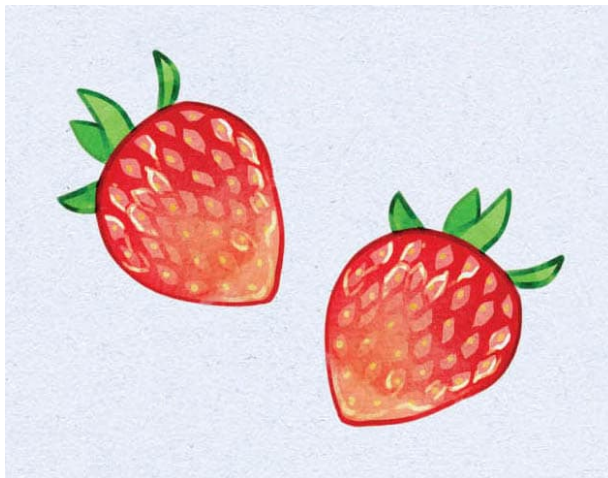
3 If using a shaker, shake until the syrup is combined with the milk. If using a blender, briefly pulse the drink (do not blend!) until all ingredients are nicely combined.

4 Add  $\frac{1}{4}$  cup (35 g) of the ice cream to your serving glass, followed by the toppings (if using).

5 Pour the drink into the glass.

6 Put your straw in the glass before adding the scoop of ice cream on top.

7 Add the remaining  $\frac{3}{4}$  cup (105 g) ice cream on top.







## ◁ GUILT TRIP

The Guilt Trip is our rendition of the popular iced milk drink sold at other bubble tea shops. It's simply a blended mix of whole milk, ice, and a bit of brown sugar syrup. Egg pudding and boba are also definite musts. But be warned—this drink packs a sugary punch, hence the name, so you may want to take a walk or small jog after drinking this!

### MAKES

one 16-ounce (475 ml) drink + ice cream on top

- 2¼ cups (545 g) ice (cubed ice works best)

- 1¼ cups (300 ml) lactose-free milk
- 2 to 4 tablespoons **Brown Sugar Syrup**
- Chocolate syrup, for drizzling
- Caramel sauce, for drizzling
- Favorite toppings (optional)
- ¾ cup (105 g) your favorite ice cream, for topping (optional)
- 1 chocolate wafer stick, for topping

1 To a blender, add the ice and milk. Blend until creamy and smooth.

2 To your serving glass, add your desired amount of brown sugar syrup:

- 4 tablespoons for “normal” sweetness
- 3 tablespoons for 75 percent sweetness
- 2 tablespoons for 50 percent sweetness

3 Drizzle the chocolate syrup and caramel sauce along the sides of the glass for a fancy-looking drink.

4 Add the toppings (if using) to your serving glass.

5 Pour the drink into the glass.

6 Add the ice cream (if using).

7 Top with more chocolate and caramel sauce.

8 Grab your chocolate wafer stick, crack it in half, and top it off!

9 Before drinking, stir extremely well to mix in the syrup sitting at the bottom.

### **TIP**

*You might want to go to the dentist after drinking this!*



## ◁ **ELECTRIC FEEL**

Countdown, Escape, Coachella, Life Is Beautiful—raves and festivals make up a part, if not all, of Beyah's DNA. The most popular of them all? Electric Daisy Carnival (EDC). When we opened our (now-closed) store in Las Vegas, Beyah knew that an EDC drink had to be created. As the rave's date grew closer, she started experimenting with different flavors and drinks and names until finally landing on the Electric Feel. It started off as a promotional drink that lined up with the dates of EDC, but after customers got a glimpse—and a taste—of it, they demanded that it stay on the menu. It's topped off with cotton-candy ice cream and sweetened with condensed

milk. Now a regular drink on the menu, this is a noncaffeinated spin-off of our **Guilt Trip!**

## **MAKES**

one 16-ounce (475 ml) drink + ice cream on top

- 2¼ cups (545 g) ice (cubed ice works best)
- 1¼ cups (300 ml) lactose-free milk
- 2 to 4 tablespoons **Simple Syrup**
- Condensed milk, for drizzling
- Favorite toppings (optional)
- ¾ cup (105 g) your favorite cotton-candy ice cream

1 To a blender, add the ice and milk. Blend until creamy and smooth.

2 To your serving glass, add your desired amount of simple syrup:

- 4 tablespoons for “normal” sweetness
- 3 tablespoons for 75 percent sweetness
- 2 tablespoons for 50 percent sweetness

3 Drizzle the condensed milk along the sides of the glass for a fancy-looking drink.

4 Add the toppings (if using) to your serving glass.

5 Pour the drink into the glass.

6 Put your straw in the glass before adding the scoop of ice cream.

7 Add the ice cream to the top.

8 Before drinking, stir extremely well to mix in the syrup sitting at the bottom.





## ◁ NIGHT SHIFT

The Night Shift was created as a peanut-buttery pick-me-up for night-shift workers—a homage to those, like us, who worked until 3:00 or 4:00 a.m. when we had our food truck.

