

## WHIPPED SYLLABUB

½ cup white sugar  
2 lemons  
1 cup of Madeira wine  
2 cups of heavy cream  
Nutmeg, for garnish

Place ½ cup of sugar into a mixing bowl and rub the lemons into the sugar to extract the oils, until fragrant. Juice the lemons, and add the juice to the mixing bowl, along with the Madeira wine and the heavy cream. Use an electric mixer with a whisk attachment to beat the mixture until it is a light froth (this should take a few minutes).

Fill wine glasses with 3 to 4 oz of Madeira wine and sweeten with a teaspoon of sugar. Stir well to ensure sugar is dissolved (a 1:1 simple syrup could be used in place of sugar to eliminate the stirring). Fill the remainder of the glass with spoonsful of the whipped syllabub, and top with grated nutmeg. Serve immediately. *If you do not have Madeira, you can substitute any wine you have on hand.*



Syllabub is a whipped dessert. In the 18<sup>th</sup> century it was constantly evolving, sometimes into an alcoholic drink called “whipped syllabub.” This particular incarnation has been adapted from the 8<sup>th</sup> edition of William Augustus Henderson’s *The Housekeeper’s Instructor; or, Universal Family Cook* published in 1800. It features Madeira wine, an oxidized fortified wine favored by General Washington and his peers. Records show Washington ordered substantial amounts of Madeira during this lifetime.<sup>1</sup>

This type of drink became so popular that “whipt syllabub” entered the language as an expression meaning “a flimsy, frothy discourse or treatise, without solidity” according to Francis Grose’s *The 1811 Dictionary of the Vulgar Tongue*. It even found its way into the debates of the First Congress in 1789 when South Carolina representative Aedanus Burke derided a motion proposing an addition to the First Amendment as “little better than whip syllabub, frothy and full of wind, formed only to please the palate.”<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.mountvernon.org/library/digitalhistory/digital-encyclopedia/article/madeira/>

<sup>2</sup> “Amendments to the Constitution, [15 August] 1789,” *Founders Online*, National Archives, <https://founders.archives.gov/documents/Madison/01-12-02-0224>. [Original source: *The Papers of James Madison*, vol. 12, 2 March 1789–20 January 1790 and supplement 24 October 1775–24 January 1789, ed. Charles F. Hobson and Robert A. Rutland. Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1979, pp. 339–342.]