

“Villing”

When Mr. Land was sick, Reuben came home to find Swede making what she calls “soup.” The family calls it villing, and it’s described as “hot milk with a little sugar stirred in, also some butter and a shake of cinnamon.” To Reuben, it was “sick food.”

This is a much more appetizing version—with a little something extra for adults only: a more-than-adequate alternative to eggnog at the holidays.

Better-Than-Villing Hot Milk Punch

Makes 1 cocktail

¾ cup milk
¼ cup coconut milk (regular or lite)
1 tablespoon packed light brown sugar
1 teaspoon vanilla extract
1 to 1 ½ tablespoons brandy
Grated nutmeg or ground cinnamon for garnish
Cinnamon stick for garnish (optional)

Heat milks and sugar in a small saucepan over medium-low heat; cook, stirring, until frothy and steaming. Stir in vanilla and brandy, then pour into a coffee mug; garnish with nutmeg or cinnamon and a cinnamon stir-stick, if desired.

Better-Than-Villing Hot Milk Punch for a Crowd

Makes 8 cocktails

6 cups milk
2 cups coconut milk (regular or lite)
½ cup packed light brown sugar
3 to 4 tablespoons vanilla extract
½ to ¾ cup brandy
Grated nutmeg or ground cinnamon for garnish
Cinnamon sticks for garnish (optional)

Heat milks and sugar in a large saucepan over medium-low heat; cook, stirring, until frothy and steaming. Stir in vanilla and brandy, then divide among 8 coffee mugs; garnish with nutmeg or cinnamon and cinnamon stir-sticks, if desired.

