

Title: **"the Thinking Bartender"**  
Author: George Sinclair

## Preface

When it comes to writing a book on bartending, it is only possible to put into writing certain aspects of the trade. You do not read a book and become more personable to your customers, friendliness is something you have, or you do not. No one goes to a bar to be insulted or receive mediocre service, so being polite and efficient seems to me to be a logical thing to assume, without being told.

A cocktail book should only be bought for its recipes, its explanations of these recipes, related techniques and so on. Rather than buying a book that lists every cocktail recipe ever created, consider buying a book that presents you with a style of making cocktails, and a selection of cocktails representing this style. Presenting my own style of bartending is what I will endeavour to do, presenting you with my understanding of certain recipes, and techniques.

When it comes to cocktail recipes, most bartenders operate under the principle 'more is better'. However, a cocktail recipe, which simply combines two variations, will not necessarily be twice as good. Deconstructing each recipe into its component parts, and then trying to understand each ingredients role within the recipe is the style that I preach.

Many bartenders go to great lengths to 'improve' cocktail recipes, when all that is really needed is to understand the original recipe, and what it was trying to achieve.

Understanding classic cocktails is the gateway to understanding all cocktails. One of the hardest parts of bartending however, is finding out what a classic cocktail actually is. After reading a few books you will quickly come to realise what different peoples ideas of a classic cocktail are. Each country has its own definition of what makes a classic cocktail, but generally it is a recipe that has stood the test of time, and is regularly called for in most bars.

Understanding how specific spirits/ brands are made will help you to appreciate their qualities all the more, either when drinking them straight, or mixed in cocktails. Learning how to balance these flavours is a skill that all bartending enthusiasts, professional or otherwise need to acquire and it only comes through patience, and practice.

Remembering little stories about classic cocktails only serves to entertain your guests, not quench their thirsts. These cocktail stories are usually widely

disputed; therefore I believe that knowing who invented something is far less important than how or why they invented it.

It will take years not months to become a great bartender, so regularly assess how you are doing.

### **Garnish & presentation: The Final Touch**

The appearance of a cocktail makes it appear more interesting/ appealing, but it does not improve the flavour. The art of cocktails is a culinary art, so the end result must always be good taste, and flavours. No amount of dressing will disguise the fact of a foul tasting and poorly constructed libation.

### **Measurements**

Everything is denoted as being measured in shots, which can in turn be substituted for any other measurement. The point is to keep the proportions as they are. If you have bigger drinking glasses than those that I use, you will have to increase the size of your shots.

American ounces are c. 30ml  
English measures as 25mls  
Germany/ Scandinavia has 20ml shots. (2cl)

Keep the proportions the same, and the taste will always be the same, regardless of the actual servings size.

<b>Glossary</b>
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**Tall glass:** Hi-ball, Collins etc

**Whisky glass:** Old fashioned glass, lo-ball, tumbler, rocks glass etc

**Cocktail glass:** v-shaped glass, or the glass commonly misdescribed as a 'martini' glass.

**Shake with ice:** In a cocktail shaker or closed container filled with ice, the ingredients are added, and then shaken. This shaking should not be too hard so that it smashes the ice too much. The duration of the shaking should not be for too long, 30 shakes should be enough. Shaking a cocktail 'waters down' the contents to a greater degree than stirring, due to the ice impacting each end of the shaker. The shaking of certain ingredients (pineapple juice, egg white) adds a foamy head to a cocktail. Shaking is also the best way of mixing drinks that contain dairy products (milk, cream).

**Stir with ice:** In a mixing glass containing ice and the ingredients, the ice is briskly rotated to chill the contents. This stirring should not chip the ice, as this will lead to ice floating on the surface of the drink. If you do chip the ice, use an inexpensive tea strainer to pass the cocktail through; this will retain the ice crystals/ chips. The technique that I recommend is to hold the bar spoon firmly against the inside of the mixing glass, and follow the interior of the mixing glass with the spoon using circular motions. This will result in the ice spinning on its axis, and should be totally silent and smooth when this is being done. This means that the ice is not clattering together, and will therefore not be chipping.

**...and strain:** This refers to pouring the cocktail into the glass it is going to be served in, while at the same time retaining the ice it was mixed with. Some people like to pour their cocktails into a glass along with the ice it was shaken with, but I prefer to pour the cocktail onto new ice. The new ice will last longer in the glass, and will also look better compared with shattered ice cubes.

**Rimming a glass with sugar, or salt:** When rimming a glass with sugar or salt, moisten the rim with a piece of fresh fruit, I usually use a lemon slice. Then roll the rim of the glass in the ground sugar/salt, turning the glass by its stem. Do not stand the glass upside down in the salt/sugar, you are only meant to be coating the outside of the glass. 'Rimming' the glass in this fashion, stops salt/sugar getting into the drink, and also produces a finer line of sugar/ salt.

**Blend with ice:** Into an electrical blender add all of the listed ingredients, and then double the quantity with ice. Always use crushed ice in your blended drinks. Using crushed ice when blending helps to control the thickness of the eventual cocktail. Using crushed ice also ensures that you do not end up with cubes of ice sitting on top of the drink. It is also quicker to use crushed ice.

**Build over ice:** pour the ingredients over ice, and then serve.

**Orange twists:** To make an orange twist, finely cut a section of orange peel off, about the size of your thumb. The trick is to hold the knife flat against the orange, and cut just under the surface. All the time you are cutting, you should be able to see the knife through the pores in the oranges surface.

This takes practice, and this is the same technique you use to make lemon twists.

**Using the Orange twist:** Once the twist is cut, great care must be taken not to squeeze it too hard before properly using it. The skin of the orange contains oil; it is these oils that are squeezed onto the surface of the cocktail. Lightly hold the twist between your thumb and the next finger, with the actual surface of the fruit facing downwards, towards the cocktail. When you squeeze your fingers together the oils will be squirted out onto the surface of the cocktail. Make sure the twist bends towards the drink, when you squeeze it.

An added touch is to rub the 'twists' surface around the rim of the glass. Make sure you do not use the pith side by mistake, the pith is bitter in taste.

## **Pousse Cafe Layering Techniques**

### **1. Using a teaspoon or bar spoon.**

After pouring the first ingredient, place the 'back' of the tea/ bar spoon onto the surface of the first ingredient. Pour the next ingredient into the centre of the spoons concave surface (the bowl of the spoon). As the spoon fills up, liquor will spill over the edge, gently layering onto the top of the first ingredient. The spoon is meant to slow the movement of the liquid, so that it rolls onto the surface of the previous ingredient without disturbing its surface too much. This technique is also preferable if you are layering cream onto an Irish coffee.

Use the bowl of the spoon, not the back of the spoon, as so many preach.

### **2. Flat ended bar spoon.**

Not all bars have this kind of bar spoon; it has a round flat end, and a rifled spiral stem. After pouring the initial ingredient place the flat end of the bar spoon just under the first ingredients surface. Place the pour spout of the next ingredient against the stem of the bar spoon, about 6 inches up. Allow a little of the liqueur at a time to travel down the stem. As the flat end fills up the liquid will gradually spill out onto the surface of the previous ingredient. This technique is better than #1, especially if you are going for a 10+ layered shot, in one of those tall narrow shot glass.

## **Sugar syrup**

Also known as simple syrup, this is the simplest way of adding sweetness to your cocktails. Into a saucepan add: half a litre of water, then keep pouring in granulated white sugar until the total volume becomes one whole litre. Heat up the two ingredients, so that they dissolve together, cool it down; then bottle it. This is the method for making true 1:1 sugar syrup.

Sugar syrup is also referred to as gomme syrup, sirop de gomme, and gum syrup.

Some commercially produced sugar/ gomme syrups use as much as 7 parts sugar to 1 part water. These 7:1 syrups are, of course, thick and extremely

sweet. Sugar syrups, which are of a 7:1 ratio, add less additional volume to a drink they are used in, compared with a 1:1 ratio sugar syrup.

Sugar does not dissolve well in cold water. If you crush sugar cubes in your cocktails (e.g. Caipirinha), then you will end up with gritty drinks, unless you spend a little more time pulverising the sugar into a clear liquid (which resembles sugar syrup).

### **Grenadine syrup**

aka. Pomegranate syrup.

This is a, usually, red coloured syrup, made with pomegranates. The syrup and the name, Grenadine, originate from the Caribbean island of Granada. Nowadays, many syrup producers do not put pomegranates into their grenadine (pomegranate syrup), and their products are nothing more than red-coloured sugar syrup. Always try to buy grenadine syrup that contains pomegranate, but if you can't you can always have a try at making your own by combining fresh pomegranate juice with ordinary sugar syrup.

## **Vodka Section**

To understand vodka is to understand the process of distillation.

Alcohol boils at a lower temperature than water, so alcohol can be separated from a mixed solution of alcohol and water by heating to below the point where the water boils.

Alcohol boils at 78.3 degrees Celsius, whereas water boils at 100 degrees Celsius. And so as the alcohol boils off, the water will stay where it is. When the evaporated alcohol recondenses and reforms back into a liquid, it will be of a higher strength in alcohol due to its lack of dilution.

Producing industrial alcohol is relatively simple; producing a flavoursome spirit however is not. To distil pure alcohol 200 percent proof (100% abv), is not actually achievable. 196 percent proof (98% abv) is the highest distillable strength of alcohol.

Pure alcohol (ethanol) is odourless, colourless, and most notably tasteless. Due to the high degree of distillation, the congeners (the elements that provide the taste) are stripped away, and this renders the liquid characterless. Most vodka is distilled to between 80% and 90% abv (multiply by 2 for the proof rating), and therefore retains some of the flavours from the initial ingredients used to produce the alcohol. This is the principle behind vodka, alcohol balanced with flavour, not just pure alcohol.

To distil a liquid with a high alcohol content, you must start with a liquid with a low alcohol content. This liquid is sometimes referred to as wort/ beer/ mash etc, the name depends on who is brewing it, and for which eventual spirit. The simplest way to produce alcohol is to use yeast and sugar, and water. The yeast eats the sugar, then produces two things: carbon dioxide and alcohol. You will then have a low alcohol solution of alcohol, water and the solids (the left over grains, and the dead yeast).

The low alcohol solution is first distilled to around 12%abv (24% proof). The liquid will then be alcohol, water and congeners (the flavour elements); the main element to have been removed by the first distillation is the solids (i.e. the grains themselves). Great care must be taken when the distilling the liquid when it contains solids, as they can stick to the bottom of the still and burn. This, as you can probably guess, adds a burnt taste to the spirit.

All the subsequent distillations concentrate the alcohol further, by removing more of the water content. It is also while the liquid is being further distilled that more of the congeners are removed, but remove too many and you have a flavourless, though highly alcoholic liquid.

Using good distillation procedures, a totally pure alcoholic spirit can be obtained after just two runs through the stills.

Products that claim to have been distilled more than 3 times, lead me to ask "why so many?" The only answer that I can think of is that people are associating extreme amounts of distillations with a purer spirit. This is not true, a totally pure spirit needs at most 3 distillations, any more than that and it is just for show (or more precisely, marketing).

The same opinion should be held toward excessive filtration. A spirit should be filtered no more than twice, especially if coupled with a triple distillation process.

### **Which is the most important ingredient of a distilled spirit?**

Actually, each of the ingredients used is just as important as any of the others. Impure water will ruin the brew, bad yeast will produce an undesirable flavour, and as the 'sugar source' contains a lot of the flavour for the eventual spirit, it too is important.

### **Bad ingredients equate to a bad spirit**

When I refer to a 'sugar source' I mean the "food for the yeast", from which it (the yeast) produces the alcohol. Cooking breaks down the starch in most foods, cereals, and plants, this transforms the starch into sugar. My explanation is

simplistic I admit, but as long as you have a basic understanding of what is going on, you can build upon it with further research. For now, simply knowing what a spirit is made from is enough to aid you immeasurably in understanding why spirits taste like they do.

Once you obtain your sugar source, from the cereal grains etc, you allow the yeast to consume it, thus producing the alcohol. Then from the mixture of alcohol, water and solids, you remove the water content, and solids. How is the water removed? Well, actually the alcohol is removed, by boiling it away from the water. And that is how distilling, very basically, works.

### **The Heart of the Matter**

Not all the elements, which pass through to the end of the distillation process, are desirable, the middle portion, or "heart" is the part that is particularly sought after. The first part, and last part of the distillation, called the heads, and the tails respectively, must be separated from the heart. The heads and tails contain different types of alcohol, some of which have undesirable effects on those that consume them. The skill of the distiller comes from controlling when to cut the first part (heads) away from the distillate as it comes out of the still. Then while the still is running, the distiller must once again decide when to cut the distillate, this time before the last part (tails) starts to appear. It is not a clear cut that is made each time; some of the heads, and some of the tails are needed, to add a little character to the finished spirit.

Absolut vodka, from Sweden, comes out of the still completely pure, when it is distilled for the final time. The characterless spirit then has more flavourful distillate added to it; this provides the taste of the vodka. European vodka is noticeably different from American style vodkas, by the fact that it is not "tasteless, colourless and odourless" (i.e. it actually does taste of something).

There is more than one type of alcohol produced by the whole process of fermentation and distillation. The desirable alcohol: ethanol is "tasteless, colourless and odourless", it is the other alcohols and flavour components (congeners) that provide the flavour of the spirit.

### **So when the "heads" and the "tails" are separated, what happens to them?**

The heads and the tails are put back into the still to be distilled again. And each subsequent time that they come out of the still, as "heads" and "tails", they are put back to be distilled again. This "little" cycle causes Phillip Hills, in his book "Appreciating Whisky", to ask:

"If the foreshots (heads) and feints (tails) are [...] redistilled, and the same thing happens again and again, is there not a build-up of some pretty hefty organic compounds?"

He continues:

"When the distillery is closed in the summer for its annual maintenance, the receiver is opened and cleaned. Its walls are thickly coated with a dark, waxy oily substance which has accumulated over the preceding year's distillation."

Phillip Hills is writing about Scotch whisky, but the process of distillation is basically the same for all alcoholic spirits. Understand one, and you, almost, understand them all.

## **Vodka Cocktails**

### **Black Russian**

1 ½ shots Vodka  
¾ shot Kahlúa (coffee liqueur)

Stir with ice, then strain into an ice filled tumbler.

Note: This recipe is equivalent to a ratio of 2:1, bear that in mind when analysing cocktail recipes.

### **White Russian**

2 shots Vodka  
1 shot Kahlúa (coffee liqueur)  
2 shots cream/ milk

Shake with ice, then strain into an ice filled tumbler.

### **Caipirovka**

Aka. Caipiroska

1 ½ shots Vodka  
¾ shot sugar syrup  
1 lime (cut into quarters)

Place quartered lime into short glass. Crush the lime pieces with a wooden muddler. Pour in the sugar syrup, and then fill the glass full of crushed ice. Pour the vodka over the crushed ice, and then stir thoroughly. Add two short straws.

This is the vodka version of the Brazilian 'Caipirinha'.

### **The Dreamy Dorini Smokin' Martini**

Created by Audrey Saunders

2 shots Vodka  
½ shot Scotch (something smoky like Laphroig)  
2 dashes of Pernod/ Ricard

Shake with ice, then strain into a chilled cocktail glass; garnish with a lemon twist.

### **Bloody Mary**

1 ½ shots Vodka,  
¼ shot fresh lemon juice,  
Salt, pepper, Tabasco sauce,  
Worcestershire sauce (all to taste)  
Top with tomato juice

Stir with ice, then strain into a tall glass filled with ice; garnish with a lemon slice.

### **Bloody Caesar**

Best-selling cocktail in Canada

1 ½ shots Vodka  
¼ shot fresh lime juice  
Celery salt, pepper, Tabasco sauce,  
Worcestershire sauce (each ingredient is to taste)  
Top with Clamato juice (half tomato juice/ half clam juice)

Stir with ice, then strain into a tall glass filled with ice; garnish with a stick of celery.

### **Russian Spring Punch**

Created by Dick Bradsell

2 shots Vodka  
¾ shot fresh lemon juice  
½ shot sugar syrup  
¾ shot Crème de Cassis (blackcurrant liqueur)

Build over ice in a tall glass, top with sparkling wine, and then stir gently.  
Garnish with a lemon slice and two raspberries

### **Mitch Martini**

Created by Giovanni Burdi

2 shots Vodka (Zubrowka, Bison Grass vodka)  
1 shot apple juice  
¼ shot peach liqueur  
¼ shot passionfruit syrup

Shake with ice, then strain into a chilled cocktail glass; garnish with a lemon twist.

### **Vodka Espresso**

Created by Dick Bradsell

1 ½ shots Vodka  
½ shot Kahlúa (coffee liqueur)  
1 strong espresso (or ristretto)  
¼ shot sugar syrup

Shake with ice, and then strain into a chilled cocktail glass.

The ice should be added last to the shaker, especially when the espresso is fresh (& hot!)

### **Kangaroo Kicker**

2 shots Vodka  
¾ shot dry vermouth (Noilly Prat)

Shake with ice, then strain into a chilled cocktail glass; garnish with a lemon twist.

### **Raspberry Martini**

Created by Dick Bradsell

1 ½ shots Vodka  
1 shot raspberry purée  
½ shot raspberry liqueur  
¼ shot fresh lime juice (optional)  
¼ shot sugar syrup

Shake with ice, then strain into a chilled cocktail glass; garnish with a single raspberry. The zest from a squeezed lemon twist can be nice with this drink.

### **Kamikaze**

1 or 2 shots Vodka  
1 shot Cointreau, or Triple Sec  
1 shot Fresh Lime Juice

Shake with ice, then strain into a chilled cocktail glass. Garnish with a lime wedge, cut and placed on the edge of the glass.

### **Moscow Mule**

2 shots Vodka  
¾ shot fresh lime juice  
Top with ginger beer

Build over ice in a tall glass; garnish with a lime wedge.

### **French Martini**

1 ½ shots Vodka  
1 shot pineapple juice  
½ shot Chambord (Cognac based- raspberry liqueur)  
¼ shot sugar syrup (optional)

Shake hard with ice, then strain into chilled cocktail glass; no garnish.

### **Seabreeze**

2 shots Vodka  
4 shots cranberry juice  
2 shots grapefruit juice

Shake with ice, then strain into a tall glass, filled with ice; garnish with a lime wedge.