### MAKES

about 1½ cups (360 ml) syrup and one 16-ounce (475 ml) drink + ice cream on top

#### NIGHT SHIFT SYRUP

- ½ cup (130 g) your favorite creamy peanut butter



- 1 cup (240 ml) **Simple Syrup**

## **DRINK**

- 2 to 4 tablespoons Night Shift Syrup
- 2 cups (435 g) ice (cubed ice works best)
- $\frac{2}{3}$  cup (160 ml) brewed black tea
- $\frac{1}{4}$  cup (60 ml) lactose-free milk
- Chocolate syrup, for drizzling and topping (optional)
- $\frac{3}{4}$  cup (105 g) your favorite vanilla ice cream, divided
- Favorite toppings (optional)

**1 To make the syrup:** Combine the peanut butter and simple syrup in a small saucepan over medium heat, stirring until everything is mixed. Bring the mixture to a boil, stirring constantly. Once the mixture reaches a boil, take the syrup off the heat, and let it cool for 2 to 3 hours.

**2 To make the drink:** To a shaker or blender, add your desired amount of night shift syrup:

- 4 tablespoons for “normal” sweetness
- 3 tablespoons for 75 percent sweetness
- 2 tablespoons for 50 percent sweetness

**3** Add the ice, followed by the tea and milk.

**4** If using a shaker, shake until the syrup is combined with the tea. If using a blender, briefly pulse the drink (do not blend!) until all ingredients are nicely combined.

**5** Drizzle the chocolate syrup (if using) along the sides of your serving glass.

**6** Add  $\frac{1}{4}$  cup (35 g) of the ice cream to your glass, followed by the toppings (if using).

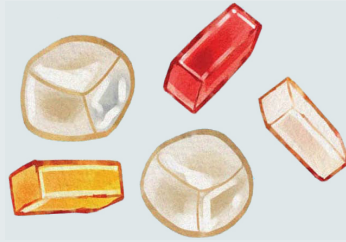
**7** Pour the contents of the shaker into the glass. Put your straw into the glass before adding the ice cream on top.

**8** Add the remaining  $\frac{1}{2}$  cup (70 g) cup ice cream on top, then top with more chocolate syrup (if using).

**TIP**

*Do not take your eyes off the syrup while it's cooking! The peanut butter likes to separate, so make sure you're constantly stirring.*

## TOPPINGS



## BASIL SEEDS

Basil seeds, also known as Sabja seeds, are little black seeds that closely resemble black sesame. These tiny seeds pack a punch in terms of nutrition and make a great add-on or topping to any drink and dessert. Not only are they low in calories, but they're chock-full of fiber, protein, calcium, iron, and magnesium. There's so much fiber inside these little guys, experts have cautioned against eating too many! So be careful and consume sparingly.

When mixed with water, the basil seeds form a clear outer layer around their tiny bodies. This creates a crunchy effect that's fun to eat and slurp up with boba drinks!

**Where to buy:** Online

**Try it with:** [Best Friend](#), [MILK+T Thai Tea](#), and any fruit teas **MAKES**  
**1 cup (200 g)**

- 2 teaspoons edible basil seeds
- 1 cup (240 ml) lukewarm purified water
- 1 tablespoon cane or medium or dark brown sugar (optional)

1 Add the basil seeds to the water.

2 Add the sugar (if using) for sweetness.

3 Stir and let sit for 15 minutes.

4 Add a spoonful of basil seeds to your drink.

5 Store in a sealed container in the refrigerator for up to 1 week.

## CHIA SEEDS

Chia seeds are just as packed with nutrients as Basil Seeds (opposite)! Because chia seeds are much easier to source than basil seeds, they seem to be a popular choice among people trying to diet or those who want to add a nutritional boost to their meals.

