



**THE FUTURE HAS NO ALCOHOL**

No alcohol. No added sugar. No compromises.



## ALL THE EXPERIENCE. NONE OF THE ALCOHOL

Consumers are rethinking their relationship with alcohol, and the beverage industry is responding in a big way. As demand for alcohol-free options grows, ready-to-drink (RTD) mocktails are emerging as one of the fastest-rising categories. But today's consumers expect more than just "no alcohol." They want beverages that taste great, feel authentic, and are made with clean, recognizable ingredients, without added sugar.

That's where smart formulation makes all the difference.

Creating a great mocktail isn't about simply removing alcohol, it's about replacing the experience. From the bright pop of citrus and the complexity of botanicals to the subtle warmth known as "the burn," every element must be carefully crafted. By combining natural sweeteners, balanced acidity, herbal infusions, and functional ingredients, formulators can recreate the depth, mouthfeel, and satisfaction consumers expect from traditional cocktails.

**"It is becoming clear that, for whatever reasons, today's younger generations are just less interested in alcohol and are more likely than older generations to see it as risky for their health..."** — Dr. George Koob, Time Magazine.

At the same time, clean label expectations are higher than ever. Shoppers are reading labels, avoiding artificial ingredients, and seeking products they can trust. This creates a powerful opportunity for brands to deliver RTD mocktails that are not only alcohol-free, but also transparent, better-for-you, and aligned with modern wellness trends.

The result? A new generation of beverages that don't feel like a compromise. They're vibrant, refreshing, and designed to stand on their own, whether enjoyed socially or as part of a healthier lifestyle.

For brands and formulators, the message is clear: the future of cocktails isn't just alcohol-free, it's smarter, cleaner, and more intentional than ever before.



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# FAST FACTS

**1. The shift is real** Alcohol consumption is declining, while non-alcoholic RTDs are surging, with triple-digit growth in recent years.

**2. “No alcohol” isn’t enough anymore** Today’s consumers expect full flavor, clean ingredients, and no added sugar, not just a missing ingredient.

**3. The “burn” can be built** That signature cocktail warmth doesn’t require alcohol. It can be recreated using ingredients like ginger, acids, and botanicals.

**4. Clean label is driving decisions** Shoppers are actively seeking beverages with recognizable, natural ingredients and transparent labeling.

**5. Formulation is the differentiator** The brands winning in mocktails aren’t just removing alcohol, they’re engineering balance, mouthfeel, and experience from the ground up.



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## FAQ

### 1. How can formulators replicate the “burn” of alcohol without ethanol?

**Answer:** The perception of “burn” is primarily a trigeminal response, not a flavor. It can be recreated by layering controlled irritants, such as gingerols, capsaicinoids, organic acids, and certain botanical extracts. The key is balance. Too much creates harshness, too little loses authenticity. When properly calibrated alongside acidity and sweetness, these ingredients can deliver a clean, warming sensation that closely mimics ethanol without the drawbacks.

### 2. What role do sweetener systems play in no-added-sugar mocktails?

**Answer:** Sweetener systems are foundational to structure, not just sweetness. Natural options like allulose, monk fruit, and stevia must be strategically blended to deliver temporal profiles, mouthfeel, and flavor harmony. Allulose, for example, contributes bulk and a sugar-like curve, while high-intensity sweeteners fine-tune sweetness. A well-designed system avoids aftertaste while supporting the overall sensory experience.

### 3. How is mouthfeel achieved in the absence of alcohol?

**Answer:** Alcohol contributes viscosity and body, so replacing it requires functional ingredients that enhance texture. Soluble fibers, glycerin, and carefully balanced solids can create a more rounded, full-bodied profile. These components help mimic the weight and linger of traditional cocktails, preventing the product from feeling thin or diluted.

### 4. Why are acid systems critical in mocktail formulation?

**Answer:** Acids act as both flavor enhancers and structural tools. Citric, malic, and tartaric acids can be combined to shape brightness, sharpness, and perceived freshness. Beyond taste, acids help “lift” other ingredients, making flavors more expressive and dynamic. Proper acidulation is essential for recreating the crisp, balanced profile of a well-made cocktail.

### 5. What differentiates a premium RTD mocktail from a basic alcohol-free beverage?

**Answer:** A premium RTD mocktail is designed holistically. It balances sweetness, acidity, bitterness, aromatics, and trigeminal sensations to deliver a complete sensory experience. It also aligns with clean-label expectations by using recognizable ingredients and avoiding unnecessary additives. Ultimately, the difference lies in intention: premium products are engineered to replace the cocktail experience, not simply remove alcohol.



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