### **Cape Cod (long)**

2 shots Vodka  
Fill with cranberry juice  
¼ shot fresh lime juice (optional)

Build over ice, in a tall glass, and then stir. Garnish with a lime wedge.

### **Cape Cod (short)**

2 shots Vodka  
1 shot cranberry juice  
¼ shot fresh lime juice

Shake with ice, then strain into chilled cocktail glass; garnish with an orange twist.

### **Cosmopolitan**

1 ½ shots Vodka  
½ shot Cointreau  
1 shot cranberry juice  
¼ shot fresh lime juice

Shake with ice, then strain into a chilled cocktail glass; garnish with an orange twist.

### **Metropolitan**

1 ½ shots Vodka  
½ shot Crème de Framboise (raspberry liqueur)  
1 shot cranberry juice  
¼ shot fresh lime juice

Shake with ice, then strain into a chilled cocktail glass; garnish with a raspberry.

A good addition to the 'Metropolitan' is to squeeze a lemon twist over the surface of the glass, after you have poured the cocktail into it. This squeezing of the lemon twist, releases the oils in the lemon's skin, this adds a nice accent to the taste. Do not add the 'spent' lemon twist to the glass; the raspberry is enough for the garnish.

## **Aquavit Section**

Aquavit, the word, is derived from the Latin Aqua Vitae, meaning "water of life". Though each Scandinavian country uses the spelling 'Aquavit', they also use their own languages spelling:

'Akevitt' is the Norwegian spelling for Aquavit.

'Aqvavit' is the Swedish spelling for Aquavit.

'Akvavit' is the Danish spelling for Aquavit (note: the Danish also call their Akvavit 'snaps').

'Akwawit' [akvavit] is the Polish spelling for Aqua Vitae (this refers purely to vodka)

The flavour of Caraway seeds is to Aquavit, what juniper seeds are to gin. It is these main flavourings that give each spirit its characteristic taste. It should also be added that caraway is the main flavour that non-aquavit drinkers take a dislike to. The knowledge that more bottles of aquavit could be sold if only the caraway seed flavour was reduced has resulted in some producers making aquavit with a less pronounced caraway flavour.

As well as caraway seeds, aquavit can also be flavoured with any of the following ingredients: cumin seeds, cardamom seeds, lemon peel, orange peel, aniseed, fennel, dill and more.

Aquavit can also be aged; this results in a mellower spirit, with a light golden colour. It should be noted that it was fairly common for gin to be aged, but as soon as people started associating clear spirits with better spirits, that trend died by the wayside. Although the colour of aged aquavit can come from the barrels, it can also be added artificially with caramel (burnt sugar).

Re-distilling a grain spirit with the herbs and spices, much in the same way as gin can be produced makes aquavit.

The alcoholic strength of Aquavit ranges from 40% -45% abv (80-90 proof), depending on the brand.

### **Linie Aquavit**

The herbs and spices are redistilled with a neutral potato spirit, in a pot still not unlike those that you see in Scotland, or France (cognac etc). The aquavit is put into barrels, previously used for the maturation of sherry, at an alcoholic strength of 60% abv (this is brought down to 41% abv, before it is bottled). 'Ekvator' is the Norwegian for the Equator, the name 'Linie' comes from the Norwegian word for 'the line' (which also refers to the equator), Linje. As part of its maturation, Linie aquavit is transported from Norway to Australia, then back again, crossing the equator twice on its journey.

## **Aquavit Cocktails**

### **Caraway Julep**

2 shots Aquavit  
¼ shot sugar syrup  
6- 8 fresh mint leaves

Muddle/ crush the mint leaves in the bottom of a whisky glass. Fill glass with crushed ice, and then add the aquavit and sugar syrup. Stir thoroughly. Add more crushed ice, if necessary. Garnish with a mint sprig, and then add two short straws.

### **Norsk Mulata**

Created by George Sinclair

2 shots Aquavit (Norwegian)  
1 shot dark crème de caçao  
1 shot fresh lemon juice

Shake hard with crushed ice, and then strain through a sieve, into a chilled cocktail glass. Garnish with a lemon twist.

### **Amor**

Based on a recipe by Robert Hess.

1 ½ shots Aquavit  
¾ shot Campari  
¾ shot sweet vermouth

Stir with ice, then strain into a chilled cocktail glass; garnish with an orange twist.

### **Fjellbekk (Mountain Stream)**

¾ shot Vodka  
¾ shot Aquavit  
¾ shot fresh lime juice

Build over ice, in a tall glass, then top with Sprite (lemonade); garnish with a lime wedge.

## **Ibsen**

Created by George Sinclair

2 shots Aquavit (Norwegian)  
¾ shot fresh lime juice  
¾ shot Orgeat syrup (almonds)  
½ egg white (albumen)  
2 dashes of Bitters

Shake with ice, then strain into ice filled whisky glass; garnish with a pinch of ground cinnamon sprinkled on top.

## **Gin Section**

Gin is a distilled spirit, which during its distillation has various herbs and spices added, to flavour it. The added ingredients are called 'Botanicals'. The most predominant 'botanical' flavouring of Gin is Juniper berries. It is from these berries that Gin derives its name, Genever (French for Juniper) which was then corrupted to just 'Gin'. Gin's other botanicals can be any herb or spice, with each brand putting a different emphasis on which botanicals it uses. Some brands use 8 botanicals, while other brands may use up to 20 botanicals. The alcohol content itself is of a completely neutral nature, with the botanicals providing all of a gins taste.

Some of the Botanicals used in the flavouring of Gin:

Juniper berries (*Juniperus communis*)  
Lemon, orange, or lime peel  
Angelica  
Grains of Paradise (*Aframomum Melegueta*)  
Coriander (*Coriandrum sativum*)  
Cassia Bark (*Cinnamomum aromaticum*)  
Almonds, sweet and bitter varieties  
Orris, from the roots of the Iris plant  
Cubeb Berries, a type of pepper found in Java.  
Liquorice (*Glycyrrhiza glabra*)  
Ginger (*Zingiber officinale*)  
Gentian Root (*Gentian lutea*)  
Nutmeg (*Myristica fragrans*)  
Cardamom (*Elettaria cardamomum*)  
Cucumber (check: [Hendricksgin.com](http://Hendricksgin.com))  
Rose Petals (check: [Hendricksgin.com](http://Hendricksgin.com))

In the book 'Classic Gin' by Geraldine Coates, she claims that 'Over 120 botanicals' can be found in gin production, 'although most gins use no more than seven or eight.'

### **Juniper Vodka**

From the book 'Classic Vodka' by Nicholas Faith & Ian Wisniewski:

"Mysliwska. Dry juniper vodka flavoured with rectified juniper distillate together with herbs and juniper berries gathered from selected species in Polish forests. Definite juniper taste, typically drunk by hunters."

### **Why is gin not a juniper vodka?**

The primary taste of gin should be from the botanicals, as the spirit base is completely neutral in taste and smell. The taste of flavoured vodka also comes from the flavour of the distillate, which is not always neutral in taste.

### **How many categories of gin are there?**

There are three main categories of gin; London dry gin, Plymouth gin and jenever.

1. London Dry Gin, the most common style, does not have to be made in London.
2. Plymouth Gin can only be made in Plymouth, and as a consequence there is only one producer, Coates and company, who distil at Black Friars Distillery. Coates produce 'Plymouth Gin', which was the first gin to be specified in a martini cocktail recipe.
3. Jenever, this is the oldest style, primarily associated with the Netherlands and Belgium.

There is also a style of gin made in Germany, this is flavoured with juniper only, and nothing else.

## **Gin Cocktails**

### **White Lady**

### Aka. Delilah

1 ½ shots Plymouth Gin  
¾ shot Cointreau  
¾ shot fresh lemon juice

Shake with ice, then strain into a chilled cocktail glass; garnish with a lemon twist.

### The 20th Century Cocktail

1 ½ shots Plymouth Gin  
¾ shot dry vermouth  
¾ shot white Crème de Caçao  
¾ shot fresh lemon juice

Shake with ice, and then strain into a chilled cocktail glass.

### Gin Fizz

2 shots Plymouth Gin  
1 shot fresh lemon juice  
½ shot sugar syrup  
½ of an egg white (albumen)

Shake hard with ice, and then strain into a tall glass, which contains a little ice (2 or 3 cubes). Then top with aerated water/ soda water.

### Tom Collins

2 shots Plymouth Gin  
1 shot fresh lemon juice  
½ shot sugar syrup

Build over ice in a tall glass (Collins), then top with soda water; garnish with a lemon slice.

Swapping the sugar syrup in the recipe for other different syrups; e.g. elderflower syrup, or pomegranate syrup, for instance, can produce some interesting "Tom Collins" variations.

### Raspberry Collins

2 shots Plymouth Gin  
1 shot fresh lemon juice

½ shot sugar syrup  
¾ shot raspberry liqueur  
½ shot raspberry purée  
2 dashes of orange Bitters (optional)

Shake with ice, and then strain into an ice filled tall glass (Collins). Top with soda water, then garnish with a lemon slice and two raspberries.

The 'Raspberry Collins' recipe can be modified to include any fruit, and its corresponding liqueur. If you do not have pureéd raspberries, just add whole raspberries to the mixing glass, and muddle/ crush them.

### **Cowboy Martini**

Created by Dick Bradsell

3 shots Plymouth Gin  
¼ shot sugar syrup  
2 dashes of orange bitters  
4-5 mint leaves (partially torn before going into the shaker)

Shake with ice, then strain into a chilled cocktail glass; garnish with an orange twist

### **Gin Re-Fashioned**

Created by Antonia Andrasi

2 shots Tanqueray Gin  
¼ shot passionfruit syrup  
2 dashes of bitters  
2 dashes of orange bitters

Stir with ice, then strain into ice filled whisky glass; garnish with a lemon twist.

### **Can't find orange bitters?**

Try substituting a couple of drops of 'orange curaçao' liqueur, then add two dashes of bitters.

### **Negroni**

1 shot Plymouth Gin  
1 shot Campari  
1 shot sweet vermouth

Stir with ice, then strain into a chilled cocktail glass; garnish with an orange twist.

The Negroni is more often served over ice, in a whisky glass.

### **Valentino**

Created by "The Regans"

2 shots Plymouth Gin  
1 shot Campari  
1 shot sweet vermouth

Stir with ice, then strain into a chilled cocktail glass; garnish with an orange twist.

### **The Wibble**

Created by Dick Bradsell

1 shot Plymouth Gin  
1 shot Plymouth Sloe Gin  
1 shot grapefruit juice  
½ shot lemon juice  
½ shot crème de mûre (blackberry liqueur)  
¼ shot sugar syrup (optional)

Shake with ice, then strain into a chilled cocktail glass; garnish with a lemon twist.

### **Jupiter Cocktail**

1 ½ shots Plymouth Gin  
½ shot dry vermouth  
¼ shot fresh orange juice  
¼ shot Parfait Amour (violet liqueur)

Shake with ice, and then strain into chilled cocktail glass.

The measurements for orange juice and parfait amour should be equal to a teaspoon each.

### **The Bramble**

Created by Dick Bradsell

1 ½ shots Plymouth Gin  
¾ shot fresh lemon juice  
½ shot sugar syrup

Build over crushed ice, in a whisky glass. Stir, then pour over ¾ shot of crème de mûre; garnish with a lemon slice and two raspberries.

### **'Official' Singapore Sling**

1 shot Plymouth Gin  
½ shot cherry brandy  
4 shots pineapple juice  
½ shot fresh lime juice  
¼ shot Cointreau  
¼ shot Bénédictine  
½ shot Grenadine syrup (pomegranate)  
1 dash of bitters

Shake with ice, then strain into an ice-filled tall glass; garnish with a pineapple chunk and a cherry (skewered together).

### **Straits Sling**

2 shots Plymouth Gin  
¼ shot cherry brandy (Kirschwasser)  
¼ shot Bénédictine  
1 shot fresh lemon juice  
2 dashes of bitters  
2 dashes orange bitters

Build over ice in a tall glass, then top with soda water; garnish with an orange slice.

### **Sensation**

1 ½ shot Plymouth Gin  
½ shot fresh lemon juice  
¼ shot Maraschino liqueur  
3 sprigs of fresh mint

Shake with ice, then strain into a chilled cocktail glass; garnish with a mint sprig.

### **Clover Club**

2 shots Plymouth Gin  
1 shot fresh lemon juice  
½ shot Grenadine syrup (pomegranate)  
1 egg white (albumen)

Shake with ice, then strain into a chilled cocktail glass; no garnish.

### **Aviation**

2 shots Gin  
1 shot Maraschino liqueur  
1 shot fresh lemon juice

Shake with ice, then strain into a chilled cocktail glass; garnish with a lemon twist.

### **Pegu Club**

2 shots Plymouth Gin  
¾ shot Cointreau  
¾ shot fresh lime juice  
2 dashes of bitters

Stir with ice, and then strain into a chilled cocktail glass

### **Gin Sour**

2 shots Gin  
1 shot fresh lemon juice  
½ shot sugar syrup  
½ of an egg white (albumen)

Shake with ice, then strain into an ice filled whisky glass; garnish with a lemon slice.

### **Vesper**

Created by Ian Fleming, in his book: 'Casino Royale' (1953).

3 shots Gin (Gordon's)  
1 shot vodka  
½ shot Kina Lillet (brand of vermouth)

Shake with ice "until it's ice-cold", then strain into a chilled cocktail glass; garnish with a lemon twist.

### **My own thoughts on the use of vodka in the 'Vesper' cocktail:**

The more neutral properties of the vodka are utilised to lessen the intensity of the taste of the gin used, but without reducing its strength. Perhaps Mr. Fleming should have tried using a less pungent brand of gin, like Plymouth gin.

### **Dry Gin Martini Cocktail.**

The cocktail world is saturated with many martini recipes, as it is with other types of drinks. The martini cocktail is the type of drink where personal preference comes before factual clarity.

"When I ask for a martini" roars the martini purist, " I expect gin and dry vermouth!!!"

How is every bartender supposed to know what drink you want, unless you tell them specifically how you want it prepared. A cocktails recipe can often be in doubt, or as is more common, widely misunderstood.

"Dry gin martini, straight up with a twist."

That seems easy to say, so why is it not said more often? Indeed Gin and vermouth may combine to create 'A' martini cocktail, but it is not 'The' martini cocktail. And the fact some people find hard to bear is that there is no 'The' martini cocktail.

'Original' recipes for gin martini cocktails often stated orange bitters as an ingredient, so why do purists not demand this? Also, why not demand that your two shots of gin be accompanied by one whole shot of dry vermouth?

The origins of the name 'martini' are just as lost in the past, as the name for all mixed drinks (cocktail). "Ah! Yes!" they will say, "but it says in this book that this is the original martini cocktail recipe!" Yeah, sure! Some even try to prove the lineage of the martini, as if it were some divine dynasty, why bother? If the truth is realised quickly, i.e. that there is no 'one' martini recipe, then you can move on to its logical conclusion. There are many different martini cocktails, some worth actually drinking, some that are not. Martinis are not the be all and end all of cocktails; they are instead a part of its ambiguity. If you prefer your martini cocktail a certain way be sure to tell the bartender how you want it, before s/he begins.

It is very important at an early stage to establish whether or not the customer wants a martini cocktail, or just a glass of dry 'martini' vermouth. So ask 'Gin or Vodka?' then ask 'lemon twist, or olive?' never assume what the guest wants. It is very hard to change a Gin martini with an olive, into a Vodka'tini (Vodka Martini) with a lemon twist. Although the Gin martini came first, the vodka version has been around for at least 50 years, so it is always prudent to ask. The only thing I do suggest assuming when serving a martini cocktail of any kind, is that it is served 'Straight up' (without any ice in the finished cocktail). Sometimes the customer will insist on having their cocktail 'Down/ on the Rocks/ On Ice', after you have made it. Simply pour the cocktail from its glass into an ice-filled tumbler.

A most important thing to note is, as with all bar service, that if a customer insists on you making their cocktail their way (and if it is not totally preposterous) then do it. Being compliant with guests wishes can earn your bar a lot of respect, and cash tips from customers. Not just the customers you are serving, but the other customers at the bar. Customers watch bartenders, to see what they are up to. Some of these people are wanna-be bartenders themselves, and can easily distinguish between good and bad bartending. If they see you are willing to go that little bit extra for your customers, they (hopefully) will do the same for you. The reason that I mention these points here, is that the Martini is the most well-known, and contentious, classic cocktail there is. People who come to bars, will sometimes have read an article/ book and think they know better than everyone else, on how to make that cocktail that you make everyday at work. My advice is, humour them. Okay, so they want you to shake the vermouth, shake the gin whatever, do it! Do their drink, then go and serve the next customer, take everything in your stride. Martinis are revered, but they are definitely not worth arguing with the customer about.

The greatest martinis are created, or destroyed, in the way they are prepared. The classic Martini is always stirred and is never shaken. But as I said before, if that's the way the customer wants their drink, then that's the way they get their drink. Although having said that, I would feel a little aggrieved if someone requested a vodka martini shaken 100 times!

The reason the martini cocktail is stirred, never shaken, is all down to the dilution of the ice used for chilling the cocktail. But we are not just chilling down the gin/ vodka, we are actually diluting it, and the key point is the control of this dilution. To demonstrate this, fill a glass with ice, and then pour in a quantity of room-temperature spirit, and watch the ice melt, even without stirring or shaking. The stirred martini is the best way to ensure least dilution, but also to ensure some dilution. If we were merely in the business of producing the coldest martini cocktail possible, then we would make a frozen martini.

### **Frozen 'Martini'**

To 'produce' a frozen martini take a bottle of decent gin (or vodka) and leave it in the freezer overnight, next to it keep the cocktail glass that you will be using. In the fridge compartment keep a bottle of dry vermouth. When the time comes, remove the frozen cocktail glass from the freezer, and rinse the glass out with the cooled vermouth, flicking out any excess vermouth into the sink. The interior of the frozen glass is now coated with dry vermouth; now quickly retrieve the frozen bottle of spirit from the freezer. Uncap the bottle, and fill the cocktail glass with the ice cold undiluted spirit, then add the garnish and serve.

It is the lack of dilution that prevents this preparation method resulting in a martini cocktail; it is after all just frozen gin (or vodka) in a dirty glass.

