Sunflower Seed and Cinnamon Horchata with Agave

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Makes 6 servings of 1 cup each, before ice

Ingredients with Glycemic Index (GI) Reference

Raw sunflower seeds, hulled and unsalted	1 cup	NA
Water for soaking	Enough to cover seeds	NA
Fresh water for the drink	About 6 cups, divided	NA
Mexican cinnamon stick, about 3 inches long	1 stick	NA[1]
Pure vanilla extract	1 teaspoon	NA[1]
Agave nectar	2 tablespoons	22–28[2]
Salt	1 small pinch	NA
Ice	As needed for serving	NA

Instructions

1. **Soak the sunflower seeds.** Place seeds in a bowl and cover with water by 2 inches. Cover and refrigerate for 6 to 8 hours or overnight. Drain and rinse. Discard the soaking water.
2. **Infuse the cinnamon.** Combine the cinnamon stick and 2 cups fresh water in a small saucepan. Bring to a gentle simmer, cover, and simmer 5 minutes. Remove from heat and steep 15 minutes. Remove and discard the cinnamon stick. Let the infusion cool.
3. **Blend.** Add drained seeds, cooled cinnamon infusion, and 2 more cups fresh water to a blender. Blend on high for 1 to 2 minutes, until smooth as possible. Work in batches if needed.
4. **Strain and sweeten.** Pour through a fine-mesh strainer lined with cheesecloth or a nut-milk bag into a large measuring jug. Press or squeeze to extract the liquid. Stir in agave, vanilla, and salt. Add enough of the remaining fresh water to reach exactly 6 cups; stir well.
5. **Chill and serve.** Cover and refrigerate until cold. Stir or shake before pouring because settling is natural. Serve 1 cup per person over ice. Keep refrigerated and use within 3 days.

[1] GI is not useful in these small amounts. NA applies to ingredients with little or no available carbohydrate; it is not a food quality rating.
[2] Published values of 22 and 28 apply to specific tested light agave syrups, not every brand or this finished drink. Agave remains a concentrated sweetener.

Recipe used with permission from Dr. Claudia Serrato.