

Strawberry Daiquiri

By John Gertsen, manager, Drink, Boston

2 oz Barbancourt *Réserve Spéciale* Rhum
½ oz fresh lime juice
½ oz strawberry syrup*
Lime twist garnish

Combine rum, lime juice, and strawberry syrup in ice-filled shaker. Shake well and double-strain into prechilled cocktail glass. Garnish with lime twist.

*Strawberry Syrup

Wash and hull 1 quart ripe native strawberries. Slice strawberries into quarters, place in large bowl, and cover with 2 ounces vodka. Add 1 quart granulated cane sugar and mix well. Add 1 quart water, stir, and pour into clean container with tight-fitting lid. Place in refrigerator and allow berries to macerate for one week. Pour mixture through chinoise (cheesecloth also works well), and press berries to release all of liquid. Pour into sanitized glass bottles, cork, and store in refrigerator for up to one month. (Yield: approx. 1.5 quarts)

“After the long, often cold and wet spring of New England, I find the native strawberry to be the perfect way to usher in summer. These fickle fruits are in season for only a few weeks, so I try to preserve their flavor by turning them into a stable syrup. This syrup has several uses, but one of the best is to make a daiquiri, substituting the strawberry syrup for sugar. For some the strawberry daiquiri conjures up images of a headache-inducing frozen Slurpee of cheap booze, but one sip of a daiquiri made with fresh lime, great rum, and this strawberry syrup will change all that.”

Summer Cocktails:

Bartenders Push Beyond the Standards

That hot buttered rum that you were serving up only a few months ago would look completely out of place on your new summer drinks menu, right? Especially when it's competing with the likes of a refreshing, well-made, citrus-spiked mojito or caipirinha. Millions of glasses of these two superstar drinks will be mixed and muddled during the hot season, but it's time to start thinking outside the box with your summer cocktails this year.

Often-Overlooked Choices

Brown spirits are mostly associated with winter drinking, but there is no reason they can't also be used as a cocktail base in summer. When mixed with the right combination of fruits, herbs, liqueurs, fortified wines, or whatever else your imagination will allow, light Scotches (Compass Box *Asyla*, lowland malts, and many blends), rye whiskies, Cognac, gold rums, and reposado Tequilas are all wonderful cocktail bases now.

While Sherry is still a long way from being a staple in most of the major cocktail cities, it is being used much more liberally by many of the country's top bartenders. I'm not talking about those cream Sherrys that our grandparents fondly imbibe but rather the wonderfully complex Finos and Manzanillas from Jerez and Sanlucar de Barrameda, respectively. These Sherrys are super refreshing unadorned and, when included in a cocktail, add a wonderful nuttiness, while also nicely drying out the drink.



Cornell Cooler

By Marshall Altier, head bartender, *Insieme*, New York City

“The drink’s moniker is a nod to the good folks at the Plant Sciences Division of Cornell University, who in 1973 put together the most thorough survey of eastern US peach varieties. According to cocktail historian David Wondrich, coolers were ‘simple, tall things that are of little mixological interest but are mighty refreshing on a hot day, especially with air-conditioning still a generation or two over the horizon.’ We have the AC part figured out, but those treks down Broadway gazing up at dripping window units still can be horrendous in August. This is something to help get us through the dog days.”



- ¼ ripe local peach
- 2 basil leaves
- ¾ oz cardamom honey syrup*
- 1½ oz rye whiskey
- ½ oz crème de pêche
- ¾ oz lemon juice
- Soda

Basil sprig and lemon wedge garnishes

Combine peach, basil leaves, and honey syrup in a mixing glass, and muddle all ingredients to a paste. Add rye, crème de pêche, and lemon juice. Shake vigorously for 15 to 20 seconds. Strain into ice-filled collins glass, and top with soda. Garnish with sprig of fresh basil and lemon wedge.

*Cardamom Honey Syrup

Toast ½ cup green cardamom pods in skillet for 30 seconds. Add pods to mixture of equal parts honey and water, which has been brought to simmer. Reduce heat, and simmer for 5 minutes. Cool to room temperature, strain, and bottle mixture.



The 5th Avenue

By Jim Romdall, *Vessel*, Seattle

- 1½ oz Martin Miller’s Gin
- ½ oz Dolin Bianco Vermouth
- 1 barspoon yellow Chartreuse
- 1 dash Marteau Absinthe
- 3 dashes The Bitter Truth lemon bitters
- Lemon twist garnish

Combine gin, vermouth, Chartreuse, absinthe, and bitters in ice-filled bar glass. Stir, and strain into cocktail glass. Garnish with lemon twist.