Getting back to stirred martinis, fill a cocktail mixing glass with ice, and then pour in a small quantity of dry vermouth, around half a measure. Using a bar spoon, stir the ice for 15 rotations (your choice), then pour out the vermouth while retaining the ice. The ice will now have a light coating of vermouth, now pour in the desired amount of spirit, and stir that for 15 rotations. Strain the now-chilled spirit into your chilled cocktail glass; add garnish, and then serve. The end result should have absolutely no ice chunks or splinters floating on its surface. If you have a problem with floating ice, then pass the cocktail through a miniature sieve/ tea strainer. This is a great tip for all cocktails served straight up.

My recommended method of preparing a martini is a little different to the one above, and it is these little differences that make or break a martini cocktail. Pour about half a shot of dry vermouth (Noilly Prat) into a chilled cocktail glass. Now swirl the vermouth around the inside of the glass; this is done by tilting and rotating the glass. Now pour out the vermouth into the sink, the glass is now coated with vermouth. Stir and strain the gin (without vermouth) into the vermouth stained glass. The vermouth is there and so is the dilution, perfect (in my opinion!).

I now bring your attention to martini dryness, one of the most contentious of martini related debating, 'How dry...very dry!' A great way of avoiding this boring, and overplayed, discussion is not to ask how dry they want it. However, when they order and they ask for a really dry martini, nod your head agreeingly and leave it at that. If you master the stirring technique above, you will be producing the driest martini possible anyway. Most people don't realise that maybe they are just too used to bad cocktails, and therefore have to ask for them to be made in the correct fashion. Do not be tempted to give them half dry vermouth, and half gin; they will not thank you for it. This is where the great martini paradox lies, no-one knows whom to blame, but this conundrum remains. A sweet martini is made with sweet vermouth, and to make it sweeter means to add more sweet vermouth. But to make a dry martini drier, you take

away the dry vermouth all together. In effect, stirring gin with ice, then straining it, with no contact with vermouth what so ever.

Whole books have been written just on the martini cocktail; this book however, is not going to be one of them. But let me just add that floating ice chips, ice shards, ice slithers are not desirable; they are the sign of a badly prepared cocktail.

## **Jenever Section**

The word Jenever [ye-nay-ver] derives from the Dutch 'Jeneverbes', meaning Juniper. Genever is the Old Dutch (Flemish) for Jenever. Until the 19th century Dutch 'Jenever' was called 'Genever', so there is no real difference between the two words. The two words both describe the same product.

Jenever should not be referred to as 'Dutch Gin'; this is because another product by that name already exists. This other 'Dutch Gin' is in fact an imitation of the English style 'London Dry Gin'. As Jenever was created before Gin, it would be more correct to identify Gin as 'English Genever', but as English gin doesn't closely resemble jenever, that too is inappropriate. Therefore calling the two categories, as they are, Gin and Jenever, is a less strenuous, and more exact practice.

While Gin can be easily simplified as a diluted neutral spirit which is then flavoured with botanicals, Jenever is far more complicated. Jenever involves the blending of two things, neutral grain spirit and 'Moutwijn' (Malt wine). 'Malt wine' closely resembles whisky, which is also made from a mash. The 'Malt wine' mash can consist of a mixture including any of the following: malted barley, wheat, corn or rye. Malt wine is distilled to a minimum alcoholic strength of 46% a.b.v, and a maximum alcoholic strength of 48% a.b.v.

It should also be noted that the Dutch word 'Wijn', although commonly translated as 'wine', also refers to other types of alcoholic product, not just wine from grapes.

Once the 'Moutwijn' is distilled, part of it is distilled again with botanicals; another part is redistilled as it is (i.e. with no botanicals). The two distillates are then recombined, then blended with 'neutral spirit' (from grain, or molasses). The ratio of 'moutwijn' to 'neutral spirit' determines amongst other things what type of jenever the end product will be.

**Jonge Jenever** translates as 'young jenever', though it refers more precisely to the newer 'style' of jenever (post-WW2). Jonge Jenever can only contain a maximum of 15% malt wine, while at the same time having a limit of 10 grams of sugar per litre. This means that Jonge jenever is less pronounced, with

regards to the taste of 'moutwijn', while at the same time being less sweet compared with its older style counterpart.

**Oude Jenever** translates as 'old jenever', though it refers more precisely to the older 'style' of jenever (pre-WW2). Oude jenever must contain a minimum of 15% malt wine, while at the same time having a greater sugar allowance of 20 grams per litre. This means that Oude jenever is more pronounced in its 'moutwijn' taste, and at the same time being doubly sweet.

**Korenwijn (Corenwijn, Corenwyn)**, translates as 'cornwine'. Korenwijn must contain at least 51% of malt wine, but no more than 70% malt wine. Korenwijn must not contain more than 20 grams of sugar, per litre.

## **Jenever Cocktail**

### **Dutch Trade Winds**

2 shots Jenever  
½ shot Curaçao (or triple sec)  
½ shot fresh lemon juice

Shake with ice, then strain into a chilled cocktail glass; garnish with a lemon twist.

### **Le Steenworde**

2 shots Jenever  
1 shot fresh lemon juice  
½ shot sugar syrup

Shake with ice, then strain into ice filled whisky glass; garnish with a lemon slice.

## **Bourbon Section**

Bourbon is a whisky, which can be made anywhere in the U.S.A., but it is primarily associated with the state of Kentucky. Bourbon whiskey made in Kentucky is distinctly labelled as being 'Kentucky Bourbon'. The state of Kentucky claims 90- 95% of total bourbon production. The almost insignificant 5% is comprised of the other bourbon producing states, which include Virginia, Georgia and Indiana.

The name 'bourbon' comes from the name of one of Kentucky's counties, called Bourbon County. During the American War of independence, France aided the American side a great deal. As thanks, the Kentuckians named numerous towns in honour of their French benefactors. Louisville, the capital of Kentucky, is

named after King Louis. The, then, reigning French royal family of Bourbon, had Bourbon County named after them.

During America's history, the boundaries of all of Kentucky's counties have changed considerably. Bourbon County itself once covered most of Kentucky at one point. At one point in time, Kentucky, and Bourbon County had been a part of the state of Virginia.

For a whisky to qualify as a straight bourbon, it must meet several government-controlled criteria.

- 1) The whisky must be aged for a minimum of two years.
- 2) This aging must take place in new, charred, American oak barrels.
- 3) The whisky cannot be distilled to a greater strength than 160 proof (80% abv)
- 4) The whisky cannot be put into the barrel for aging, at a greater strength than 125 proof (62.5% abv)
- 5) All bourbon recipes (mashbills) must be a minimum of 51% corn.
- 6) Produced anywhere in the United States of America.
- 7) It can be a mix of several bourbons, but they must all have been produced in the same state, for it to be designated 'Straight Bourbon'.

So, how is the whisk(e)y in 'bourbon whisk(e)y' spelt? Well that is down to the individual distiller, though their choice of one, or the other, is usually decided by family heritage. The Irish spelling is with an 'e', the Scottish spelling is without. So depending on the ancestry of the distiller, it is thus decided which spelling will be used. Makers Mark, and George Dickel (Tennessee Whisky) use the Scottish spelling, while most others use the Irish spelling. There is no legal requirement; it is all down to personal preference.

American law dictates that a bourbon must contain a minimum of 51% corn, and a maximum of 80% corn, anymore corn than that, and it is legally a 'corn whisky'. If a whisky is a minimum of 51% rye, then it is a 'rye whisky'. A 'normal' bourbon contains corn, malted barley and rye in its mashbill. Some bourbon, however, uses wheat instead of rye, which makes for a mellower taste. Some well-known wheated bourbons brands are, Old Fitzgerald, Makers Mark and W.L. Weller.

The nearer a spirit gets to becoming pure alcohol, the less character/ flavour it will have. Some brands make a point of distilling their bourbon close to its final barrelling strength, thus retaining even more flavour. Most noticeably is the Austin Nichols Distillery, which produces Wild Turkey Bourbon.

**Wild Turkey Rare Breed (108.4 proof/ 54.2% abv)**

Rare breed is a "barrel-proof bourbon," meaning it is bottled directly from a variety of barrels at the proof it reaches in those barrels, with no added water to lower the proof or dilute the flavour. Therefore, each batch varies slightly in proof.

This bourbon is a unique marriage of Wild Turkey 6, 8 and 12 year old stocks, which give the whiskey a rich, exceptional flavour that is remarkably smooth. According to Jimmy Russell (Wild Turkey Master Distiller), this whiskey is assertive with hints of light oranges, mint, and tones of sweet tobacco that will remind you of your grandfather's pipe-bowl.

See: [wildturkeybourbon.com](http://wildturkeybourbon.com), for the rest of the flock (range of products).

### **What is proof compared to abv (alcohol by volume)?**

Proof refers to alcoholic strength, one point in proof being the equivalent of .5 percent alcohol. Therefore, one hundred proof equals 50 percent alcohol. Mixing equal quantities of liquor and gunpowder together and applying a flame originally determined proof. If the gunpowder failed to burn, the spirit was too weak. If it burned too brightly, it was too strong. If the mixture burned evenly, with a blue flame, it was said to have been "just right", or "100 percent proved right."

### **Booker's**

Booker's, produced by Jim Beam, is a single barrel, barrel proof bourbon. Booker's is bottled at 125 proof/ 62.5% abv, the exact same strength as when it was in the barrel. Both Wild Turkey Rare Breed, and Bookers deserve a place on any good bars shelves. Just because most whisky is bottled at around 80 proof/ 40% abv, that does not mean you can't drink it at a higher strength, and still appreciate its flavours.

See [Smallbatch.com](http://Smallbatch.com) for the Jim Beam small batch range of products.

When a whisky is 'cut' (i.e. watered down) prior to bottling, the water that is used is very important to the final product. The preferred source of water is called 'branch water'. Branch water comes directly from the stream that the distillery is built on, some companies even bottle this water, so that bar customers can further dilute their bourbon with the original bourbon water. This branch water starts its life in the underground limestone shelf that exists under most of Kentucky, and part of Tennessee. The limestone shelf acts as a natural filter for water that passes over it. Branch water is particular for its lack of character, with no traces of iron, or other minerals that would be harmful to the whisky making process.

### **What is Small Batch Bourbon?**

Bourbon produced from a small batch of barrels. Now, if you produce all your bourbon in small batches, as Makers Mark does, then all of your bourbon whisky is 'Small Batch Bourbon'. Other Companies just make a small selection of their barrels, and designate this as a 'Small Batch'.

### **What is Single Barrel bourbon?**

Bourbon from a Single Barrel.

Usually a brand is blended, and balanced, from different bourbon barrels from all over a distilleries warehouses. All barrels of aged spirits age differently, and have different characteristics and flavours as a consequence. And so to create a particular brand, which, year after year tastes the same, different amounts of different tasting barrels must be blended together. Brands of the Single barrel designation are produced only from one single barrel, but these are not just any old barrels, these are the ones the master distiller feels are exceptional.

However, according to the Makersmark.com website, no distillery actually bottles the contents of one barrel at a time. So maybe small-batch and single-barrel bourbons are just a marketing ploy. Who knows? But it definitely works.

Whatever the truth, single barrel bourbon is always exceptional whisky (hence the higher price tag). The 'original single barrel' bourbon is "Blanton's" from the Buffalo Trace Distillery (see: [Blantons.com](http://Blantons.com), or [Sazerac.com](http://Sazerac.com)).

### **Why charred barrels?**

There are many theories as to why bourbon whisky is aged in charred barrels. One theory is that the barrels were used for other purposes, prior to whisky storage. One storage use often mentioned is fish, and so the insides were charred to remove unpleasant odours.

Another theory is that the sour mash (the pre-whisky beer), which would be used later to distil into whisky, was fermented in the barrel itself. And so the barrel was flamed to cleanse it.

A more probable theory is that, after cutting the wood to be used to construct the barrel, they would leave it to dry out before using it. During this time, sap/resin would collect on the surface of the barrel; these resins could putrefy the whisky, and so were removed by flame.

The charring of the barrel makes a major contributing factor to the taste of the whisky, the heat from the charring causes sugars within the wood to caramelize.

So in affect the barrel consists of one layer of charred wood, which acts as a filter, and a second layer of caramel that sweetens the whisky.

As the heat of the day expands the barrel, it draws young whisky (white dawg) into, and through the outer charcoal layer filtering out undesirable congeners (taste elements). The whisky then reaches the caramelised layer, or 'red-line', which is where the whisky gains its sweetness.

There is a similar type of whisky to bourbon made in Tennessee, called "Tennessee whisky".

There are only two distilleries in Tennessee, George Dickel and Jack Daniels. These two distilleries separate their whisky from bourbon by using a method called, The Lincoln County Process. This process involves filtering the newly distilled clear whisky through several feet/ metres of charcoal, which leeches congeners from the whisky; the distilleries themselves call it a mellowing process. After the filtration is complete, the whisky is filled into barrels, and aged as normal. The Lincoln County Process is claimed to give the young whisky a head start in the aging process.

See: [jackdaniels.com](http://jackdaniels.com), and [georgedickel.com](http://georgedickel.com) for more details on Tennessee whisk(e)y. For the best bourbon site on the Internet, try [straightbourbon.com](http://straightbourbon.com), it also includes a forum.

### **"Old Fashioned" Whiskey Cocktail**

The "Old Fashioned", as it is more commonly known, is the perfect cocktail, not just from a flavour point of view, but also from other aspects. It has all the criteria for judging the proficiency of a bartender, in their bartending abilities, and their dedication to the cause. The cause, to which I am referring, is that of historical accuracy, and how a bartender sees what they are doing in this wider perspective.

"When properly made, this cocktail [the old fashioned] can represent the pinnacle of the bartenders trade. When done improperly, which is more often the case, it can be a disaster of mediocrity."

– Robert Hess, [Drinkboy.com](http://Drinkboy.com)

It is, all too often, taken for granted that the cocktail recipe that one was initially taught is the indisputably original, correct, authentic recipe. This way of thinking is based on the incorrect assumption that the teacher, who taught you, will have been shown the correct recipe to begin with. The best way to avoid perpetuating mistakes, and so-called "improvements", is to delve a little, into the past.

Historical Investigation can, even when just looking at the two words, cause people's eyes to glaze over. "I am a bartender, not an historian!" goes the cry. That may be so in most cases, but to make drinks and call them "the original recipe", "the authentic recipe" etc is to proclaim something else entirely. A bartender, or a well printed bar book, which proclaims historical accuracy invokes scrutiny upon itself.

If a bartender proclaims neither historical accuracy, nor divine assistance, then they are making drinks to their own preferences, whether they be personal or commercial. No false claims will have been asserted, and so none will need to be defended from curious minds, asking politely for some form of substantiation.

"The drinks I make are delicious" is a subjective assertion, and the individual's taste buds are the judging panel.

"The drinks I make are the originals" is an objective assertion, and will need to be proven historically.

Any cocktail can be changed, and then said by its deviator to taste "better". But no recipe can be referred to as the "original", unless that is indeed the case. Referring to a recipe, as "the earliest known" is entirely truthful, as it leaves the door open for any earlier recipes to be discovered, thus saving oneself from potential embarrassment.

You may not have noticed it before, but take a closer look at those bar books, and "borrowed" bar menus, note their spurious claims.

Please be aware that I am not saying that original recipes are the only recipes to be used, nor am I saying that they are the better recipes.

I now return back to the "Old Fashioned" cocktail, being as it is the pretence for this diatribe on "bar-honesty", and point out some falsities that need highlighting.

The earliest known reference to fruit being muddled in an Old Fashioned is from:

**"Burke's Complete Cocktail and Tastybite Recipes"**, by Harman Burney Burke (1936)

Old Fashioned Cocktail

Whiskey, 1 Glass

Sugar, 1 Lump

Angostura Bitters, 2 Dashes

Curacao or Absinthe, 2 Dashes

Add one Slice of Orange, one Slice of Lemon Peel, mull with the Bitters and Sugar, then add the Whiskey and serve in the same glass.

Note: American Prohibition lasted from 1920 until 1933. During this time sub-standard spirits were often bolstered with fresh fruits, in an attempt to hide their less than satisfactory taste.

And while I am on the topic of fruit and the Old Fashioned:

**"Cocktail Guide and Ladies' Companion"**, by Crosby Gaige, (1941)

"Serious-minded persons omit fruit salad from "Old Fashioneds," while the frivolous window-dress the brew with slices of orange, sticks of pineapple, and a couple of turnips."

Crosby Gaige also relates the response he received from a bartender, when he was foolhardy enough to request an Old Fashioned made without fruit:

'Young impudent sir,' he screamed, '...Man and boy I've built Old-Fashioned cocktails these 60 years...and I have never yet had the perverted nastiness of mind to put fruit in an Old-Fashioned. Get out, scram, go over to the Palmer House and drink.' I was rebuked."

This is one of my all-time favourite quotes, regardless of topic. Such indignation is hard to come by.

The earliest known reference to the "Colonel Pepper story", the much-repeated yarn of the Old Fashioned's creation is from 1931.

**"Old Waldorf Bar Days"** by Albert Stevens Crockett (1931)

This was brought to the old Waldorf in the days of its "sit-down" Bar, and introduced by, or in honor of, Col. James E. Pepper, of Kentucky, proprietor of a celebrated whiskey of the period. The Old-fashioned Whiskey cocktail was said to have been the invention of a bartender at the famous Pendennis Club in Louisville, of which Col. Pepper was a member.

The style of writing has a very "just mentioning what I heard" approach, giving the impression that the author is just repeating a rumour they chanced upon. How exactly did every other cocktail book author miss this story, or think it unworthy of mention, until 1931?

The Pendennis Club was founded in 1881, and the "sit-down" bar was opened in 1893.

The first recorded recipe for an "Old Fashioned":

**"Modern American Drinks"**

By George J. Kappeler  
(1895)

The Old-Fashioned Whiskey Cocktail:

"Dissolve a small lump of sugar with a little water in a whiskey-glass; add two dashes Angostura bitters, a small piece ice, a piece lemon-peel, one jigger whiskey. Mix with small bar-spoon and serve, leaving spoon in glass."

The Old Fashioned is exactly what it's first known recipe states, "Old Fashioned Whiskey Cocktail". A Whisky cocktail made in the old fashioned (old style).

The first reference to a cocktail is dated 1806, from an American Magazine called "**The Balance**".

