

Prep time: 15 minutes

Chill time: 2 hours

Active time (at serving): 5-10 minutes

Total time: About 2 hours 25 minutes

Intensities:

- Sweetness: Medium
 - Tartness: Medium
 - Spice (warming): Low-medium
 - Effort: Low
 - Visual drama: Very high
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Ingredients

For the punch base

- 8 cups (64 oz / 1.9 L) unsweetened black cherry juice, chilled
- 4 cups (32 oz / 950 mL) pomegranate juice, chilled
- 2 cups (16 oz / 475 mL) dark grape juice, chilled
- 1 ½ cups (12 oz / 355 mL) freshly squeezed orange juice (about 4–5 oranges)
- ½ cup (4 oz / 120 mL) freshly squeezed lime juice (about 4 limes)
- ⅓ cup (80 mL) honey or maple syrup (adjust to taste)
- 1 cinnamon stick

- 4 whole star anise pods
- 6 whole cloves
- 1-inch piece fresh ginger, thinly sliced (optional, for a subtle bite)

For the “black magic” finish

- 1-2 blocks food-grade dry ice (about 1 lb / 450 g total)—see safety notes
- Gummy worms, lychee “eyeballs” (canned lychees with a blueberry or grape in the center), and black grapes for garnish
- Orange peel twists or a hollowed-out small pumpkin as a serving vessel (optional)

Equipment

- Large punch bowl (at least 1.5 gallons / 6 L capacity) or a large cauldron-style pot
- Long ladle
- Tongs (for handling dry ice)
- Fine-mesh strainer

Instructions

Step 1: Bloom the spices (5 minutes)

In a small saucepan over medium-low heat, warm the honey (or maple syrup) with the cinnamon stick, star anise, cloves, and ginger for 3–4 minutes until fragrant. Do not let it boil. Remove from heat and let steep for 10 minutes.

Intensity note: For a stronger spice flavor, steep up to 20 minutes. For a milder brew, strain after 5 minutes.

Step 2: Build the base (5 minutes)

In your punch bowl (or a large pitcher, if chilling in the fridge), combine the black cherry, pomegranate, and grape juices. Stir in the orange juice and lime juice. Pour the warmed, strained honey-spice mixture through a fine-mesh strainer into the bowl, discarding the whole spices. Stir well.

Taste check: The punch should be tart with a gentle sweetness. Add more honey 1 tablespoon at a time if needed—remember it will taste slightly less sweet when very cold.

Step 3: Chill thoroughly (2 hours)

Cover and refrigerate for at least 2 hours, or up to 24 hours. Chilling is essential: a cold punch keeps the dry ice effect dramatic and slows dilution.

Step 4: Prep the garnishes (10 minutes, can be done ahead)

Thread gummy worms onto skewers or let them float. Make “eyeballs” by pressing a blueberry or small grape into the hole of each drained lychee. Keep garnishes refrigerated until serving.

Step 5: The magic finish (5 minutes at serving)

Just before your guests arrive, place the punch bowl on a stable, heat-safe surface (a rimmed tray or towel protects furniture). Using tongs and gloves, add one block of dry ice (about ½ lb) to the bowl. It will begin to fog immediately. Stir gently with the ladle to distribute the fog.

Safety note: Never touch dry ice with bare hands, never place it directly in a glass someone will drink from, and never seal dry ice in a closed container. Keep pieces larger than a pea so they sink and fog rather than being accidentally swallowed. Do not add dry ice to individual serving glasses; ladle punch from the bowl, avoiding the ice block, and add a fresh small block to the bowl as needed for continued fog.

Step 6: Serve

Ladle punch into cups, avoiding the dry ice. Garnish each glass with gummy worms or an “eyeball.” For extra drama, serve from a hollowed-out pumpkin or cauldron and dim the lights—the fog will glow under candlelight or a small LED.

Timing tip: Dry ice fog lasts about 10–15 minutes per block. Add the second block midway through the party for a second wave of fog. If you’re not using dry ice, the punch is still delicious—serve over regular ice made from the same juices so it doesn’t water down.

Variations & Substitutions

- Non-alcoholic (as written): This recipe is alcohol-free. For an adult version, stir in 2 cups of vodka or dark rum before chilling (reduces servings slightly by volume; adjust juice to taste).
- Less sweet: Reduce honey to 2 tablespoons and use unsweetened juices throughout.

- Spicier “witch’s brew”: Add a pinch of cayenne or a sliced jalapeño to the honey-spice steep, then strain.
 - No dry ice: Use a fog machine nearby, or serve in a bowl over crushed ice with a few drops of food-safe bubbling effect (e.g., a splash of club soda in each glass).
 - Citrus swap: Blood orange juice deepens the color; lemon can replace lime in a pinch.
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Make-Ahead & Storage

- Make ahead: The punch base can be made up to 3 days ahead and stored covered in the fridge. Add garnishes and dry ice only at serving.
 - Storage: Leftover punch (without dry ice) keeps 3–4 days refrigerated in a sealed container. Discard any punch that has had dry ice in it for more than a few hours—for best quality, remove and discard the dry ice block before storing leftovers.
 - Freezing: Freeze leftover punch in ice cube trays to use as non-diluting ice for the next batch.
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Nutrition (per serving, about 4 oz / 120 mL)

Estimated; values vary by brand of juice and amount of honey used. Excludes garnishes. Dry ice adds no nutrition.

Nutrient	Amount
Calories	~85 kcal
Total fat	0 g
Saturated fat	0 g
Sodium	~5 mg
Total carbohydrates	~21 g
Sugars	~18 g
Fiber	<1 g
Protein	<1 g
Vitamin C	~15% DV
Potassium	~150 mg