

❧ Black Tea Punch ❧

Punch was introduced from the Indian subcontinent to England by employees of the East India Company in the late 17th century.

Punch is usually served at parties in large, wide bowls, known as punch bowls. The original drink was named *paantsch* from Hindi पाँच (pāñc), meaning "five", as the drink was frequently made with five ingredients: alcohol, sugar, juice from either a lime or a lemon, water, and spices or tea.

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Obviously, the other major product of the East India Company is, of course, tea. Originally chartered as the "Governor and Company of Merchants of London Trading into the East-Indies", the company rose to account for half of the world's trade during the mid-1700s, particularly in basic commodities including cotton, silk, indigo dye, sugar, salt, spices, saltpeter, tea, and opium. The company also ruled the beginnings of the British Empire in India.

The combining of tea (stolen from China and cultivated in India) and punch is a clear favorite in colonial America. Ours (actually Les Ford's recipe) also introduces a uniquely American spirit — rye whiskey.

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