"Cocktail is a stimulating liquor, composed of spirits of any kind, sugar, water, and bitters - it is vulgarly called bittered sling and is supposed to be an excellent electioneering potion"

The above definition of a cocktail is exactly that of an Old Fashioned, albeit the water coming in the form of ice. Obviously there must have been a time when the Old Fashioned was new, and therefore referred to simply as a "Whiskey Cocktail".

**"How to Mix Drinks"**, by Jerry Thomas, (1862)

109. Whiskey Cocktail  
(Use small bar glass.)

3 or 4 dashes of gum syrup.

2 do. Bitters (Bogart's)

1 wine-glass of whiskey, and a piece of lemon peel.

Fill one-third full of fine ice; shake and strain in a fancy red wine-glass.

This recipe, of Thomas', is better designated as a precursor to the fully fledged "Old Fashioned", rather than actually being an "Old Fashioned" itself. The sugar comes in the liquid form of gum syrup (sirop de gomme), and the water is constituent in the fine ice. As the precursor to the "Old Fashioned", the listed recipe dispels many bartenders 'convictions' towards sugar syrup, and the shaking of clear spirits. If it was good once, then it can be good again. The most interesting difference, for me, is that Thomas prepares his "Whiskey Cocktail" in a separate container before pouring the libation into its serving glass.

**Re-Fashioned Whiskey Cocktail (2002).**

Created by George Sinclair

2- 3 shots of Bourbon Whisky,

¼ - ½ shot of Sugar Syrup,

2 dashes of Bitters,

Stir with ice, then strain into an ice filled whisky glass (keep the glass and ice in the freezer); then garnish with an orange twist.

There are a few published bartenders who claim that they are using original, authentic "Old Fashioned" recipes, but are in fact using their own preferences, and then portraying them falsely.

### **Old Fashioned Elements:**

#### **1. The type of whiskey used.**

The flavour of the whisky, i.e. mild, harsh tasting etc, will affect the influence of the other ingredients. The harsher the taste, the more sweetness you will need to counter the taste. Old fashioned were traditionally made with straight Rye whiskey, so staying with a strong tasting whisky is at least in some way authentic.

#### **2. The sugar.**

Some people like to use sugar cubes, some people like to use sugar syrup. Lets say you are making ten old fashioned at once, which I have done, how long does it take to crush/ muddle ten sugar cubes properly? Most people who use sugar cubes, fail to dissolve the sugar properly, leaving sugar to collect on your teeth each time you sip your drink (caipirinhas are also a prime example of this). It should also be noted that sugar does not dissolve properly in cold water. The best way of dissolving sugar is to heat it in water, and this is exactly how sugar syrup is made. Another reason for using sugar syrup is, that once you have made a drink and you then discover that it is not sweet enough, you can add more sugar syrup without any difficulty at all.

#### **3. The bitters.**

Bitters are not some sort of Soya sauce, to be splashed on haphazardly. Use restraint, as you are meant to taste the base spirit combined with the bitters, not just the bitters.

### **Old Fashioned Variants:**

1. Muddle orange slice and maraschino cherry, into a pasty goo. Then add ice, then bourbon, stir then add soda water. This drink is totally different from the old fashioned that I chose to make. A very odd taste, **not** recommended.

2. Muddle orange slice in glass, before making old fashioned. This is a method that goes well with those who insist on using sugar cubes in their old fashioned.

Muddling the orange slice provides enough liquid to moisten the sugar cube, and thus make the sugar easier to crush with your muddler.

3. Top up with soda water. An old fashioned is not meant to be fizzy. If you want more dilution use more ice. The use of soda water appears to stem from a misunderstanding of the recipe. A splash of soda water can be added to a sugar cube to moisten it, and thus make it easier to crush. If you are using sugar syrup, as I recommend, no additional water will be needed.

4. Using infused bourbon, (vanilla, cinnamon, cardamom, mint, pineapple, mango). Infused bourbon will provide you with a novelty old fashioned rather than a drink for a serious cocktail drinker.

## **Bourbon Cocktails**

### **Mint Julep**

3 shots Bourbon  
1/2 shot sugar syrup  
8 mint leaves

Gently bruise mint leaves in the bottom of a tall glass, and then add the other ingredients. Top with crushed ice, and then stir thoroughly. Add more crushed ice, if necessary. Garnish with a mint sprig, and then add 2 long straws

**Mint Julep #2:** Pour a 3/4 shot of mint syrup and 3 shots of bourbon into a tall glass filled with crushed ice. Stir/ churn the crushed ice thoroughly, garnish with a mint sprig. Add two long straws.

The mint syrup is prepared by adding a handful of mint leaves to the saucepan, while you are preparing 'normal' sugar syrup (see Glossary)

### **Bourbon Cobbler**

2 shots Bourbon  
1/4 shot sugar syrup

Pour the two ingredients over crushed ice, in a whisky glass. Garnish with seasonal fruit (pineapple chunks, orange slices, lemon slices etc)

### **Suburban**

Created by Tim Lackey

1 1/2 shot Bourbon

½ shot fresh lime juice  
¼ shot sugar syrup  
½ shot crème de mûre (blackberry liqueur)  
3 blackberries (muddled)

Shake with ice, and then strain into a whisky glass filled with crushed ice. Garnish with a blackberry, and then add 2 short straws.

### **Bourbon Milk Punch**

2 shots Bourbon  
½ shot sugar syrup  
2 shots cream/ milk

Shake with ice, and then strain into ice-filled whisky glass; a pinch of cocoa powder will suffice as a garnish.

### **Bourbon Cooler**

2 shots Bourbon  
½ shot fresh lime juice  
1 shot fresh orange juice  
2 dashes of bitters

Build over ice in a tall glass, top with sparkling mineral water, and then stir. Garnish with a lemon slice, and a sprig of mint.

The measurements for the lime juice and orange juice are roughly equivalent to half a lime, and half an orange.

### **Bourbon Sour**

Aka. Boston Sour

2 shots Bourbon  
1 shot lemon juice  
½ shot sugar syrup  
2 dashes of bitters  
½ of an egg white (albumen)

Shake with ice, and then strain into an ice filled whisky glass. Garnish with a lemon slice, and add 2 short straws.

### **L & G**

Created by Vincenzo Errico

2 shots "Woodford Reserve" Bourbon  
¼ shot Chambord (cognac based- raspberry liqueur)  
¼ shot orange curaçao

Stir with ice, then strain into chilled cocktail glass; there is no need for a garnish.

The name 'L&G' comes from the distillery where Woodford Reserve Bourbon is produced, Labrot & Graham.

### **Eastern Whiskey Sour**

Created by Trader Vic

2 shots Bourbon  
¾ shot fresh lime juice  
1 shot fresh orange juice  
¼ shot Orgeat syrup (almond)  
¼ shot sugar syrup (or rock candy syrup)

Shake with ice, then strain into an ice filled tumbler; garnish with a wedge of lime.

### **Frisco Sour**

1 ½ shots Bourbon  
¼ shot Bénédictine  
¾ shot fresh lemon juice  
½ shot sugar syrup

Shake with ice, then strain into ice filled whisky glass; garnish with a wedge of orange (squeezed into drink first).

### **Basin Street**

Aka. Bourbon Sidecar

2 shots Bourbon  
1 shot Cointreau  
1 shot fresh lime juice

Shake with ice, and then strain into a chilled cocktail glass. Garnish with a lemon twist (or orange twist).

### **Change the ratio, change the name.**

The above recipe's ratio is 2:1:1 (aka. 4:2:2). If you half the fresh lemon juice, you will end up with a sweeter concoction, which will have a ratio of 4:2:1. This 4:2:1 ratio cocktail can go by the name of 'Bourble', and is then served over crushed ice, in a whisky glass.

To push this a little bit further, a (Bourbon, Cointreau, fresh lemon juice) cocktail made to the ratio 4:4:1 can be called a 'Chapel Hill'.

### **The Seelbach Cocktail**

Old Seelbach Bar, Kentucky.

1 shot Bourbon  
½ shot triple sec  
2 dashes of bitters  
2 dashes of Peychauds bitters (see Sazerac recipe)

Add all ingredients to a chilled champagne flute, and then top with champagne.

You may wish to stir the listed ingredients with ice, to chill them, before adding them to the champagne flute (or keep them in the fridge).

### **Bourbon Alexander**

Aka. Louisville Lady

2 shots Bourbon  
1 shot light crème de caçao  
1 shot cream/ milk

Shake with ice, then strain into a chilled cocktail glass; garnish with a sprinkle of grated nutmeg.

### **Horse's neck (with a kick)**

2 shots Bourbon  
Topped with ginger ale (not ginger beer)

Build over ice, in a tall glass; garnish with extra-long lemon twist.

The extra long lemon twist is the "horses neck", so great care should be shown with this drink's garnish, more than any other.

## **Bourbon Manhattan**

2 shots Bourbon  
1 shot sweet vermouth (Martini Rosso)  
2 dashes of bitters

Stir with ice, then strain into a chilled cocktail glass; garnish with an orange twist.

The original Manhattan was made using American Straight Rye whiskey, and not Canadian Blended Rye whisky as is often assumed.

Before being aged in used barrels, Canadian whisky is 'blended' with neutral grain spirit. To demonstrate this idea for you, get one shot of a strong tasting Bourbon whiskey, and then mix in a shot of neutral tasting vodka. The flavour of the whisky will be completely flattened, but this is what is done to Canadian whisky before it is aged.

If you can't find a straight rye whiskey, do yourself a favour and opt for bourbon instead for all of your rye cocktail 'needs'.

## **Bourbon Manhattan Variants**

Here are some Manhattan variations:

1. Splash of maraschino cherry syrup, from the cherry jar. This cherry syrup is just plain sugar syrup (sugar & water) mixed with artificial cherry flavours. I used to use this 'technique' at a bar I worked at, not anymore though. Not recommended.
2. The 'Dry Manhattan', substitute dry vermouth for the sweet vermouth. Although I don't recommend this drink, there are plenty of people who do.
3. The 'Perfect Manhattan', substitute half the sweet vermouth for dry vermouth. This results in ½ shot dry vermouth, and ½ shot sweet vermouth, instead of 1 shot of sweet vermouth. It is far from perfect.

### **Manhattan Cocktail**

Taken from "Bartenders Guide" by Jerry Thomas (1887)

1 pony of rye whiskey.  
1 wineglass of vermouth.  
2 dashes of Curacao or Maraschino.

3 dashes of Boker's bitters.  
2 small lumps of ice.

Shake up well, and strain into a claret glass. Put a quarter of a slice of lemon in the glass and serve. If the customer prefers it very sweet use also two dashes of gum syrup.

## **Sazerac**

The greatest of New Orleans' alcoholic concoctions.

A quick search of the Internet reveals many recipes for the Sazerac. I am at a loss to explain the confusions over this simple matter. Sazerac.com is the place to go, it's as simple as that, plus they even answer their E-mails.

Erroneous recipes seem hell-bent on shaking the life out of this classic cocktail, when it is meant to be stirred. There are some fine establishments in the city of New Orleans that do indeed shake their Sazeracs, but shame on them. Somehow these propondencies for error end up on the Internet, and one thing leads to another, and people start believing that this is the correct way to do things. I have even seen a link to the official Sazerac website on a web page containing a very incorrect recipe.

Even bartenders and journalists in the great city of New York are mistaken:

"I was sitting at the bar at Pastis, and ordered a Sazerac. The barman muddled wedges of lemon with pink Peychaud bitters and sugar. He scooped ice into the glass; poured over bourbon; shook it so quickly his arm was a blur, shattering the ice into flinty pieces; and strained the drink into a Pernod-stained glass. It was a great drink, sharp and sweet, with a stiff kick punctuating each sip."

-May 23rd 2001, The New York Times.

Error seems to plague the majestic Sazerac. Even some well-respected bartenders make their Sazeracs incorrectly, topping off the glass with plain water, or soda.

## **How the Sazerac Cocktail Came to Be**

In 1838, Antoine Amedie Peychaud, owner of a New Orleans apothecary, treated his friends to brandy toddies of his own recipe, including his "Peychaud's Bitters," made from a secret family recipe. The toddies were made using a double-ended eggcup as a measuring cup or jigger, then known as a "coquetier" (pronounced

"koo-kay-tay"), from which the word "cocktail" was derived. Thus, the world's first cocktail was born!

By 1850, the Sazerac Cocktail, made with Sazerac French brandy and Peychaud's Bitters, was immensely popular, and became the first "branded" cocktail.

In 1873, the recipe for the Sazerac Cocktail was altered to replace the French brandy with American Rye whiskey, and a dash of absinthe was added.

In 1933, the Sazerac Cocktail was bottled and marketed by the Sazerac Company of New Orleans. That same year, "Herbsaint," a pastis, was made according to a French recipe; "Herbsaint" was so named for the New Orleans term for wormwood - "Herb Sainte."

In 1940, the Official Sazerac Cocktail recipe was modified to use Herbsaint as the absinthe.

Finally, in 2000, the Official Sazerac Cocktail recipe was modified to use Sazerac Kentucky Straight Rye Whiskey - or - Buffalo Trace Kentucky Straight Bourbon Whiskey.

### **'Official' Sazerac Cocktail**

Take two heavy-bottomed 3 1/2-oz. bar glasses; fill one with cracked ice and allow it to chill while placing a lump of sugar with just enough water to moisten it. Crush the saturated lump of sugar with a bar spoon. Add a few drops of Peychaud's Bitters, a jigger of rye whiskey and several lumps of ice and stir briskly. Empty the first glass of ice, dash in several drops of Herbsaint, swirl the glass rapidly and shake out the absinthe. Enough of it will cling to the glass to impart the desired flavour. Strain into this glass the rye whiskey mixture prepared in the other glass. Twist a lemon peel over the glass, but do not put it in the drink.

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## **More Rye Cocktails**

### **George's Sazerac**

Adapted by George Sinclair

2 shots straight rye whiskey  
2 dashes of Peychauds Bitters  
2 dashes of Pernod/ Ricard  
¼ shot sugar syrup

Stir with ice, and then strain into a chilled whisky glass ("keep them in the freezer"), that has been rinsed out beforehand with Herbsaint. Squeeze the oil from a lemon twist onto the surface of the finished cocktail, and then discard the spent twist, it is not added to the drink as a garnish.

If you don't have access to either Straight Rye whiskey or Peychauds bitters, maybe you should consider waiting until you can obtain these two items before you attempt to make a Sazerac.

### **Ward Eight**

2 shots straight rye whisky  
¾ shot fresh lemon juice  
¾ shot fresh orange juice  
¼ oz grenadine syrup (pomegranate)

Shake with ice, and then strain into a chilled cocktail glass.

### **The Oriental Cocktail**

2 shots straight rye whiskey  
1 shot sweet vermouth  
1 shot Cointreau  
¾ shot fresh lime juice

Shake with ice, and then strain into a chilled cocktail glass.

### **Frisco**

Aka. Kentucky Colonel

2 shots straight rye whiskey  
½ shot Bénédictine

Stir with ice, and then strain into a chilled cocktail glass. Garnish with a lemon twist.

### **Algonquin**

2 shots straight rye whiskey  
1 shot dry vermouth  
1 shot pineapple juice

Shake with ice, and then strain into a chilled cocktail glass.

**Questions about Makers Mark Bourbon:  
Answered by David Pickerell (Master Distiller at Makers Mark).**

**Question 1:** What are M.M.'s similarities and differences with Old Fitzgerald, which I have read was an 'inspiration' for M.M.

Old Fitz was originally crafted as a wheated bourbon ... just like Maker's Mark. There was a time when they were very similar. Old Fitz has changed some over the years ... they modified the mash bill to use less malt, they quit growing their own yeast ... and most recently, the brand has been sold to a company that here-to-fore has never made a wheated bourbon.

**Question 2** What are the 'gold seal', 'black seal' and 'green seal' (mint julep?) and the 'V.I.P.'? Are there any other releases? (1985 vintage)

Gold seal ... I think you are referring to a product that we used to sell ... same stuff, but bottled at 101 proof with a gold wax top. We have ceased production on that product.

Black seal ... a special product introduced only into Japan and the duty free shops that serve Japan from the US. It was designed with the Japanese palate and culture in mind ... 95 proof and about 8 years old ... meaning that the balance of the product has been clearly shifted to the more woody side.

Green seal ... a pre-made mint julep that we produce annually for the Kentucky market only at Derby time. We make just enough to satisfy the consumer demand at the Derby and that's it.

VIP ... that's the same product as red wax, but in a decanter style presentation bottle. It has custom labels on it ... the purchaser sends us a card, and we make up a front label that says whatever the customer wants it to say ...(within certain limits, of course).

We did have a vintage bottling ... I think it was 1983 ... the package looks a lot like the VIP and the product was a lot like the black wax. Other than that, we play around with the wax colours for various charitable purposes, but no other expressions of the product are out there.

**Question 3:** I once had a bourbon seminar, which told me about Glenmorangie Scottish whisky being matured in Makers Mark's warehouses. Can you tell me if that experiment was a success? Will the experiment be repeated?

Actually, we did a one-shot experiment with one scotch barrel being aged in our warehouses and one of our barrels being aged in a scotch warehouse. There

was no success or failure as an issue ... we just wanted to see definitively how aging differs between the two climates. There are currently no plans to repeat the experiment ... but, by the way, the two barrels are still aging away after about 11 years of experimentation. I still talk to the folks in Scotland about it from time to time.

Note: From other sources, I am able to deduce that, the Glenmorangie whisky aged quicker in Kentucky while the Makers Mark bourbon aged at a slower rate in Scotland. The Glenmorangie apparently became 'undrinkably woody' after 4 years, while the Makers Mark was still immature after the same amount of time.

**Question 4:** For clarification, what is the M.M. mashbill? Why is the mashbill not kept a secret?

The mash bill is 70% corn, 16% soft red winter wheat, and 14% malted barley. The reason we don't keep the mash bill a secret is because it's just hokey to pretend that it's a big deal.

Essentially, there are only 3 mash bills in the whole bourbon industry. One with wheat (70-76% corn, 14-18% wheat, and 8-14% malt) ... a low rye mash bill (75-79% corn, 14-18% rye, 5-8% malt)... and a high rye mash bill (66- 75% corn, 20-26% rye, 5-8% malt). Most distillers like to preserve the aura of the distiller's art by making it look like this is the big deal. In fact, the water source and yeast strain used are much more important in the distinctiveness of the product than a couple of percent in a mash bill any day. At Maker's Mark, we say that we can tell you the mash bill because you can't get any water from our lake, you can't get any of the Samuels' family yeast, and you can't use our personnel ... so there's no way you can copy our product.