**Where to buy:** Grocery stores and online **Try it with:** [Area 51](#) and [UnBEElievable](#)

**MAKES**

**1 cup (200 g)**

- 1 tablespoon (13 g) chia seeds
- 1 cup (240 ml) lukewarm purified water
- 1 tablespoon cane or medium or dark brown sugar (optional)

- 1 Add the chia seeds to the water.
- 2 Add the sugar (if using) for sweetness.
- 3 Stir and let sit for 15 minutes. (Chia seeds clump very easily, so make sure to stir thoroughly.)
- 4 Add a spoonful of chia seeds to your drink.
- 5 Store in a sealed container in the refrigerator for up to 1 week.



## **FLAVORED JELLIES**

LYCHEE JELLY





Lychee jelly is also commonly known as “lychee coconut jelly.” The word “coconut” is often included in the name because the first ingredient is coconut jelly. The jelly is then sweetened with a lychee syrup and served in cold beverages. In the Philippines, there is a similar dessert add-on called nata de coco. The only difference is that you can’t suck it up through a straw. Lychee jelly adds a chewy component to any drink or dessert, and when eaten, one can taste the delicious lychee syrup being squeezed out. It goes great with any fruity drink, and you can also use it to top other desserts, like shaved ice!

**Where to buy:**

Online and specialty Asian wholesale markets

**Try it with:**

Strawberry Tea ([here](#)) and any fruit teas



## RAINBOW JELLY



Rainbow jelly, despite having only three colors, is a topping made with either coconut meat, konjac, or agar agar—depending on which brand you buy. Either way, it is not known to be made with gelatin, so vegans can rejoice! Each color is supposed to represent a different flavor. White = lychee/coconut, yellow = mango, and red = strawberry. But in all honesty, when we tried our supplier’s rainbow jelly, all the “colors” tasted the same! Maybe the brand you buy will taste different, but regardless, the sweet jelly pairs well with fruity drinks and desserts. We’ve witnessed some customers adding rainbow jelly to their milk drinks and loving it, so hey, to each their own!

### Where to buy:

Online and specialty Asian wholesale markets

### Try it with:

**Lady Bug** and any fruit teas



## ALOE VERA JELLY



Often sweetened with a bit of honey syrup, aloe vera jelly is an attractive alternative to calorie-dense boba pearls. While the version you see at boba shops is still jam-packed with sugar and not the healthiest of choices, it does have some nutritional value that one can appreciate. Vitamin C and iron are just some of the nutrients that aloe vera holds in its prickly package. But when processed and cut up into bite-size pieces, the plant no longer looks as intimidating. When sucked through a straw, aloe vera jelly gives a satisfying and refreshing crunch that goes great with fruity drinks.

### Where to buy:

Online and specialty Asian wholesale markets

### Try it with:

**Pineberry** and any fruit teas



## GRASS JELLY



Despite its name, grass jelly is not made with the grass from someone's front lawn. Rather, it's made from Chinese mesona, a plant from the mint family. It's boiled with cassava, potato, or even corn starch and turns into a dark brown jelly once it cools. While there are a number of popular Taiwanese dishes that serve the jelly hot, it is often served chilled inside desserts and bubble tea. It has an ever-so-slightly bitter aftertaste, but it is also known to possess a cooling effect for those hot summer days. Its texture reminds us a bit of a pudding crossed with a jelly—definitely a fun and healthier topping option!

### Where to buy:

Local Asian grocery stores have canned versions that are easily accessible

### Try it with:

**Classic** and **Guilt Trip**





## ◁ **HOMEMADE ALMOND JELLY**

Almond jelly, otherwise known as annin tofu (杏仁豆腐), is a popular Cantonese dessert that also works great as a boba topping! My dad grew up in Hong Kong and emigrated to the United States at the age of nine, so he managed to grow up pretty Americanized. My mom wasn't quite as young, coming from China at the age of twenty, so she brought a lot of her culture with her. Growing up, my parents tried their best to instill their culture in me to preserve what was left. But me being stubborn, I didn't care for any of it. Weekends would go by when my mom would buy annin tofu and bring it home after dim sum with the family. She would ask me if I wanted



any, and I'd shake my head and make a face. At my mother's house, we still stock boxes of instant almond jelly to cure any cravings my mom may have. It never quite made its way to MILK+T, but to pay homage to my Chinese Hong Kong roots, we knew we had to include the recipe.

