



Bissap

a taste of history on the Floridian table

The *Juneteenth Drink* is made from Roselle Hibiscus flowers, and the ruby-red colored beverage was popular in early American history particularly during celebrations and holidays. Native to Africa and India, roselle is the main ingredient in common West African beverages such as *bissap* in Senegal, *sobolo* in Ghana, and *zobo* in Nigeria. It is believed that Roselle was consumed by newly freed enslaved African-Americans to celebrate emancipation. The roselle drink fell out of favor as artificially-colored and flavored red beverages gained popularity in the 20th century. Yet the historical roselle beverage experienced a recent revival as a celebratory Juneteenth Drink today.

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Bissap in Senegal, West Africa



BISSAP

25
MINUTES
TOTAL

4
TOTAL
SERVINGS

INGREDIENTS

- | | |
|---------------------------|----------------------------------|
| 1 1/3 cups water | 2 tsp finely grated fresh ginger |
| 1 1/3 cups sugar or honey | 1 tsp orange juice |
| six ounces dried roselle | fresh mint leaves |
| hibiscus | optional sparkling water |

DIRECTIONS

1. To make the syrup: combine water and sugar in sauce pan and simmer.
2. Remove the pan from the heat when sugar dissolves and add dried roselle.
3. Steep 10 minutes and strain out hibiscus.
4. Stir in the ginger and orange juice, and steep for five minutes.
5. Strain through a fine sieve and let cool completely. Keep refrigerated.
6. To serve: fill a 12-ounce glass one-third with ice and pour 1 ounce hibiscus syrup over the ice. Bruise 4 mint leaves by pinching between fingers and place on ice. Fill glass with sparkling or flat water and stir.



FACTS

The earliest evidence of roselle in Africa dates back at least 6000 years in Egypt, and Sudan remains one of the top producers in the world today. The drought-resistant plant grows well in poor soil and tropical and subtropical climates in Florida where it is referred to as the “Cranberry of the South.” The bright red flowers are not only a beautiful addition to the Florida garden, they are also nutritious and delicious.

Roselle is high in magnesium, potassium, and vitamins C, B9, and niacin.

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