**Question 5** I have read that you (M.M.) use both stainless steel and cypress fermentation tanks, is this true? Which material is preferred?

[Yes] We use both, and the product from them is completely indistinguishable. Remember, iron ruins whisky ... 100 years ago, there was no such thing as stainless steel ... so you had to choose ... some folks made their fermenters out of ceramic tile (but had trouble with the grout lines) ... some made 'em out of copper alloy (they had more money than they had sense) ... some went ahead and made them out of iron (they just decided they weren't going to make the good stuff anyway)... the rest chose wood.

If you use wood, you need a type that won't rot, leak, or put any extraneous tastes or aromas into the product. (That's where the Tidewater Red Cypress comes in ... it's a sub-species of the bald cypress that grows in the brackish waters along the gulf coast. I say it is the closest thing they had to stainless steel.)

**Question 6:** What is the maximum strength that M.M. is distilled to? And what is its importance on the final whisky?

The maximum strength we distil from the column still is 120 proof ... from the doubler its 130 proof. The higher the proof, the less grain character will be evident in the final product. You can distil up to 160 proof and still be a bourbon, but with the delicate nature of the wheat, we choose to distil at a much lower proof to preserve those delicate tastes and aromas in the final product.

**Question 7:** I have heard tales of M.M. & hot water, M.M. in the freezer. How about your drinking preference?

Just yesterday, someone talked with me about freezing Maker's ... I don't recommend it, because a lot of the nose gets lost when it gets too cold... and aroma is a good part of the taste. Personally, if I'm going to sit around the house and have my Maker's the way I really like, I will either pour it on about 3 ice cubes and add a splash of water, or I will just shake it over ice in a Manhattan shaker, strain off the ice, and drink it straight.

**Question 8:** I have read in two whiskey books that M.M. has charcoal added to it when it is in the cistern, after being distilled. This is to remove certain congeners I take it? Is there a comparison to be drawn with the Lincoln County Process used by Tennessee Whisky producers? Do you filter the whisky again in this way after it has been aged?

We do, indeed, filter our whisky before it goes into the barrel, and again after it comes out. But there's more to it. Our first filtration is nothing at all like the Lincoln County process. In the Lincoln County process, you actually leach the whisky through a large bed of charcoal. Typically, the whisky is in the bed for about 3 days before it percolates out the other end. This is a very heavy filtration that removes a great deal of the grain character (taste and aroma). Whiskies that have undergone the Lincoln County process are typically much lighter bodied when fully aged.

Our new whisky filtration involves stirring a relatively small amount of activated carbon into a large volume of unfinished whisky and then filtering it back out. Contact time with the charcoal is only about an hour or so. Hence, the filtration is much, much lighter than the Lincoln County process. Essentially, we remove some pre-formed organics but almost all of what is typically referred to as the congeners passes through this process.

After aging, our whisky undergoes a second filtration... which is even much lighter than the first (with the carbon being measured out in quarters of an ounce per 100 gallons of whisky). The purpose of this filtration is merely to make a

final colour adjustment ... because the whisky is bottled to taste, not to age ... sometimes it's a little darker when it comes out of the barrel. This is by no means a chill filtration (a very heavy filtration aimed at removing the chill haze for whisky to be sold at less than 86 proof).

**Question 9:** Would you (as a company) ever consider releasing a 'barrel proof' Makers Mark? If not, what would the reasons be?

Pretty much we're a "one trick dog" ... meaning that we have one brand and we try our best to focus all of our energies on making it the best we can. We have never entertained the thought of selling a 'barrel proof' variety of our product ... for several reasons.

Most importantly, the alcohol content in a spirit can be a blessing or a curse. Alcohol carries taste very well ... in fact, most artificial flavours are delivered to the food manufacturer in an alcohol base because of this property. The problem is that alcohol is also an astringent ... which means that at too high a proof, your taste buds essentially pucker up, and become less capable of true taste sensation. So the issue is to find the right balance of proof to carry the taste well without having so much that it overwhelms the taste. For Maker's Mark, we believe that the perfect balance for proof is 90 ... so you won't see a barrel proof because it would most likely result in a negative impact for our distinctive taste.

To a lesser degree, some would infer that a 'barrel proof' product would necessarily be "premium" in its attributes [compared to the same product at a] lesser proof ... which is not generally the case. In fact, some spirit producers have attempted to gain entry into the premium spirit market merely by changing the proof of an existing product. I would argue that they have done nothing to change the quality of the product at all ... same product, different proof (i.e. just add a little less water to it). Those who have achieved some notoriety in the premium market with a proof change have generally done so by not only changing the proof, but by adding some extra age to a product that probably needed some extra age anyway. The Jim Beam/ Booker's (or Knob Creek) and Old Forester/Woodford Reserve combinations are examples of this.

**Question 10:** Is the water, which is used to 'cut' Makers Mark, distilled before use?

Since the water used to cut the whisky is added after distillation, it must be specially purified. Distilling water is one way to accomplish that. Most distilleries, however, filter their water and run it through a de-ioniser to clean it up. Some use reverse osmosis type filtration. At the end of the day, it is all interchangeable with distilled water and has essentially the same character.

**Question 11:** Why is 'Sour Mash' (set back) used in new batches of whisky?

It keeps out unwanted bacterial action by means of holding the fermenter at a low pH throughout the fermentation (the set back is pH buffered at about 4.6 to 4.8). Most bacterial growth will not flourish at such low pH conditions.

The yeast strain is kept pure through our propagation and sanitation systems.

### **Makers Marks Production Processes**

To properly understand the process of bourbon making, I have chosen to focus on one particular brand. The following steps are the same for most whiskies; it is of course all down to the differences in these processes, that produces the different results.

#### **Ingredients:**

70% Corn, 16% Soft Red Winter Wheat, 14% Malted Barley

Makers Mark uses wheat instead of rye in its 'mash-bill' (recipe); this produces a less aggressive taste. Such bourbons are referred to as 'Wheated Bourbons'. As long as the basic mash-bill of a bourbon is a minimum of 51% corn, the remaining 49% can consist of any grain type. But if it contains more than 80% corn it must be labelled as a 'Corn Whiskey'.

#### **Milling:**

The grains (ingredients) are crushed with rollers, rather than being pounded by a hammer-type mill, as is more of a normal practice. This rolling action is gentler on the grains, but it produces less fermentable material.

#### **Mashing:**

The ground ingredients are mixed with spring water, and then some 'set back' (a percentage of the previous mash) is added. The amount of this 'set back' for M.M. is 33%, which is a higher than usual percentage for the industry. The use of 'set back' helps to prevent undesirable yeasts taking hold of the sugars in the mash. 'Rogue' yeast strains can produce unwanted flavours, and could possibly ruin the whole batch.

The 'mash' (beer/ wort) comes out, after fermentation, at around 8- 10% abv (10 proof)

#### **Distillation:**

1st Distillation

- Column Still
- Resultant strength in alcohol= 120 proof (60% abv)

#### 2nd Distillation

- Doubler (made partially of copper), resembles pot still
- Resultant strength in alcohol= 130 proof (65% abv)

#### Cistern

- This is where the newly distilled spirit collects after coming out of the 'doubler', and prior to barrelling.
- A small percentage of 'activated carbon' (charcoal) is stirred into the spirit. (This addition of charcoal at this stage is not a common production practice).
- Activated Carbon, Carbon (charcoal) that has been treated with either steam or chemicals to make it more absorbent.

Before going into the barrel, the spirit is brought down in alcoholic strength by 'cutting' it with spring water. The 'watered down' distillate will be 109- 110 proof (54.5- 55% abv)

#### **Maturation:**

Rotation of barrels in the warehouses. Most big bourbon makers leave their barrels where they are during maturation, relying instead on blending their whisky to maintain the flavours of their brands. Blending helps to fade bad (under-matured) barrels into batches of good (properly-matured) barrels. Makers Marks insistence on barrel rotation, helps to mature all its barrels to a more equal condition, ensuring a uniformity of quality. This uniformity is at opposites with the wide spectrum of maturation offered by stagnant whisky barrels, while some barrels squalor in bad positions in the warehouse, while others revel in so-called 'honey spots'.

#### **Barrels:**

'Air dried' rather than 'kiln dried', this is similar to 'Sun dried' as opposed to 'oven baked', and the air-drying takes longer than kiln drying, and is also more expensive. Air-drying means that the wood is more evenly, and less extremely, dried.

#### **Bottling:**

When the bourbon comes out of the barrel at around 114- 117 proof (57- 58.5% abv), it is 'cut' again with treated spring water to bring it down to its final bottling strength (90 proof, 45% abv).

No chill filtering is preformed on any Makers Mark bourbon.

Chill filtering is used to prevent distilled spirit going 'hazy', but this only affects lower alcoholic strength whiskies (below 86 proof, 43% abv).

### **"Whisky, whiskeys, whiskies and whiskey" Section**

The words whisky and whiskey are both derived from the same Gaelic phrase: Uisge beatha, which means 'water of life'. Uisge was subsequently corrupted to uisgey, and then finally to whisky, and also whiskey.

Uisge beatha is pronounced "Ooshi Baah"

Scottish & Canadian=whisky, and whiskies  
Irish & American=Whiskey, and whiskeys

### **Fermentation & Yeast**

To produce whisky, or indeed any spirit, a lower alcohol solution is needed. To produce the low alcohol solution, a sugar source is needed, which is then fermented with the addition of yeasts and water. This solution is concentrated later on, by the distillation process, which reduces the amount of water in the liquid, thereby increasing the ratio of alcohol to water.

There are two types of yeast fermentation methods in whisky making: the sweet mash and the sour mash methods.

"Sweet mash is the traditional form of fermentation used by Scottish and Irish distillers, where fresh grain is used in each fermentation. Sour mash [used in bourbon whisky] uses a portion of the previous fermentation, already stripped of all its sugars and therefore 'sour'."

Jim Murray's Complete Book of Whisky

The main species of yeast we use in the whisky industry is "Saccharomyces cerevisiae". "

GlenMorangie (Scotch Whisky Distillers)

It should be noted that while sweet mash contains the yeast that will ultimately consume the sugars in the wash, sour mash does not. Sour mash is dead 'left overs', its only purpose is to make sure that wild strains of yeast do not take hold of a new batch of mash before the distillery has introduced its own preferred

yeast strain. The 'sour mash' causes the acidity of the 'wash' to be kept at a low level, thus preventing wild strains colonising it.

The reason that American whiskey producers use the sour mash method is due to the extreme heat of their local environment, which contains a larger, and more dangerous, concentration of wild yeasts. This large availability of wild yeasts could lead to unwanted contamination by undesirable yeast, and to the different flavours each one can produce.

Each different strain of yeast consumes sugar in a different way; some strains are more thorough in their consumption of sugars than others. If a yeast strain devours all of the sugar in a mash completely, there would be only alcohol and carbon dioxide left over, which is not good for whisky making. The parts of the mash that are not consumed totally, provide a lot of the flavour for the end product (the whisky). The yeasts that provide the best results, i.e. consume the sugars in such a way that a pleasant set of flavours is left over, are highly prized, in Bourbon whiskey production anyway.

Scottish whisky distillers seem to just buy in standard yeast strains from outside suppliers, this highlights a major contrast in the approach to whiskey production between the two continents.

The bourbon whiskey producers place great emphasis on the importance of 'their' yeast strain, compared to other distillers. Just try asking if you can have some of it!

### **Barrels and Teabags**

Unless additives and foreign substances have darkened a brown spirit, it will have been discoloured by exposure to a barrel. New barrels have a greater affect on a new spirit than a previously used barrel. This is due to a greater availability of fresh properties in the new barrels material. A spirit that is contained in a new barrel can only be left in so long, before it takes in too much from the barrel. Barrels that have been used several times before, will have a much more subdued affect on the maturation of new spirit. This is due to the properties of the barrel having been depleted by the spirit that it was first used to mature.

Every subsequent use of the barrel will deplete its potential to affect a maturing spirit even more. This is how some French brandies can stay in a barrel for up to, and over 80 years. No new spirit would survive that long in a new barrel, if it did it would become undrinkable. Its flavour would become over concentrated and over woody, making it particularly undesirable to drink.

Compare a cup of tea made with a fresh teabag, and a cup of tea made with a used teabag. A first use teabag will add the most flavour in the shortest time,

whereas the used teabag will produce a much weaker cup of tea no matter how long it is left in.

Makers Mark Bourbon Whisky uses new charred American oak barrels to mature its fine whiskey, as do all bourbons. Once it has finished with these barrels, after about 6- 7 years they are shipped off to the Glenmorangie Scotch Whisky Distillery. Once the M.M. barrels reach Glenmorangie they are utilised to age their own whiskey. The initial aging of the M.M. took the lion's share of the barrels properties, leaving behind only a fraction of its original properties. This lack of properties in the barrel is fine with the Scotch whisky producers; they are out to produce a smoother, mellower (less flavoursome) whisky.

Of course there are more variables than this to explain the fact that scotch tastes different from bourbon, original ingredients (i.e. what was it distilled from?), length of aging etc. But the affect of the barrel should not be over-looked. The greater temperature difference in Kentucky does cause more of the whisky to be circulated into and out of the barrels surfaces, thereby aiding in the take-up of the barrels properties. But it should still be noted that a greater concentration of properties exist in the Kentucky barrels as they have never been used before.

This analogy of aging is equally applicable to rum, tequila and any other type of aged spirit.

The less properties a barrel has, the less affect it will have on the spirit it is maturing. Compare colouring a picture with a new felt-tip pen, to colouring a picture with a worn out one.

### **Irish Whiskey Versus Scottish Whisky**

Most people's definition of Irish whiskey is that it is Triple distilled, and that Scotch whisky production involves the use of peat, which produces the Smokey taste. That is not always the case. It should be noted that not all Irish whiskey is triple distilled and that not all Scotch production involves peat drying.

It is better to judge each individual brand of whisk(e)y on its own merits, rather than 'pigeon holing' all Irish as one thing, and all Scotch as another.

### **Blends Versus Malts**

Blended whisky is produced by blending a proportion of malt whiskies, with less flavoursome grain whisky. The grain whisky brings down the intensity of flavour from the malts by diluting its taste with its own near absence of taste. This is not to say that grain whisky is not a great thing in its own right, but its role in blended whisky is not centred around its strengths.

**John Glaser** of Compassbox Delicious Whisky is pioneering the renaissance of good (Delicious?) grain whisky as a spirit in its own right, check [compassboxwhisky.com](http://compassboxwhisky.com) for more details.

According to Phillip Mills, co-founder of the Scottish Malt Whisky Society, the prominence of blends is down to their role in the past. The thinning of a malt whisky's flavour was beneficial at the time it was introduced; this was due to the inferior quality of malts of old. In the present day, the quality of all spirits, and their production methods, has been greatly improved. Malt whisky is now of a much more palatable nature, whereas before it was not. This improvement in quality of malts should, I feel, negate the 'need/ want' for blended whisky, but this is where a few other factors come in: Heritage, and Profit.

Grain Whisky is cheaper to produce than Malt whisky; this is due to the fact that it is produced almost like vodka, in a column still. Grain whisky is distilled to an extremely high alcoholic strength and then 'cut' (watered down) to a more appropriate strength. Grain whisky is lighter than malt whisky due to this near vodka-like production.

The heritage factor of blended whisky stems from the image that they have bought for themselves, from advertising and sponsored endorsements. It more to do with being seen drinking a particular brand, than the flavour it possesses.

### **Back to the yeast's food**

So we know that yeast eats sugar, and produces alcohol and carbon dioxide. But where does it get the sugar from? Answer: From grain.

Whisky is produced from grain, predominantly barley. This barley is soaked in water, which causes it to begin germinating; it's in moist soil it thinks! The process of germination is when the seed converts its latent starch store into digestible sugars; this is so the new plant has a source of fuel while it is growing.

Whisky production involves tricking the barley, or other grain, into germinating, and then stopping it at the optimum moment. It has converted the starch into sugar, but is not fully developed into a seedling. Once the grains have reached a certain point in their germinating, and the majority of their contained starch is converted into sugars, they are baked. This kills the grains, but leaves their sugars behind. It is these sugar-containing grains, which are mashed with water, to create a sugary wash of grains and water. Now the yeast strain is unleashed on the sugar content of this wash. As mentioned before the by-products of yeast activity are alcohol and Carbon dioxide, the alcohol remains in the wash, but the CO<sub>2</sub> is released into the atmosphere. This bubbling mash will continue converting sugar into alcohol for a couple of days, and then it will fall silent. The sugar is all gone, and the yeast dies, starved to death after its feeding frenzy.

Now the distiller is left with alcohol, water and solids, the solids being the remainants of the mashed grains.

Now the alcoholic mixture needs to be concentrated, removing the water content does this. This stripping away of water is achieved by use of the scientific fact that alcohol boils at a lower temperature than water. To vaporise the alcohol, the wash/ mash is heated to a temperature in between the two chemicals boiling points. As the alcohol is boiled off, the water and solids remain where they are. The vaporised alcohol travels up the still and is condensed back into alcohol.

Theoretically, we should have pure alcohol in one container, and the water & solids mixture in the other, but it is not that simple. Due to technical constraints, the distillation is not so clean-cut, some water and elements from the wash/ mash stays with the vaporising alcohol, and re-condenses along with everything else. A major part of the water will have been removed, and thus the new concentrated liquid will take on a new different, more potent flavour.

This distillation process may happen again, the exact number depends on the distiller and what they want to achieve as their final product.

The non-alcoholic elements that pass through the still help to provide the flavour components of the whisky, without these 'congeners', as they are known, there would be not taste or aroma to the distilled spirit.

## **Whisky Cocktails**

Some people try to put bourbon into all their whisky cocktails, which is unnecessary. Scotch cocktails should not be seen as competing with those made with bourbon, but as being in a category of their own.

### **Whisky Sour**

2 shots Scotch whisky  
1 shot fresh lemon juice  
½ shot sugar syrup  
2 dashes of bitters (optional)  
½ of an egg white (albumen)

Shake with ice, then strain into an ice filled whisky glass; garnish with a lemon slice.