**Try it with:** **Classic** and any milk drink **MAKES**  
**about 3 cups (810 g)**

- 1 envelope (¼ ounce/7 g) unflavored gelatin powder
- ½ cup (120 ml) cold water
- 2 cups (475 ml) whole milk
- ½ cup (100 g) cane sugar (add another ¼ cup/50 g if you like your desserts extra sweet)
- 1 tablespoon almond extract

1 Bloom the gelatin powder by sprinkling the gelatin into the cold water. Set the mixture aside for at least 5 minutes.

2 In a medium saucepan, heat the milk, sugar, and almond extract over medium heat until all the sugar is dissolved. Remove the pan from the heat and pour in the bloomed gelatin mixture. Stir thoroughly and let it chill in the refrigerator for at least 5 hours, or until solidified.

3 Cut the almond jelly into cubes and eat it with fruit or put it in your drink. It can be refrigerated for up to 3 days.

#### **TIP**

*To get an even creamier dessert, replace the milk with half-and-half. Lactose intolerant? Substitute the milk with a lactose-free or nondairy milk.*



## ◁ **HOMEMADE EGG PUDDING**

We really could give egg pudding the credit for being one of the main reasons MILK+T is self-serve. When going to different tea shops, I always wanted both boba and egg pudding. But without fail, at every shop, there was always an upcharge. As a teenager making a minimum wage of eight dollars an hour, I sadly couldn't afford an extra seventy-five cents, so I had to pick my favorite of the two. Now, had I known how to make my own egg pudding at home, maybe that wouldn't have been a problem! This recipe is incredibly easy to master!

Try it with: **Classic** and **Black Tea à la Mode**

## MAKES

about 3 cups (845 g)

- 1 envelope (¼ ounce/7 g) gelatin powder
- ¼ cup (60 ml) cold water
- 2 cups (475 ml) half-and-half
- 4 egg yolks
- ¼ cup (50 g) cane sugar

- 1 Bloom the gelatin powder by sprinkling the gelatin into the cold water. Set the mixture aside for at least 5 minutes.
- 2 In a medium saucepan, heat the half-and-half over low heat, being sure not to let it simmer or boil.
- 3 In a large bowl, whisk together the egg yolks and sugar for about 2 minutes, or until the sugar is dissolved and the mixture is pale and creamy.
- 4 Turn off the heat, and slowly pour about ½ cup (120 ml) of the heated half-and-half into the egg mixture. Whisk to combine.
- 5 Pour the egg mixture into the pan with the remaining half-and-half. Cook for about 2½ minutes over low to medium heat, whisking constantly to prevent the bottom from burning.
- 6 Remove the pan from the heat and add the bloomed gelatin. Whisk until all the gelatin is nicely dissolved. Let the pudding chill in the refrigerator for at least 4 hours, or until solidified.
- 7 Cut the egg pudding into cubes and put it in your drink. It can be refrigerated for up to 3 days.

## INDEX

### A

almond butter: Humanity First Syrup, [89–90](#)

almond extract

Homemade Almond Jelly, [120](#)

Humanity First Syrup, [89–90](#)

almond milk

as base, [32](#)

Know Your Roots, [95–96](#)

### B

Basil Seeds, [116](#)

black tea

as base, [32](#)

Black Tea à la Mode, [102](#)

brewing, [19](#)

Classic Black Milk Tea, [76](#)

The Evelyn, [98](#)

Homemade Thai Tea, [82](#)

Humanity First, [89–90](#)

Kiwi Tea + Slushie, [53](#)

Lady Bug, [62](#)

Mango Tea + Slushie, [49](#)

Night Shift, [113](#)

with nondairy creamer, [35](#)

origin plant, [16](#)

Pomelo Tea + Slushie, [50](#)

Strawberry Tea + Slushie, [46](#)

Thai tea and, [80](#), [82](#)

Top Shelf, [105](#)

UnBEElievable, [73](#)

blender, [14](#)

boba

5-minute boba, [21](#)

fresh boba, [25–26](#)

grade A boba, [23–24](#)

brewing

black tea, [19](#)  
green tea, [18](#)  
Thai tea, [80](#)

## Brown Sugar Syrup

Best Friend, [79](#)  
Classic Black Milk Tea, [76](#)  
Guilt Trip, [109](#)  
recipe, [31](#)  
Top Shelf, [105](#)

