



## 6 Amazing Diabetes-Friendly Cocktail Recipes

**Here are some fun low-carb drink recipes that are sure to spice up any party.**

If you love a good party, this one's for you! Navigating food at parties can be stressful when you're living with diabetes, and then there are cocktails on top of that. Unless you've got a background as a bartender, the carb counts of most drinks are anyone's guess, and it also depends on who's doing the pouring.

When you're the host, you're in control, and you can keep your cocktail party diabetes-friendly. Here is a handy guide to the carb content of alcoholic beverages, followed by six amazing diabetes-friendly cocktails that'll make your party memorable! A huge thank you to Paloma Kemak aka Glitter Glucose for two of these recipes.

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# Carb content of alcoholic beverages

Here's how broad classes of alcoholic beverages break down in carbohydrate content:

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## BEER

**Standard beer:**

13 grams of carb in a 12-oz serving

**Light beer:**

6 grams of carb in a 12-oz serving

**Ultralight beer:**

3 grams of carb in a 12-oz serving



## WINE

**Dry wine:**

4 grams of carb in a 5-oz serving

**Sweet wine:**

14 grams of carb in a 5-oz serving

**Port:**

14 grams of carb in a 2-oz serving



## SPIRITS

Vodka, rum, whisky, and bourbon contain no carbs (though they have approximately 100 calories per 1.5-oz serving).

# The PB&G (Pepper, Basil & Gin)

Adapted from Nicolette Teo & Joel Blum of [LA Spirits Awards](#)

An award winning, no-fuss cocktail.

**Makes: 1 serving**  
**Carbs: 0 grams**

## INGREDIENTS

Red bell pepper

Fresh basil leaves

Ice

Gin

Club soda or  
seltzer water

## DIRECTIONS

1. Thinly slice a small amount of red bell pepper and muddle it in a cocktail shaker with a few fresh basil leaves.
2. Fill the shaker with ice, add a half-ounce of gin\* and club soda or seltzer to taste, and shake vigorously for 3 seconds.
3. Strain over fresh ice into a frosted glass and garnish with additional red pepper strips and a sprig of basil.

\*For a non-alcoholic cocktail, the authors recommend substituting gin for 2 oz of Damrak VirGin (a Silver medal winner in the 2021 L.A. Spirits Awards).

# Sparkling Sangria

Recipe by Paloma aka [Glitter Glucose](#)

A lower-carb version of the sangria we all know and love. Make an entire pitcher with less than 15 grams of carbs!

**Makes:** Entire pitcher  
**Carb:** Depending on fruits

## DIRECTIONS

1. Cut up any of your favorite fruits for a sangria. We used apples, strawberries, and oranges.
2. Add 1 bottle of Prosecco, ½ cup of brandy, and ¼ cup of orange liqueur.
3. Add ice, serve and enjoy!

## INGREDIENTS

Bottle of Prosecco

Brandy

Orange liqueur



# Low Carb White Russian

## INGREDIENTS

2 tablespoons of  
Torani sugar-free  
chocolate syrup

3 ounces of heavy  
cream

¼ teaspoon of  
vanilla extract

1 ounce chilled  
brewed espresso

1 ½ ounce of vodka

Courtesy of Melissa Collins at  
[Perfect Brew](#)

Chocolate and heavy cream.  
That's all I need to know!

**Makes: 1 serving**

**Carbs: 0 grams**

## DIRECTIONS

1. Use a cocktail shaker to combine all the ingredients.
2. Add a moderate amount of ice and shake until it is chilled.
3. Strain into a rocks glass and add ice. Serve.

# Keto Hot Buttered Rum

## INGREDIENTS

2/3 cup (150g) butter

1 star of anise

1/2 tsp powdered  
ginger

1 tbsp cinnamon

1/2 tsp nutmeg

1/2 tsp allspice

1 tsp vanilla

1/4 cup (45g) brown  
sugar substitute

1 tbsp sugar free  
maple syrup

1/2 cup (125ml)  
water

1/2 cup (125ml) rum  
or bourbon

From [The Hungry Elephant](#)

Not low calorie, but definitely low carb. An indulgent winter treat!

**Makes: 6 serving**

**Carbs: 1.5 grams per serving**

## DIRECTIONS

1. In a deep pot, melt the butter over medium heat along with the star of anise.
2. Stir in the ginger, cinnamon, nutmeg, allspice, vanilla, maple syrup and brown sugar.
3. Make sure it is mixed thoroughly and then bring it to a simmer.
4. Pour in the water (it will bubble a bit).
5. Simmer for 10 minutes.
6. Add in the bourbon and leave on the heat for an extra 2 minutes.
7. Take off heat and serve!

# Espresso Martini

Recipe by Paloma aka [Glitter Glucose](#)

Finish off your night with the delicious, no-sugar nightcap.

**Makes: 1 serving**  
**Carb: 0 grams**

## INGREDIENTS

1 shot freshly brewed espresso or 2 tbsp of coffee

2 shots vodka

1 tbsp stevia

Ice

## DIRECTIONS

1. Pour all ingredients into a shaker. The secret to making it frothy is the shaking so shake it like you're on the dance floor!
2. Pour & enjoy.



# Low Carb Christmas Mule

Adapted from  
[The Spruce Eats](#)

You didn't think I'd leave you wondering, did you? This one is a snap.

**Makes: 1 serving**  
**Carbs: 0 grams**

## INGREDIENTS

1 1/2 ounces pear vodka

4 ounces diet ginger beer

1 cinnamon stick

## DIRECTIONS

1. In a small saucepan, heat the ginger beer gently for a few minutes. It should reach a very low simmer, but not a boil.
2. Pour the vodka into a warmed Irish coffee glass or mug, then top with the warm ginger beer.
3. Drop a cinnamon stick into the glass.
4. Serve and enjoy!



# Drinking Alcohol Safely with Diabetes

As you can see, if you stick to light or ultralight beer, dry wine, and spirits, you can keep your carb intake relatively low while enjoying an adult beverage. In fact, alcohol consumption (without added carbs) tends to cause low blood sugar and can lead to hypoglycemia if you are not careful. However, it's the mixers (such as soft drinks and juice) that tend to cause blood sugar spikes for people with diabetes. When you drink, make sure it is in moderation and avoid becoming too intoxicated. Being drunk impairs your judgment, including interfering with your decision-making when it comes to managing diabetes. Plus, being drunk can look like hypoglycemia, so friends and family members might think you are drunk based on your behavior, when you are actually experiencing hypoglycemia and are in danger.

Because of all this, drinking alcohol can be especially complicated for people with diabetes. Avoiding alcohol is the healthiest choice for people with or without diabetes (and no matter what, it's illegal to drink alcohol in the US if you are under the age of 21), however there are ways to do so safely.

If you do choose to drink, always make sure that you are with someone who is not drinking who can respond quickly in case you experience an emergency low (and provide you with either carbs or glucagon). In addition, if you have a continuous glucose monitor (CGM), use it – and make sure you have a care-partner who is also watching your glucose levels.

Finally, there are tips around eating and dosing insulin that you should keep in mind: have a meal with fat and protein beforehand, avoid drinking when dancing or exercising (this can cause your glucose to plummet), closely monitor your glucose levels to help determine your insulin dosing (and you most likely should not bolus for alcohol). To learn more about staying safe while drinking, read, "[Drink to That: How to Safely Consume Alcohol with Diabetes.](#)"

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