### **Rob Roy**

2 shots Scotch whisky  
1 shot sweet vermouth

2 dashes of bitters

Stir with ice, then strain into a chilled cocktail glass; garnish with a lemon twist.

### **City Limits**

Created by George Sinclair

2 shots 'Black Bush' Irish whiskey

1 shot apple juice

¼ shot sugar syrup

2 dashes of bitters

Stir with ice, then strain into a chilled cocktail glass; garnish with a lemon twist.

### **Godfather**

1 ½ shots Scotch whisky

¾ shot amaretto

Stir with ice, and then strain into an ice filled whisky glass.

### **Rusty Nail**

1 ½ shots Scotch whisky

¾ shot Drambuie (scotch whisky based, honey liqueur)

Stir with ice, and then strain into an ice filled whisky glass.

### **Irish Coffee**

This recipe is taken from the Buena Vista Cafe, San Francisco, where the Irish coffee arrived in America (from Shannon Airport, Ireland).

1. Fill glass with very hot water to pre-heat, then empty.
2. Pour hot coffee into hot glass until it is about three-quarters full. Drop in three sugar cubes.
3. Stir until the sugar is thoroughly dissolved
4. Add full jigger of Irish Whiskey for proper taste and body.
5. Top with a collar of lightly whipped whipping cream by pouring gently over a spoon.
6. Enjoy it while piping hot.

The exact amount of Irish whiskey to use in an Irish coffee is down to personal choice. The three sugar cubes can be substituted for the equivalent amount of

sugar syrup. The equivalent amount of sugar must be used, or the cream will fail to float atop the coffee properly.

Some establishments garnish their Irish Coffees with three coffee beans; this is borrowed from a sambucca related serving ritual. An odd number of coffee beans mean the guest is welcome.

## **Tequila Section**

Tequila is not made from cactus; it is made from the Agave plant.

### **What is an Agave?**

An Agave is categorised as being part of the 'succulent' family, an especially adapted type of plant that stores water inside itself, so that it can last long periods of drought. Tequila is not, as commonly assumed, made from cactus, or any part of it for that matter. The perceived scenery of Mexico, found its way into the products imagery, and was then incorrectly assumed to be the principal ingredient of the tequila.

If you are a thinking bartender, you should find it inconceivable to pour expensive brands into cocktails, just for the sake of using expensive brands. After all, cocktails are about flavour, and quality workmanship, not how much the ingredients cost. Some people, including myself, feel that good tequilas can be the rivals to the world's finest cognacs, and whiskies. So why use the best tequila in a cocktail? These tequilas are best appreciated when sipped thoughtfully, from the same type of glass used to savour cognac in. Good quality cocktails do come from good quality ingredients, but a point of diminishing returns is quickly reached, as the only thing that is improving is the cost. A good cocktail bartender should be able to sell good straight spirits with the same enthusiasm as they sell their cherished mixed drinks. Prising the salt and lime from a customers hands and making them actually taste a good tequila, is much more of a challenge than serving them 'happy hour' beers, or cocktail 'pitchers'.

### **From Agave to Tequila**

The agaves tough husk must be cut through to reach the pine (heart), but before that can be done, the sharp spiky protective spines must be cut off. To break down the 'pine' into a fermentable state, it must be cooked to break down its structure. It is then ground down and fermented into a low alcohol mash, it is this mash which is distilled into the tequila.

Good tequila is produced totally from the Agave, hence the '100% Agave' labelling. The cheaper tequilas on the market, those which are not labelled 100% Agave, are referred to as 'Mixto'. Mixto tequila will usually contain some Agave,

and then be 'topped up' with non-Agave alcohols, usually distilled from sugar. 'Mixto' tequila production only serves to enable its producers to cash in on the tequila name, while at the same time supplying an inferior product, which generates bigger profit margins.

Hopefully you will now accept that 100% Agave is the only tequila to be stocked on a quality-orientated bar. And therefore, the only type of tequila to be used in tequila cocktails.

### **Mezcal versus Tequila**

Blue Agave (Tequilana Weber) is not the only type of Agave there is, and therefore tequila is not the only distilled spirit to be made from an Agave. Correctly classified, tequila is a form of mezcal, as the word mezcal covers all distilled spirits made from Agave. To be called "Tequila", a mezcal must meet several Mexican government controlled criteria, one of which is the use of only Blue Agave.

You must now decide which brand of tequila to use for your margarita cocktail. When it comes to 100% Agave tequila, there is no cheap option, just a less expensive option. Farming, harvesting and processing the Agave plant properly, is the expensive way of producing tequila. Only when it comes down to using 'rested' tequila (reposado), or 'aged' tequila (anejo) does the price go up substantially. When tequila is aged for long periods of time, it becomes mellower and softer in flavour, and begins to lose its earthy, Agave taste. The reason for using tequila in a cocktail, is to add that earthy tequila flavour into the mix, so therefore using aged tequila is not always a wise choice.

There are many types of tequila, each with its own classification. Do not assume a tequila's classification without finding the exact wording on the label.

**Blanco** (Silver/ White/ Plata): This is unaged tequila. 'Blanco' tequila can be either '100% Agave' or Mixto (The less than 100% Agave tequila). The label will not tell you if it is a 'mixto' tequila, but it will tell you if its '100% Agave'. If it says nothing specific, then it will most definitely be of the 'mixto' variety.

**Joven Abacado** is commonly referred to as 'Gold Tequila'. This tequila is the same as 'Blanco', but with the addition of burnt sugar (caramel) to discolour and sweeten it. It is usually made of the inferior 'Mixto' tequila, and it is sweetened and given the 'gold' moniker to make it more appealing to the uneducated palate. Steer clear of this stuff, or you will become one of those who are 'allergic' to tequila.

If you drank a bottle of any spirit, you will suffer an 'allergic' reaction, technically known as alcohol poisoning.

**Reposado** means 'rested'. This tequila must be aged for a minimum of two months. This tequila is the intermediate stuff between 'Blanco' and 'Anejo'. The only difference is the amount of time it has been aged, usually only a few months in total. Reposado should only be purchased if it says '100% Agave' on the label. The 'reposado' will be mellower than the 'Blanco', but have more of an earthy (tequila) flavour than the 'Anejo'.

**Anejo**, meaning aged. Must be aged for a minimum of one year. This tequila is the same as the 'Reposado' tequila except that it has been aged for years, rather than months. Expect it to be smoother, mellower, more palatable, and of course, more expensive. If this stuff doesn't say '100% Agave', then don't waste your money.

Now that you have hopefully accepted that good quality tequila should be the 'norm' on any quality bar, I now move your attention, to the often misunderstood area of the 'triple sec' element in margarita recipes. All Triple Secs (orange liqueurs) are by no means the same.

**Overproof**, meaning over 100 proof in alcoholic strength (50% abv). Actually, there is no overproof designation for tequila, but I was interested in finding out if there was a maximum strength that was being produced. After some research I found that the highest alcoholic strength for tequila in a bottle was 55% abv (110%), but I continued to wonder, was tequila being distilled to a higher level than this? I contacted several authors, posted on the Internet, but no useful responses came my way. After an exchange of e-mails with a tequila company I was informed that the highest strength a tequila could be distilled to was indeed 55% abv (110 proof). 55% is a particularly low degree of distillation, which enables the spirit known as tequila to retain most of the flavours from the Agave plant itself. Compare this 55% abv maximum to the 80% abv maximum of bourbon whisky.

### **Margarita cocktail components:**

#### **Cointreau**

Created in 1849 by Edouard-Jean Cointreau, and his brother Adolphe. Cointreau is an orange liqueur made from the infusion of both bitter and sweet orange peels. These orange peels are sourced from Spain and Brazil. These peels are then macerated (soaked) in alcohol for several weeks to bring out the flavour and aroma. The true mastery of the Cointreau brand is the balance that is attained between the bitter and the sweet orange peels. Due to the variability of each years orange harvest, the Cointreau master distiller has to balance out the flavours, to maintain his products consistency.

Very basically, Cointreau is natural grain spirit (pure alcohol), sugar, and the flavours and aromas from bitter and sweet orange peels.

### **Grand-Marnier**

Another well-known brand name associated with margaritas is Grand Marnier. Grand Marnier uses fine cognacs instead of neutral grain alcohol in its products, so the taste is a blend between brandy and oranges, albeit sweeter. Grand Marnier was conceived in 1880 by Louis-Alexandre Marnier. During a tour of Haiti, Louis-Alexandre came upon the idea of blending the islands oranges with fine cognac, and so Grand Marnier was born.

When it comes to margarita cocktails, I feel that the heavier flavour of Grand Marnier interferes with the tequila a little too much. It may be a nice drink for some people, but it should never be confused with an original style margarita. A margarita made with Grand Marnier is commonly referred to as a Grand Margarita.

### **Triple Sec**

There are many companies producing triple sec in the world, with a wide difference of quality, the reason for the differences in quality are down to customer demand and acceptance. If you want to increase the profits from your cocktails you either put the prices up, or use cheaper ingredients. Generally, people use cheaper ingredients as a cost-costing exercise, rather than for the properties that they bring to cocktails that they are used in. Triple sec can range in strength from as little as 15% abv, all the way up to 39% abv. If you were using vodka that was 15% alcohol, you would lose all your customers. However when it comes down to triple sec, people don't care, because they don't know what they are dealing with.

Lower strength triple sec usually tastes watery, in comparison to its better-made higher strength counterparts. The other element that stands out in this 'quality gap' is the unsophisticated way in which cheaper triple sec is sweetened. Marie Brizzard, Bols and De Kuyper, all produce triple sec of sufficient quality and taste to warrant inclusion in a margarita. Although if you care about the drinks taste, you may as well maintain authenticity as well, so using Cointreau seems more logical.

The next, and last, ingredient we come to is the sour element of the margarita, not sweet but sour. The classic recipe calls for freshly squeezed lime juice, but bars everywhere use a multitude of substitutes.

### **Lemon Juice**

Lemons are cheaper than limes, and are less sour than limes. Using lemon juice makes the margarita taste sweeter, due to the sweetness of the Cointreau/ triple sec not being neutralised as much, as it is with lime juice. The uneducated tongue has a leaning towards sweetness, so most people find this an acceptable practice. Mexican limes are reputed to be less sour than the limes available in most American stores, so lemon juice will just have to do, in some cases. In practice, I find lime juice to be roughly twice the sourness of lemon juice.

Even though these two fruit are different colours, and taste different, their names are often confused. Throughout cocktail books, and websites, you will see this confusion. And so to help you I include the following chart.

	Citrus limon	Citrus aurantifolia
<b>English</b>	<b>Lemon</b>	<b>Lime</b>
Danish	Citron	Lime
Dutch	Citroen	Limoen
French	Citron	Limette
German	Zitrone	Limette, Limone
Italian	Limone	Lima, Limetta
Norwegian	Sitron	Limett, Sur Sitron
Portuguese	Limão	Limão gelego, lima ácida
Spanish	Limón	Lima, Limón agria

### **Roses Lime Cordial ('lime juice')**

This cordial consists of some actual lime juice (34%), with the remaining 66% made up of sugar and water. In my opinion, roses lime cordial has no place on a cocktail bar. Lime cordial and fresh lime juice are two completely different products, and the fact that some bottles of roses lime cordial carry margarita recipes should be ignored completely. "Does orange cordial taste the same as freshly squeezed orange juice?" The answer is no, just in case you were wondering.

### **Sweet and Sour Mix**

The amount of bars that use this stuff is unbelievable; once again it is all down to money. Sweet and sour mix comes in powdered form, and is then diluted to taste (?). Powdered lemon juice, powdered sugar, powdered egg white all in one packet. Fresh limejuice goes stale after 4-5 days if kept in a refrigerator. Sweet and Sour mix stays 'fresh' for a much longer time. Not only is this product no substitute for freshly squeezed limejuice, but also it adds a fizzy taste to anything it is used in. This fizzy taste is confused by some customers, as being the taste of

the alcohol. To make the best drink possible, use fresh lime or lemon juice, and then add your own sugar to balance the taste.

### **Concentrated Lemon Juice.**

Basically this is lemon juice that has had its water content removed in a process, and is then re-diluted before bottling.

### **The sum of its parts**

Correctly balanced, all three ingredients of a margarita work extremely well together. A margarita is not meant to be sweet or overly sour, it is meant to be a platform for the flavour of all its ingredients. If someone wants a sour margarita, then let him or her ask for it.

To mis-paraphrase Neitzsche: "For a single cocktail, there are a thousand recipes".

The Margarita is one of those cocktails that everyone has the "best" recipe for. Some of these abominations contain beer, frozen lime concentrate etc etc. But let me show you the original recipe or, at least, a short-list.

### **Margaret Sames' Margarita**

3 parts silver Tequila  
1 part Cointreau  
1 part fresh lime juice

Shake with ice, and then strain into a chilled champagne glass (saucer style), which is rimmed with salt.

### **Francisco "Pancho" Morales' Margarita**

2 parts silver Tequila  
1 part Cointreau  
1 part fresh lime juice

Shake with ice, and then strain into chilled cocktail glass, which is rimmed with salt.

### **Carlos "Danny" Herrera's Margarita**

3 parts silver Tequila  
2 parts Cointreau

1 part fresh lime juice

Shake with crushed (shaved) ice, and then strain into a chilled cocktail glass, which has a salt rim.

### **Danny Negrete's Margarita**

1 part silver Tequila  
1 part Triple Sec (Cointreau)  
1 part fresh lime juice

Shake with ice, and then strain into a whisky glass containing crushed ice. A salted rim is optional.

### **Margarita ratios:**

3:1:1=6:2:2

60% silver Tequila, equal parts Cointreau & fresh lime juice

2:1:1=6:3:3

50% silver Tequila, equal parts Cointreau & fresh lime juice

3:2:1=6:4:2

50% silver Tequila; double as much Cointreau as fresh lime juice.

1:1:1=6:6:6

33% silver Tequila, 33% Cointreau, and 33% lime juice

When making a Margarita for someone, please remember to ask if the person wants salt on their cocktail glass. As popular as salt is on the Margarita, not ever one appreciates it. The eminent cocktail book author/ consultant Gary Regan takes no salt on his margarita glass, nor sugar on his "side-car".

And if you need more convincing, then heed the advice of Julio Bermejo, head bartender of Tommy's in San Francisco, regular winner of Best Margarita accolades:

"if a client loves salt, and has never been to Tommy's, I will usually salt only half the glass to give that client the opportunity to try the drink the way we made it."

Julio states that as salt is a flavour enhancer, it is mainly used to make poorly constructed Margaritas taste more palatable. It is for these culinary reasons, i.e. to taste the combined ingredients, rather than the salt, that Julio dislikes the stuff on his Margaritas.

"At Tommy's we want one's Margarita to taste of mainly two things, which in our case happen to be the largest components in our Margaritas after ice, 100% Agave Tequila and fresh, hand squeezed, lime juice.

## Tequila Cocktails

### Mangorita

2 shots silver Tequila  
1/2 shot fresh lime juice  
3/4 shot Mango syrup  
3 shots fresh mango purée

Blend ingredients, in an electric blender, with crushed ice until smooth. Pour into a tall glass, then garnish with a mango slice, and add two long straws.

There is no need to put a salt rim on this drink's glass, as it is intended to be consumed through the drinking straws.

### Brave Bull

1 1/2 shot Tequila  
1 shot Kahlúa (coffee liqueur)

Stir with ice, then strain into an ice filled whisky glass; garnish with an orange twist.

### Tequila Banger

Aka. Freddy Fudpucker

2 shots Tequila  
4 shots fresh orange juice

Build over ice in a tall glass, and then pour a 3/4 shot of Galliano over the top. Garnish with an orange slice.

### El Diablo

2 shots Tequila  
1/2 shot fresh lime juice  
3/4 shot cremé de cassis (blackcurrant)

Build over ice in a tall glass, and then top with ginger ale. Garnish with a lime wedge, and add two long straws.

### **Tequila Sunrise**

2 shots silver Tequila  
¼ shot fresh lime juice (optional)  
3 shots fresh orange juice

Shake with ice, then strain into ice filled tall glass; then pour in ½ shot grenadine syrup (pomegranate). The grenadine will settle to the bottom of the glass, creating a graduated effect. Garnish with an orange slice, and carefully add two long straws.

### **Guadalajara**

2 shots silver Tequila  
1 shot dry vermouth  
½ shot Bénédictine

Shake with ice, then strain into a chilled cocktail glass; garnish with a lemon twist.

### **Filthy Sanchez**

Aka. Tequila Cosmo, Rude Cosmo, Dirty Cosmo

1 ½ shots Tequila  
½ shot Cointreau  
1 shot cranberry juice  
¼ shot fresh lime juice

Shake with ice, then strain over new ice in a whisky glass; garnish with a flamed orange twist.

### **Rosita**

2 shots silver Tequila  
½ shot sweet vermouth  
½ shot dry vermouth  
½ shot Campari

Shake with ice, then strain into a chilled cocktail glass; garnish with a lemon twist.

### **Triple Citrus Tequila**

To a bottle of tequila, add the following: 2 complete peels of orange, 2 complete peels of lemon, 2 complete peels of lime. Leave for two weeks, then taste.

This Tequila is good straight, or used in Tequila 'Old Fashioned'.

### **Tequila Slammer**

Often confused with the 'salt, tequila, lime' ritual, ("Sal Y Limon").

Add 1-2 shots of silver or gold tequila to a solid based whisky glass. Now add 1-2 shots of, any of the following: Soda water (club soda), Lemonade, Champagne. Place the palm of your hand over the top of the glass. Swirl the glass around, then 'slam' onto a solid surface. Then drink it down in one gulp.

### **Changing the recipe**

For recipes that list soda water, try substituting champagne, or any other sparkling wine (prosecco, spumante etc)

For example: Tom Collins, Mojito, Raspberry Collins, Straits Sling, and El Diablo.

## **Brandy Section**

Cognac and Armagnac are both types of brandy, with brandy meaning a spirit that is distilled from fruit. In cocktails, it can be used in any recipe that already contains whisky, rum or tequila. Remember it too is not just brown vodka; brandy gives a great taste to a cocktail.

When making cocktails I feel it is worth noting that the finest cognac should not be destined for the cocktail mixing glass. While good tasting ingredients are indeed needed to construct good tasting cocktails, sense must be shown in what brands you use.

The best cognac should, in my opinion, be drunk without adulteration (i.e. without anything added to it), so that the skill of its production can be best savoured. I suggest sticking with VS or VSOP as the level of quality, sufficient for brandy cocktails.