## C

*Camellia sinensis* plant, [16](#)  
caramel sauce: Guilt Trip, [109](#)  
cardamom: Homemade Thai Tea, [82](#)  
cheesecloth, [14](#)  
Chia Seeds, [117](#)  
chocolate syrup  
    Guilt Trip, [109](#)  
    Night Shift, [113](#)  
chocolate wafer stick: Guilt Trip, [109](#)  
cinnamon sticks: Homemade Thai Tea, [82](#)  
coconut-flavored jellies, [118](#)  
coconut milk  
    as base, [32](#)  
    The Piglet, [86](#)  
coffee: Top Shelf, [105](#)  
colanders, [14](#)  
condensed milk: Electric Feel, [110](#)  
creamer  
    Homemade Almond Jelly, [120](#)  
    overview, [34–35](#)  
cucumber  
    Area [51](#), [70](#)  
    Cucumber Syrup, [58](#)  
cutting board, [14](#)

## E



eggs: Homemade Egg Pudding, [123](#)

## equipment

- blender, [14](#)
- cheesecloth, [14](#)
- cocktail shaker, [15](#)
- colander, [14](#)
- cutting board, [14](#)
- fine-mesh strainer, [14](#)
- ice cream scoop, [14](#)
- induction burner, [15](#)
- juicer, [15](#)
- knife, [15](#)
- measuring cups, [15](#)
- measuring spoons, [15](#)
- milk-tea shaker, [15](#)
- muddler, [15](#)
- saucepans, [15](#)
- temperature gun, [15](#)
- thermometer, [15](#)

## F

fine-mesh strainer, [14](#)

fresh boba, [25–26](#)

## G

grade A boba, [23–24](#)

## green tea

- Area [51](#), [70](#)
- as base, [32](#)
- Best Friend, [79](#)
- brewing, [18](#)
- Equality, [69](#)
- Kiwi Tea + Slushie, [53](#)
- Mango Tea + Slushie, [49](#)
- with nondairy creamer, [35](#)
- Pineberry, [66](#)
- origin plant, [16](#)
- Pomelo Tea + Slushie, [50](#)
- Strawberry Tea + Slushie, [46](#)
- UnBEElievable, [73](#)

white peaches and, [45](#)

## H

### half-and-half

Homemade Almond Jelly, [120](#)

Homemade Egg Pudding, [123](#)

### Honey Syrup

recipe, [61](#)

UnBEElievable, [73](#)

## I

ice, [37](#)

### ice cream

Black Tea à la Mode, [102](#)

Electric Feel, [110](#)

Guilt Trip, [109](#)

Night Shift, [113](#)

Pink Panda, [106](#)

Top Shelf, [105](#)

ice cream scoop, [14](#)

induction burner, [15](#)

## J

### jams

Kiwi Jam, [45](#)

Mango Jam, [43](#)

muddlers for, [15](#)

overview, [40](#)

Pomelo Jam, [44](#)

Strawberry Jam, [42](#)

### jellies

Aloe Vera Jelly, [119](#)

Grass Jelly, [119](#)

Homemade Almond Jelly, [120](#)

Lychee Jelly, [118](#)

Rainbow Jelly, [118](#)

juicer, [15](#)

## K

### kiwi

Area [51](#), [70](#)

Kiwi Jam, [45](#)

Kiwi Syrup, [56](#)

Kiwi Tea + Slushie, [53](#)

knife, [15](#)

## L

### lactose-free milk

Best Friend, [79](#)

Classic Black Milk Tea, [76](#)

Electric Feel, [110](#)

The Evelyn, [98](#)

Guilt Trip, [109](#)

Homemade Almond Jelly, [120](#)

Humanity First, [89–90](#)

MILK+T Thai Tea, [81](#)

Night Shift, [113](#)

overview, [36](#)

Pink Panda, [106](#)

Top Shelf, [105](#)

### lemon

Lemon Syrup, [91–92](#)

Mint Tea Lemon Mojito, [91–92](#)

## M

### mango

Equality, [69](#)

Mango Jam, [43](#)

Mango Syrup, [57](#)

Mango Tea + Slushie, [49](#)

Rainbow Jelly, [118](#)

measuring cups, [15](#)

measuring spoons, [15](#)

### milk

Best Friend, [79](#)

Classic Black Milk Tea, [76](#)

Electric Feel, [110](#)  
The Evelyn, [98](#)  
Guilt Trip, [109](#)  
Homemade Almond Jelly, [120](#)  
Humanity First, [89–90](#)  
MILK+T Thai Tea, [81](#)  
Night Shift, [113](#)  
Pink Panda, [106](#)  
Top Shelf, [105](#)

## mint

Mint Tea, [91–92](#)  
Mint Tea Lemon Mojito, [91–92](#)

## muddler, [15](#)

## N

## nondairy creamer

Homemade Almond Jelly, [120](#)  
overview, [34–35](#)

