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The Best Sangria

Serves 4

The longer sangria sits before drinking, the more smooth and mellow it will taste. A full day is best, but if that's impossible, give it an absolute minimum of two hours to sit. Use large, heavy, juicy oranges and lemons for the best flavor. If you can't find superfine sugar, process an equal amount of granulated sugar in a food processor for 30 seconds. Doubling or tripling the recipe is fine, but you'll have to switch to a large punch bowl in place of the pitcher. An inexpensive Merlot is the best choice for this recipe.

- 2 oranges (1 sliced, 1 juiced to yield ½ cup)
- 1 lemon, sliced
- 1/4 cup superfine sugar
- 1 (750-ml) bottle fruity red wine, chilled
- 1/4 cup Triple Sec
- 6-8 ice cubes

- **1.** Add sliced orange, lemon, and sugar to large pitcher. Mash fruit gently with wooden spoon until fruit releases some juice, but is not totally crushed, and sugar dissolves, about 1 minute. Stir in orange juice, wine, and triple sec; refrigerate for at least 2 or up to 8 hours.
- **2.** Before serving, add 6 to 8 ice cubes and stir briskly to distribute settled fruit and pulp; serve immediately.

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