Concentration on perfecting your understanding of each recipes balance of flavours will yield better cocktails, rather than spending more money on the cocktails ingredients. No two bartenders make the same drink with the same

ingredients, so understanding the nature of your products will help you to identify when you have reached an optimum balance of flavour for yourself.

I start my brandy cocktail list with the brandy cocktail that all bartenders should know how to make. The sidecar, it is the perfect example of why you should use adequate quality products in your cocktails.

Compare a sidecar made with cognac, Cointreau, and fresh lemon juice with another 'sidecar' made with cheap brandy, triple sec and sweet 'n' sour mix. The quality issue does not stem from wanting to be extravagant with costly ingredients, but from a genuine desire to create a good, tasty cocktail with adequate ingredients.

## **Brandy Cocktails**

### **Sidecar**

1 ¼ shots Cognac  
¾ shot Cointreau  
1 shot fresh lemon juice

Shake with ice, then strain into a sugar-rimmed cocktail glass; garnish with a lemon twist.

"Cocktails: How To Mix Them" by Robert Vermeire (1922)

Side-Car

Fill the shaker half full of broken ice and add:

1/6 gill of fresh Lemon Juice.  
1/6 gill of Cointreau.  
1/6 gill of Cognac Brandy.

Shake well and strain into a cocktail-glass.

The earliest known recipe for the Sidecar uses 'equal parts' (i.e. one shot of each ingredient). However, less Cointreau allows for more of the lemon juice to show through, which 'plays' nicely with the sugared rim of the glass.

### **Biarritz Cocktail**

2 shots Armagnac  
1 shot Cointreau  
1 shot fresh lime juice

Shake with ice, then strain into a chilled cocktail glass; garnish with a lemon twist.

### **Brandy Crusta.**

'Professor' Jerry Thomas' in his book "The Bon-Vivant's Companion"(1862) uses the following recipe: 2 oz brandy, 2 dashes orange Curacao, a dash of lemon juice. These ingredients are shaken with ice, then strained into a chilled wine glass, and then finally garnished with an extra long lemon twist.

### **Brandy Alexander**

2 shots Cognac  
1 shots light crème de caçao  
1 shot cream

Shake with ice, then strain into a chilled martini glass; garnish with grated nutmeg.

### **Draque**

Aka. Draquecito

2 shots Brandy/ Cognac  
1 shot fresh lime juice  
½ shot sugar syrup  
6- 8 Mint leaves  
2 dashes Angostura bitters (optional)

Gently bruise the mint leaves in the bottom of a tall glass. Add cubed ice and the other ingredients, and then stir. Add soda water to top (2 shots maximum, with the soda water), then garnish with a mint sprig. Add two long straws, and serve.

### **Godchild**

2 shots Cognac  
1 shot amaretto

Stir with ice, then strain into an ice filled whisky glass; no garnish.

### **Classic Champagne Cocktail**

1. Dab a sugar cube with 2 dashes of angostura bitters.
2. Then drop the sugar cube into a champagne flute.

3. Add just enough cognac to just cover the sugar cube.
4. Top the glass off with champagne.
5. Squeeze an orange twist over the drinks surface, then discard the twist, (do not drop it into the finished drink).

This recipe is evolved from another cocktail called simply 'champagne cocktail', which is basically the same, except that it contains no cognac.

### **Brandy Old Fashioned**

2 shots cognac  
¼ shot sugar syrup  
2 dashes of bitters

Add all ingredients to an empty whisky glass, and then add ice. Stir thoroughly, as you would a martini cocktail, then add more ice. Garnish with an orange twist, and then add a stirrer.

### **Brandy Manhattan**

2 shots cognac  
1 shot sweet vermouth  
2 dashes of bitters

Stir with ice, then strain into a chilled cocktail glass; garnish with an orange twist.

### **Between the Sheets**

¾ shot brandy  
¾ shot rum  
¾ shot Cointreau  
¾ shot fresh lemon juice

Shake with ice, then strain into a chilled cocktail glass; garnish with a lemon twist.

Although this recipe does appear to be equal part of all three ingredients, it is in fact a 2:1:1 ratio cocktail recipe. The brandy and rum constitute two quarters of the total quantity, or 50%.

The "Between the Sheets" is said to be evolved from the Sidecar.

### **Brandy Mint Julep**

3 shots cognac  
½ shot sugar syrup  
8 mint leaves

Gently bruise the mint leaves in the bottom of a tall glass, and then add all other ingredients. Add crushed ice, and then stir thoroughly. Add more crushed ice, if necessary. Garnish with a mint sprig, and add 2 long straws.

### **Black Feather**

Created by Robert Hess

2 shots Cognac  
1 shot dry vermouth  
½ shot Cointreau  
1 dash of bitters

Stir with ice, then strain into a chilled cocktail glass; garnish with a lemon twist.

### **Hennessey Twist**

Created by Fernando Castellón

1 ½ shot Hennessey Cognac  
1 shot dry vermouth  
½ shot apricot brandy  
½ shot triple sec

Stir with ice, then strain into a chilled cocktail glass; garnish with an orange twist.

### **Stinger**

2 shots brandy  
¾ shot white crème de menthe (mint liqueur)

Shake hard with ice, and then strain over crushed ice in a whisky glass. Garnish with a mint sprig, and add two short straws.

### **Brandy Sour**

2 shots Cognac  
1 shot fresh lemon juice  
½ shot sugar syrup  
2 dashes of bitters

½ of an egg white (albumen)

Shake with ice, then strain into an ice filled whisky glass; garnish with a lemon slice.

## **Pisco Section**

The Peruvian brandy, known as, Pisco is distilled from freshly fermented grape juice, and not from aged wine.

Peruvian Pisco is only produced in copper pot stills, like some Scotch whiskies, and not in continuous stills, like most vodkas for instance.

Peruvian Pisco is never diluted after it is distilled. The Pisco is distilled directly to its bottling strength, meaning that it is more flavoursome than its Chilean counterpart.

Another (Peruvian) Pisco peculiarity is that the first part of the distillation (heads) is kept, and then mixed in with the rest of the distillate. The 'heads' adds more character to the Pisco, which is the way that the Peruvians like it.

Pisco is officially recognised as a distinctly Peruvian product by the following countries: Bolivia, Ecuador, Colombia, Venezuela, Panama, Guatemala, Nicaragua, Costa Rica, and Cuba.

There are five classifications of Pisco brandy:

### **Pisco Puro**

Made exclusively (100%) from one of the following 'non-aromatic' (i.e. no aroma) grapes: Quebranta, Mollar, Negra Corriente.

### **Pisco Aromático**

Made exclusively (100%) from one of the following 'aromatic' grapes: Italia, Moscatél, Torontél, Albilla.

### **Pisco Acholado**

The Peruvian equivalent of 'Blended', a Quebranta base is mixed with at least one of the 'Aromatic' grape varieties.

### **Pisco Mosto Verde**

Translates as 'Green Must', this refers to the fact that this Pisco is distilled before the fermentation of the grape juice is complete. This leaves a sugar content of c. 6% in the pre-distillate, the finished product is no sweet, but has a different character, compared with other piscos, as a result of this.

### **Aromatised Pisco**

Before the fermented grape juice is distilled into Pisco, fruits and/ or berries are added. This imparts, of course, a fruity flavour to the Pisco.

## **Pisco Cocktails**

### **Pisco Sour**

The most popular Peruvian Cocktail

3 shots pisco brandy  
1 shot fresh lime juice  
½ shot sugar syrup  
2 dashes of bitters  
½ of an egg white (albumen)

Shake with ice, then strain into an ice filled whisky glass. Garnish with a pinch of ground cinnamon, sprinkled on top.

### **Algarrobina**

Aka. Carob Cocktail

2 shots pisco brandy  
½ shot algarrobina\*  
2 shots cream/ milk  
¼ shot sugar syrup (optional)  
1 egg yolk

Shake with ice, then strain to ice filled whisky glass; garnish with ground cinnamon.

\*Algarrobina is syrup which is made from the beans of the Algarrobo tree (*Prosopis pallida*). If you do not have Algarrobina, then try using Carob syrup (its exactly the same).

### **Pisco Punch**

Created by Duncan Nichol

Recipe taken from: The California Historical Society, who originally published the formula in 1973.

1. Take a fresh pineapple. Cut it in squares about 1/2 by 1 1/2 inches. Put these squares of fresh pineapple in a bowl of gum syrup\* to soak overnight. That serves the double purpose of flavoring the gum syrup with the pineapple and soaking the pineapple, both of which are used afterwards in the Pisco Punch.

2. In the morning mix in a big bowl the following:

1/2 pint (8 oz) of the gum syrup, pineapple flavoured as above  
1 pint (16 oz) distilled water  
3/4 pint (10 oz [sic]) lemon juice  
1 bottle (24 oz) Peruvian Pisco brandy\*\*

Serve very cold but be careful not to keep the ice in too long because of dilution. Use 3 or four oz punch glasses. Put one of these above squares of pineapple in each glass. Lemon juice or gum syrup may be added to taste.

### **"Quick" Pisco Punch**

2 shots Pisco  
1/2 shot fresh lime juice  
1/2 shot fresh pineapple juice  
uncarbonated mineral water

Stir with ice, and strain into a chilled wine glass, which may be filled with ice cubes (this is optional). Top with the mineral water, and then garnish with a wedge of pineapple.

In some parts of America, the Pisco Sour is referred to as a 'Pisco Punch'.

To produce a better tasting cocktail, you may find it beneficial to muddle a fresh chunk of pineapple, instead of relying on the quality of commercially packaged pineapple juices.

### **Chilcano de Pisco**

2 shots Pisco brandy  
1/4 shot fresh lime juice (optional)  
2 dashes of bitters (optional)

Build over ice, in a tall glass; then top with Ginger Ale; garnish with a lime wedge.

### **Capitán**

2 shots Pisco brandy  
1 shot sweet vermouth  
2 dashes of bitters (optional)

Stir with ice, then strain into an ice filled whisky glass; garnish with a lemon twist.

### **Perú Libre**

Aka. Piscoña (?)

2 shots Pisco brandy  
¼ shot fresh lime juice (optional)

Build over ice, in a tall glass; then top with cola; garnish with a lime wedge.

## **Grappa Section**

"A pomace brandy produced by direct distillation of the skins of pressed grapes...To keep its taste as unmistakable as its name, every aspect of grappa's production is prescribed by statute: the composition of the pomace (the skins, seeds, and so on left after the grapes are crushed for wine), the distillation method, and the maximum alcohol content (86 percent by volume/172 proof) of the fresh distillate." Even the maximum moisture content of the pomace has been fixed. Distillates from whole fermented grapes, though similar in taste, cannot be called grappa."

From: Grappa, by Axel and Bibiana Behrendt (Abbeville, 1999)

Note: Grappa is only Grappa if it is produced in Italy.

## **Grappa Cocktails**

### **Grappatto**

2 shots Grappa  
1 shot Amaretto

Stir with ice, and then strain into ice filled whisky glass; garnish with a lemon twist.

### **Grappa Sour**

Aka. Fellini

2 shots Grappa  
1 shot fresh lemon juice  
½ shot sugar syrup  
½ of an egg white (albumen)

Shake with ice, then strain into ice filled whisky glass; garnish with a lemon slice.

### **Grappa Fizz**

2 shots Grappa  
1 shot fresh lemon juice  
½ shot sugar syrup  
½ egg white (albumen)

Shake with ice, then strain into ice filled tall glass; top with soda water, then garnish with a lemon slice.

## **Rum Section**

When rum is first distilled it is as clear as water, and of a high alcoholic content. This high strength spirit can be used to fill bottles, once it has been diluted to a more appropriate strength, for white rum. The clear spirit can be used to fill barrels, which it is then aged in.

Any rum which is not clear in colour, will have been aged for some period of time, or have had caramel added to it. I am, however, primarily concerned with natural aging.

Wood is porous, and so therefore the spirit will be absorbed into its surface. As heat expands the wood during summer, the spirit is drawn into the barrel, where it is exposed to the barrels properties.

Most barrels are flamed, or even charred in the case of bourbon whisky, which causes the natural sugars in the wood to caramelize to a greater or lesser degree. As the inner layer of the barrel is charred, it can also add a smokey flavour to the spirit, as well as absorbing some of the impurities from the distillate.

Beneath the charred surface is the layer of caramel, which adds sweetness and colour to any spirit it comes into contact with. The more times a barrel is used for aging, the more of its properties are used up, and so it will have a lesser affect on each subsequent spirit it ages. At night and during the colder months,

low temperatures will cause the barrel to contract, causing the spirit is be pushed back into the barrel.

The spirit changes slightly each time it goes in and out of the barrels surface. Over months and years this cycle repeats itself, darkening and mellowing the flavour of the spirit contained within.

In rum cocktails it must be noted that aged rum is already sweeter and smoother than its unaged counterpart, therefore less syrup and sweet liqueurs will need to be used. Remember that the flavour of the rum should be built upon, rather than covered up. Aged rum is not brown vodka, it has a taste all of its own.

Silver rums are cheaper to produce than aged rums, as no long storage costs are incurred. This does not mean it is of an inferior quality. If you are mixing your rum into a cocktail, the flavour of silver rum will come through more readily.

Using an overly sweet or acidic combination of mixers, liqueurs etc, in a cocktail utilising aged rum, will destroy some of the delicate flavours of the spirit. The same goes for all cocktails really.

Most cocktail recipes state which type of rum to use, although there is nothing to stop you using different types of rum than those stated.

### **Zombie**

"The object is to get as many different rums as possible into one drink, like students in a telephone box."

- Michael Jackson (Beerhunter)

One cocktail that baffles me is the Zombie, it contains in some recipes one shot each of light, gold, and dark rum. Rather than having 60-75mls of rum in your cocktail, to boost its alcoholic content, why not use a smaller quantity of stronger rum. These extra strong rums are called 'over-proof', due to the fact they are over 100 proof (50% abv) in strength.

If you want a strong drink, use strong spirits.

When rum comes out of the still, its alcoholic strength can range from 60% to 80% abv. At this stage it is overproof, (100 proof+ (50% abv+)). And so to produce overproof rum, the rum is left at these high alcoholic strengths, it can be aged, but as is more common it is darkened and sweetened by adding caramel. When rum punches are made in the Caribbean, they are usually made with overproof rums, this allows less rum to be used without compromising the

drinks strength. If the rum is twice the normal strength, then half the normal amount will be needed.

Most rum is made from molasses, which in turn is made from the boiling down of sugarcane juice, a total of 3 times, finally producing Blackstrap Molasses. Rum is then distilled from this Blackstrap Molasses.

## **Rum Cocktails**

### **Dick's Mojito**

Created by Dick Bradsell

2 shots white rum  
¾ shot sugar syrup  
¾ shot fresh lime juice  
¾ shot fresh lemon juice  
6- 8 fresh mint leaves

Gently bruise the mint leaves in the bottom of a tall glass, and then add crushed ice to top. Now pour in all the other ingredients, and then give it a good stir, mixing up all the ingredients with the crushed ice. Add more crushed ice, if necessary. Garnish with a mint sprig, lemon slice and a lime wedge, and add two long drinking straws.

### **Mint garnishes**

When garnishing a cocktail with mint sprigs, always give the mint a light slap. This slap will cause the mint to bleed, releasing the aroma of the mint. Also make sure you place the mint next to the drinking straws, so that the aroma of the mint can be inhaled by the drinker as they 'imbibe'.

### **Hemingway's Mojito**

from Alberto Torres, head bartender (La Bodeguita del Medio)

1 teaspoon of sugar  
1/4 oz fresh lime juice  
two mint sprigs  
crush gently  
add 1 & 1/2 oz white cuban rum  
add ice  
add two oz soda water  
stir well  
garnish with a sprig of mint

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### **Nui Nui**

3 shots gold rum  
1 shot fresh lime juice  
¾ shot brown sugar syrup  
2 dashes of bitters  
6- 8 fresh mint leaves

Muddle/ crush the mint leaves, and the sugar syrup, plus lime juice and bitters, in the bottom of a large whisky glass. Fill the glass with crushed ice, then pour in the rum and stir thoroughly; finally garnish with a sprig of mint.

### **Canchánchara**

2 shots Rum  
1 shot fresh lemon juice  
¾ shot honey

Stir with ice, then strain into an ice filled whisky glass; top with soda water (optional).

### **George's Zombie**

2 shots dark Rum  
¾ shot fresh lime juice  
¾ shot Orgeat syrup  
½ shot apricot brandy  
2 shots pineapple juice

Shake with ice, then strain over ice in a tall glass; garnish with mint sprig, and add two long straws.

There are hundreds of recipes for the Zombie, some weak, some ludicrously strong, my recipe opts for somewhere in between. For a stronger Zombie, substitute the dark rum for dark 'over-proof' rum.

### **George's Hurricane**

2 shots dark Rum  
¾ shot fresh lime juice  
2 shots passionfruit purée  
½ shot sugar syrup (optional)  
1 shot orange juice

Shake with ice, then strain over crushed ice in a tall glass; garnish with an orange slice, and add two long straws.

For a stronger drink, substitute the dark rum for dark 'over-proof' rum.

The original New Orleans Hurricane contains 4 shots of rum, which seems like a waste to me. As I said before, if you want strong drinks, use strong spirits.

## **Mai Tai**

Trader Vic's Original Recipe

2 shots 17-year-old J. Wray Nephew Jamaican Rum  
½ shot French Garnier Orgeat  
½ shot Holland DeKuyper Orange Curaçao  
¼ shot Rock Candy Syrup  
1 shot fresh lime juice (c. one whole lime)

Shake with ice, and then strain into an ice filled whisky glass (or ceramic Tiki mug!). Garnish with a lime wedge and a mint sprig.

The ice you use in this cocktail can be changed to included shaved ice, as was originally used, or crushed ice.

The original/ authentic Mai Tai recipes can be obtained from the official Trader Vic's website: [tradervics.com](http://tradervics.com)

## **Rum Re-Fashioned**

Created by Antonia Andradi

2 shots golden Rum (Appleton's)  
½ shot Orgeat syrup  
2 dashes of bitters

Stir with ice, then strain into ice filled whisky glass; garnish with a lime wedge.