## P

## peanut butter: Night Shift Syrup, [113](#)

## pineapple

Pineapple Syrup, [60](#)  
Pineberry, [66](#)

## pomelos

Pomelo Jam, [44](#)  
Pomelo Tea + Slushie, [50](#)

## pudding: Homemade Egg Pudding, [123](#)

## S

## saucepans, [15](#)

## Simple Syrup

Black Tea à la Mode, [102](#)  
Electric Feel, [110](#)  
Kiwi Tea + Slushie, [53](#)  
Know Your Roots, [95–96](#)  
Mango Tea + Slushie, [49](#)

MILK+T Thai Tea, [81](#)  
Mint Tea Lemon Mojito, [91–92](#)  
Night Shift Syrup, [113](#)  
Pomelo Tea + Slushie, [50](#)  
recipe, [30](#)  
Strawberry Tea + Slushie, [46](#)  
UnBEElievable, [73](#)

star anise: Homemade Thai Tea, [82](#)

## strawberry

Baby Bug, [65](#)  
Equality, [69](#)  
The Evelyn, [98](#)  
Lady Bug, [62](#)  
The Piglet, [86](#)  
Pineberry, [66](#)  
Pink Panda, [106](#)  
Rainbow Jelly, [118](#)  
Strawberry Avalanche, [102](#)  
Strawberry Jam, [42](#)  
Strawberry Syrup, [55](#)  
Strawberry Tea + Slushie, [46](#)

## sweeteners

Brown Sugar Syrup, [31](#)  
Simple Syrup, [30](#)

## syrups

Brown Sugar Syrup, [31](#)  
Cucumber Syrup, [58](#)  
Honey Syrup, [61](#)  
Humanity First Syrup, [89–90](#)  
juicers for, [15](#)  
Kiwi Syrup, [56](#)  
Mango Syrup, [57](#)  
Night Shift Syrup, [113](#)  
overview, [54](#)  
Pineapple Syrup, [60](#)

Simple Syrup, [30](#)

Strawberry Syrup, [55](#)

Watermelon Syrup, [59](#)



## taro root

Know Your Roots, [95–96](#)



Taro Paste, [95–96](#)

temperature gun, [15](#)

Thai tea

black tea and, [80](#), [82](#)

brewing, [80](#)

Homemade Thai Tea, [82](#)

MILK+T Thai Tea, [81](#)

thermometer, [15](#)

toppings

Aloe Vera Jelly, [119](#)

Basil Seeds, [116](#)

Chia Seeds, [117](#)

Grass Jelly, [119](#)

Homemade Almond Jelly, [120](#)

Lychee Jelly, [118](#)

Rainbow Jelly, [118](#)

turmeric: Homemade Thai Tea, [82](#)

## U

ube

Know Your Roots, [95–96](#)

Ube Paste, [95–96](#)

## W

watermelon

Baby Bug, [65](#)

Lady Bug, [62](#)

Watermelon Syrup, [59](#)

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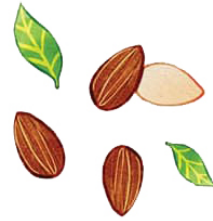
## ABOUT THE AUTHORS

**Stacey Kwong** was born and raised in Los Angeles, California, to immigrant Chinese parents. From reselling phones in high school, to starting a failed clothing line in college, it was as if she was wired to start her own business. But growing up queer in a strict Asian American household, with less than stellar report cards, she struggled to find her passion.

She and her business partner, Beyah del Mundo, found success through boba, with MILK+T, a Los Angeles–based food-truck concept, featuring the first self-serve boba bar on wheels. With tens of thousands of delicious, high-quality drinks sold, MILK+T proudly grew to three owned-and-operated stores in Los Angeles, California, and Portland, Oregon.

**Beyah del Mundo** was born and raised in Manila, Philippines, to Filipino and Chinese parents, and moved to Los Angeles, California, in 2003. As a native Filipino, entrepreneurship skills were ingrained in her head as the only means of survival, never as a career choice. In adulthood, Beyah was able to overcome adversity by thinking outside the box. Instead of complaining about her immigration disadvantages, she decided to outwork everyone.

In 2015, Beyah received a partnership opportunity with Stacey Kwong to start MILK+T, a self-serve boba-bar concept that soon would prove to change the way the world gets #BOBAWASTED.



TO MY MOM: I told you boba would be successful. :)

Dad is looking down, and I hope he'd be proud.







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