## **Rum Sour**

2 shots white Rum  
1 shot fresh lime juice  
½ shot sugar syrup  
2 dashes of Angostura bitters  
½ of an egg white (albumen)

Shake with ice, and then strain into ice-filled whisky glass. Add a lime wedge as the garnish.

### **Changing the recipe #2:**

Try using dark rum, when a recipe specifies white rum, and vice versa.

### **Daiquirí**

Perfected by Constantino "Constante" Ribalaigua.

2 shots white Rum  
½ shot fresh lime juice  
½ shot sugar syrup

Shake hard with crushed ice, and then strain through a sieve, into a chilled cocktail glass. Garnish with a lime wedge, which should be cut and placed onto the rim of the glass.

#### **The Fine Art of Mixing Drinks (1948)**

By David Embury:

"The original and correct recipe for the Daiquirí is stated in terms of a single cocktail as ½ teaspoonful sugar, juice of half a lime, and 1 jigger of white label rum. This is a cocktail that is difficult to improve upon. It is dry, yet smooth..."

### **George's Strawberry Daiquirí**

2 shots white Rum  
½ shot fresh lime juice  
1 teaspoon of sugar syrup  
4- 5 fresh strawberries

Into the shaker, add the strawberries, which have had their stalks removed, and have been roughly sliced. Now muddle/ crush the strawberries into a pulp, and then add the other ingredients. Add cubed ice, and shake vigorously. Strain the mixture through a sieve, into a chilled cocktail glass. Garnish with half a strawberry that has been dipped in granulated sugar. This 'frosted' strawberry should be partially cut, so that it can be placed onto the rim of the glass.

### **Ernest Hemingway Special**

La Florida booklet (1939)

2 shots white Rum  
½ shot fresh lime juice  
¼ shot maraschino liqueur  
¼ shot grapefruit juice

Shake with ice, and then strain over crushed ice (frappé), in a whisky glass.

The exact, stated, ingredients are: 2 oz white rum, juice of ½ lime, 1 teaspoon each of maraschino liqueur, and grapefruit juice.

### **Cuba Libre**

2 shots white Rum (Cuban Rum, of course).  
3 lime wedges (squeeze them into the glass)

Build over ice in a tall glass; then top with cola. Add two long straws, and serve.

### **Mulata**

1 ½ shots white Rum  
¾ shot dark crème de caçao  
¾ shot fresh lime juice

Shake hard with ice, then strain through a sieve, into a chilled cocktail glass.  
Garnish with a lemon twist.

### **X, Y, Zee**

1 ½ shots white Rum  
¾ shot Cointreau  
¾ shot fresh lime juice

Shake hard with ice, then strain through a sieve, into a chilled cocktail glass.  
Garnish with a lemon twist.

### **Dark and Stormy**

2 shots dark Rum  
3 lime wedges (squeezed into the glass)

Build over ice in a tall glass; top with ginger beer. Add two long straws, and serve.

The makers of Goslings Black Seal rum hold the trademark on the 'Dark & Stormy' cocktail. You could make something similar with any dark rum.

### **Six Bells**

1 ½ shots dark Rum  
¾ shot Orange Curaçao  
¾ shot fresh lime juice  
2 dashes of bitters

Shake with ice, and then strain into a chilled cocktail glass.

### **Red Rum Punch**

Generic rum punch created by George Sinclair

2 shots dark 'over-proof' Rum (woods 100)  
¾ shot Grenadine syrup (pomegranate)  
1 shot fresh lime juice  
3 shots pineapple juice  
2 dashes of bitters

Shake with ice, then strain over ice into a tall glass; garnish with grated nutmeg.

### **Scorpion**

Created by Trader Vic (1968)

2 shots white Rum  
1 shot Cognac  
½ shot Orgeat syrup (almond)  
1 ½ shots fresh lemon juice  
2 shots fresh orange juice

Shake with ice, then strain into a tall glass, which is filled with crushed ice; garnish with a mint sprig.

Note: this is not the first Scorpion recipe devised by Trader Vic, or the last.

### **Raspberry Flamingo**

1 ½ shots white Rum

½ shot fresh lime juice  
1 shot pineapple juice  
¾ shot raspberry purée  
¼ shot sugar syrup (optional)

Shake with ice, then strain into a chilled cocktail glass; drop in a raspberry as the garnish.

As strange as it may seem, I originally invented this cocktail without alcohol: fresh lime juice, pineapple juice and raspberry puree. When I tasted it, I thought that it would be perfect for Havana Club rum, which is quite citrusy. At this time it did not have a name, not even a working title. A while later I saw a recipe called a Flamingo, which contains Grenadine syrup, instead of the raspberry puree, and so I settled upon its eventual name.

The sugar syrup should only be added if the raspberry puree is not sweet enough.

### **Honeysuckle**

1 ½ shots gold Rum  
¾ shot fresh lime juice  
¾ shot honey

Shake with ice, and then strain into an ice filled whisky glass.

## **Cachaça Section**

Cachaça is a Brazilian type of rum, which is distilled from sugarcane juice, and not from molasses. Although Cachaça and rum are derived from the same original source, i.e. sugar, they taste very different from each other. Cachaça is not the only rum to be produced from sugarcane juice, there is another rum type called 'Rhum Agricoles'.

Decree 73,267 and Law 371 of the [Brazilian] Ministry of Agriculture  
Definitions of Cachaça...

"Cachaça", "aguardente de cana", "pinga" or "caninha" are the beverages obtained with an alcohol content of 38 - 54% v/v, from the distillation of fermented sugar-cane juice. Sugar may be added to the beverages, at a rate of up to 6 grams per litre. Beverages containing more than 6 grams of sugar per litre, (and less than 30 grams per litre), will be called "sweet cachaça", or "sweet cane aguardente", or "sweet pinga", or "sweet caninha."

Aged cachaça / aguardente de cana / pinga / caninha is a beverage containing at least 50% of distillate that has been aged for a minimum of 1 year.

Caramel may be added for color adjustment. The total content of congeners shall not be less than 2000 ppm, or more than 6500 ppm, on an anhydrous-alcohol basis.

## Cachaça Cocktails

### Caipirinha

2 shots Cachaça

$\frac{3}{4}$  shot sugar syrup

1 whole lime, cut in "the special way"

Muddle/ Crush the lime with the sugar syrup, in a whisky glass, with a wooden muddler. Fill the glass with crushed ice, and then top with cachaça. Stir thoroughly, then add more crushed ice if necessary. Add two short drinking straws.

**"The Special Way"** of cutting the lime, for your Caipirinha, is as follows:

Cut the lime in half lengthways, from the top to the tail, not across. If you have cut it properly you will see a white strip, which is the centre. Cut diagonally under the white strip from both sides, then pull the centre strip out. Then partially cut two parallel lines across the space where the centre strip used to be. Your lime is now ready to be muddled/ crushed in your Caipirinha.

### Other types of Caipirinha cocktail

1. Try using other fruit instead of the lime.

Caipirinha de Tangerina (Tangerine)

Caipirinha de Pêssego (Peach)

2. Try muddling berries instead of the lime, or in addition to the lime.

### Caipirinha (Rustic Style)

2 shots Cachaça

2 teaspoons of Brown Sugar

1 whole lime, cut in "the special way".

Muddle/ Crush the lime with the brown sugar, in a whisky glass, with a wooden muddler. Fill the glass with crushed ice, and then top with cachaça. Stir thoroughly, then add more crushed ice if necessary. Garnish with a teaspoon.

The teaspoon is left in the drink, so that the imbiber can continue mixing the lime and sugar together, while they consume their beverage.

**Berry Caipirinha**, add a mixture of blackberries, raspberries, redcurrants to the lime, before muddling the whole mixture.

### **Batida de Maracujá**

1 ½ shots Cachaça  
¾ shot sugar syrup  
2 shots passionfruit purée

Add all ingredients to a blender, and then blend until thoroughly mixed. Add enough crushed ice to double the amount in total. Blend until smooth, and then pour into a tall glass. The consistency of the 'slush' should be stiff, but not totally solid.

### **Other Batida cocktails.**

Substitute the passionfruit puree for different fruit puree, or coconut milk. Also try using corresponding syrups for each fruit, instead of plain sugar syrup.

Batida de Coco (coconut milk)  
Batida de Abacaxi (pineapple)  
Batida de Morango (strawberries)  
Batida de Mango (mango)

## **Liqueurs Section**

It may come as a great surprise to many that a great deal of information on specific liqueurs is actually contained on their labels. And if you have more questions, you can always consult that particular products official website.

### **What is a liqueur?**

A liqueur is a sweetened alcoholic medium for a particular flavour, or flavours. Basically the alcohol preserves the condition of the flavourings, and ensures that they do not deteriorate. Liqueurs usually contain around 30% sugar. A liqueur can be flavoured with any herb, spice or fruit, or combination of flavours.

### **Have you been making liqueurs already?**

Due to the similarities of liqueur recipes and some cocktail recipes, you may already have made a liqueur. The list of ingredients for a Coffee Liqueur is

coffee, sugar, alcohol; now compare these ingredients to those used in a Vodka Espresso: coffee, sugar, vodka (alcohol). Mixing up a single serving of Vodka Espresso, you would have around 4 shots of ingredients, now if you mixed up enough Vodka Espresso to fill several bottles, would you be making a liqueur?

This, maybe over simplistic, idea can be used to compare other liqueurs and cocktails. Limoncello, an Italian lemon 'liqueur', comprises lemon peels, sugar and alcohol; a vodka sour by comparison, has similar ingredients, if you take vodka as being the alcohol. "Alcohol flavoured with lemons", versus "vodka flavoured with lemons". What then is the point of a limoncello sour?

A raspberry liqueur is made up of raspberries, sugar and alcohol; how does a raspberry martini compare to this? You guessed it, raspberries, sugar and vodka; the addition of several small quantities of raspberry liqueur can, in turn, be broken down into raspberries, sugar and alcohol.

Some cocktails just seem to be convoluted liqueurs.

### **Liqueur versus Cordial**

Liqueurs is the name given to what Americans call cordials, the two terms are interchangeable. In England, a cordial usually refers to a non-alcoholic fruit juice concentrate, which needs to be diluted before it is consumed.

### **Fruit liqueurs**

A fruit liqueur will comprise of an alcoholic base (neutral grain spirit), fruit flavourings (natural or otherwise), and sugar.

Crème de Framboise, translates as "best of raspberry" and not "cream of raspberry", or even worse "raspberry cream". Do not translate the words, but instead translate their meaning.

Mûre (blackberry), cassis (blackcurrant), fraise (strawberry), fraise de bois (wild strawberry), caçao (caçao/ chocolate), menthe (mint).

There are, of course, many more flavours than this, with every possible fruit being used.

### **Questions about liqueurs, answered by DeKuyper liqueurs.**

What is the difference between a curaçao liqueur and a triple sec liqueur?

Curaçao is from origin a Dutch liqueur made of peels of oranges (which grew on curaçao). Triple sec is a colorless alternative for curaçao, usually higher in

alcohol and with a dryer taste.

How are orange/ blue curaao liqueurs coloured?

Orange curaao can get its colour from the extracts that it is made from, or it can be coloured with synthetic colorants, or caramel. Blue curaao is always coloured with synthetic colorants (granulate powder form, or liquid).

Are coloured liqueurs the same in flavour as their uncoloured counterparts?

Coloured liqueurs are not always the same in taste as their uncoloured versions, for example, in crme de aao white (uncoloured) we use aao distillate, [while] in crme de aao brown we use aao extract. The same goes for crme de cafe white (coffee distillate) and crme de cafe brown (coffee extract).

Some liqueurs are the same in taste, then colorant is added, for example curaao white and curaao blue. The same [is true] for crme de menthe green and white. [Mint liqueurs]

### **Herbal liqueurs**

Chartreuse, Bndictine, Galliano etc. Herbal liqueurs recipes are closely guarded secrets, and only a well-trained palate can discern the ingredients involved. My advice is just to taste these on their own, then perhaps with a little water, then you will know what kind of an influence they will have on any mixed drink, they are involved in.

The methods for making these herbal liqueurs usually involve macerating (i.e. soaking in alcohol) or redistilling the raw ingredients with neutral alcoholic spirit.

## **Liqueur Cocktails (& miscellaneous cocktails)**

### **Grasshopper**

1 shot crme de menthe (green)  
1 shot crme de aao (white)  
1 shot cream/ milk

Shake with ice, then strain into chilled cocktail glass; garnish with a mint sprig.

### **Long Island Iced Tea**

1/2 shot each of the following: vodka, gin, white rum, silver tequila, triple sec.  
1 shot fresh lemon juice

Shake with ice, then strain into an ice-filled tall glass; add a splash of cola, for colour. The drink should resemble an actual iced tea.

It seems that the Long Island Iced Tea (LIT), could have been invented with one whole shot of each alcoholic spirit; this is fooliness, so stick with the listed recipe, if you absolutely must drink LIT's.

And so to fly in the face of my own advice...

### **Tony's All-day breakfast**

1 shot each of the following: vodka, gin, white rum, silver tequila, Cointreau, fresh lime juice, raspberry puree.

½ shot of Chambord (Cognac based Raspberry liqueur)

Shake with ice, then strain into an ice-filled tall glass; top with cranberry juice, garnish with a lime wedge and two long straws.

### **After Eight**

1 shot Kahlúa

1 shot Baileys

1 shot crème de menthe (mint)

Shake with ice, and then strain into chilled cocktail glass.

### **Grand Vizier**

Created by George Sinclair

1 ½ shot Grand Marnier

¾ shot vanilla liqueur

½ shot fresh lime juice

1 shot apple juice

Shake with ice, then strain into chilled cocktail glass; garnish with an orange twist.

### **Golden Dream**

¾ shot Galliano

¾ shot Cointreau

¾ shot cream/ milk

¾ shot orange juice

Shake with ice, and then strain into a chilled cocktail glass.

### **Snood Murdekin**

Created by Dick Bradsell

1/3 Vodka  
1/3 Chambord (cognac based raspberry liqueur)  
1/3 Kahlúa

Shake with ice, then strain into chilled shot glass; float a thin layer of cream on top.

### **Amaretto Sour**

2 shots amaretto  
1 shot fresh lemon juice  
1 shot fresh orange juice (optional)

Shake with ice, then strain into an ice filled whisky glass; garnish with a lemon slice.

### **B-52**

1/3 Kahlúa  
1/3 Bailey's  
1/3 Grand Marnier

Layer ingredients as listed, into a shot glass.

### **Fade to Black**

Created by George Sinclair

1/3 white sambucca  
1/3 Grand Marnier  
1/3 dark overproof rum (wood's 100)

Layer ingredients as listed, into shot glass.

### **Bellini**

Created by Giuseppe Cipriani

1 part white peach purée  
5 parts Prosecco (Italian sparkling wine)

Add the pureed peaches to a chilled tall glass, and then top with chilled Prosecco.

### **Rossini**

1 part strawberry purée  
5 parts Prosecco (Italian sparkling wine)

Add the pureed strawberries to a chilled champagne flute, and then top with chilled Prosecco.

### **Kir**

1 shot crème de cassis (blackcurrant liqueur)  
1 glass of white wine (originally, bourgogne aligoté)

Pour the blackcurrant liqueur into a wine glass, and then top with chilled white wine.

### **Kir Royale**

1 shot crème de cassis (blackcurrant liqueur)  
1 glass of Champagne (non-vintage)

Pour the blackcurrant liqueur into a champagne flute, and then top with chilled champagne.

### **Kir Impérial**

1 shot crème de Framboise (raspberry liqueur)  
1 glass of Champagne (non-vintage)

Pour the raspberry liqueur into a champagne flute, and then top with chilled champagne.

### **ChamPino**

Created by Audrey Saunders

1 shot Campari  
1 ¼ shot Sweet Vermouth  
2 shots Champagne

Shake the first two ingredients with ice, and then strain into a chilled cocktail glass. Top with champagne. Garnish with a lemon twist, which is "flamed".

### **Negroni Sbalgiato**

Created at Bar Basso, Milan, Italy

1 oz Campari  
1 shot Sweet Vermouth  
2 shots Spumante/ Prosecco (Italian Sparkling Wine)

Build over ice, in a large wine glass. Garnish with an orange slice.

Note: Sbalgiato means, "mistake" in Italian. The drink recipe was chanced upon by mistake, when Italian Sparkling wine was added to a Negroni, instead of Gin.

### **China Blue**

Created by Antonia Andrasi

1 shot Absinthe  
1 shot fresh lime juice  
½ shot ginger syrup  
1 small cube ginger, freshly chopped

Shake hard with ice, then strain into a 'sugar rimmed', chilled cocktail glass.

### **Absinthe Suisse**

This is not the only recipe for Absinthe Suisse.

2 shots Pernod (or Absinthe)  
½ shot Orgeat syrup  
1 egg white  
1 shot cream

Shake with crushed ice, and then pour into chilled whisky glass (no ice).

### **Brandy & Herbsaint Milk Punch**

1 ½ shots Brandy  
½ shot Herbsaint (sub: Pernod/ Ricard)  
¾ shot sugar syrup  
2 shots cream

Shake with ice, then strain into an ice filled whisky glass; there is no standard garnish, though a sprinkle of nutmeg is recommended

### **Recommended Reading**

Faith, Nicholas & Wisniewski, Ian; "Classic Vodka", ISBN: 1853752347.  
Coates, Geraldine; "Classic Gin", ISBN: 1853753343.  
Arnell, Julie; "Classic Rum", ISBN: 1853752983.  
Lechthaler, Ernst; "Rum Drinks and Havanas: Cuba Classics", ISBN: 0789205270.  
Murray, Jim; "Classic Bourbon, Tennessee & Rye Whiskey", ISBN: 1853752185.  
"Jim Murray's Complete Book Of Whisky", ISBN: 1858681847.  
Hills, Phillip; "Appreciating Whisky", ISBN: 0004724496.  
Waymack, Mark H. & Harris, James F.; "The Book Of Classic American Whiskeys", ISBN: 0-8126-9306-X.  
Emmons, Bob; "The Book Of Tequila: A Complete Guide", ISBN: 0812693523.  
"Michael Jackson's Bar and Cocktail Book", ISBN: 1857326334.

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### **Quotations from Self:**

"If a cocktail was initially created a certain way, and is then more commonly prepared in a different way sometime later, then who is to object if others go back to the beginning again, and change it in a different direction entirely?"

- George Sinclair, 4/17/2003