“The Dolin Bianco Vermouth is my new favorite cocktail ingredient. I wanted to create an elegant cocktail for summertime that showcased its wonderful light flavor. I started with the base of Martin Miller’s, a soft and balanced gin. The marriage of a little yellow Chartreuse and absinthe gives the drink a little sweetness and herbal tones without disrupting the balance or adding too much medicinal flavor. The lemon bitters adds complexity and depth. The lemon twist provides aromatics and also accents the lemon-bitters combination. The resulting drink is extremely crisp and clean, perfect for a classy summer cocktail. It’s called The 5th Avenue because its elegance matches that street in Seattle, where *Vessel* is located.”

Brazilian Old-Fashioned

By Angelo Vieira, *Mondrian Hotel*, Miami

“I’ve based the recipe on one of the great classic cocktails of all time and a bartender’s sipping favorite. This version, however, is remodeled with fresh passion fruit and amarena cherry instead of muddled maraschino cherry and orange pieces. The twist comes by substituting the main ingredient, bourbon, with cachaça. The flavor profile consists of sour notes from the passion fruit mingling with sweet and bitter from the amarena cherry. Cachaça is the most predominant flavor, with highlights of cinnamon, wood, and vanilla. It leaves a soft, lingering, spiced finish.”

- 1 white sugar cube, soaked in Angostura bitters
- 1 amarena cherry
- Pulp from ¼ fresh passion fruit (save remaining ¼ for garnish)
- 1 dash Angostura bitters
- 2 oz GRM Cachaça
- Skewered passion fruit and amarena cherry garnish

Crush sugar cube and cherry in double old-fashioned glass. Add passion fruit pulp and dash of bitters. Alternate adding one ice cube and ¼ oz cachaça, stirring continually until all is incorporated. (Once the stirring begins, it should be continued until the end—no stopping.) Garnish with skewered passion fruit and amarena cherry.



Earth-Sourced Ingredients

While most herbs are available year-round, they make summer cocktails sing by adding increased complexity and fresh aromatics to the drinks. Mint is the most ubiquitous, but the notion of using basil, sage, thyme, tarragon, and rosemary is not nearly as exotic as it once was. And now there are more varieties to add to the bartender’s palate—flavored mint and basil, lemon thyme, lemon verbena, lavender, Kaffir lime, anise hyssop, cilantro, and many other herbs—that just scream out to be shaken into a cocktail.

With the continued rise of the culinary cocktail and more ideas and influences borrowed from the best chefs, Asian ingredients are now more widely used in cocktails than ever. Thai basil, lemongrass, yuzu, shiso, lychees, rambutan, ginger, and galangal are just a few.

“I began with a classic British gimlet, using fresh lime and substituting pisco for the gin. I had infused some Peruvian peppers (aji amarillo) in a bottle of pisco, so I added a barspoon for a little heat. I wanted to use Bitter Truth celery bitters in a cocktail, and it seemed to work well here. I called the drink a Paddington, since the bear in the children’s story was from ‘darkest Peru’ but was found in London at Paddington Station. Once I had the name, I thought honey more appropriate and changed the lime to lemon.”



Combine pisco, lemon juice, honey syrup, celery bitters, and aji amarillo tincture in ice-filled shaker. Shake well, and strain into chilled cocktail glass. Garnish with lemon twist.

Paddington

By Marcovaldo Dionysos, head bartender, *Clock Bar*, San Francisco

- 2 oz Pisco Quebranta
- ¾ oz fresh celery juice
- ½ oz honey syrup
- 2 dashes The Bitter Truth celery bitters
- 1 barspoon aji amarillo tincture
- Lemon-twist garnish

“When we were designing the menu for Rhumbar, we wanted to use flavor profiles that worked well with aged rums and also would please a wide range of palates. The Samba Swizzle uses Zaya rum, which is rich in molasses flavor and notes of spice. To complement this rum, we used Domaine de Canton ginger liqueur and coconut syrup and, to tie it all together, a little fresh lime and some orange bitters. For the warmer months I like using flavors from the islands, such as mango, tangerine, falernum, and, of course, mint. I always go for refreshing, especially in Vegas.

—Kristen Schaefer, Rhumbar, Las Vegas



Asian specialty stores and even specialty Asian sections within larger supermarkets stock these once-exotic items, and bartenders across the country are quick to explore these new flavors.

Old Favorites

One cocktail that is trickling its way slowly into several cities around the country is the pisco sour, the national drink of both Chile and Peru. Its biggest influence is in San Francisco, where pisco was once the most popular spirit. Egg whites may still freak out some people, but this drink is simply not the same without them. Its creamy, velvety texture, coupled with the extraordinarily refreshing mix of lemon or lime and sugar, and the dry fruitiness of the pisco make for a quintessential summer libation.

Perhaps one of the greatest unions of two ingredients to ever find its way into the same glass is that of gin and tonic. Many modern mixologists would not consider this a cocktail per se, but back when it was first enjoyed on the Indian subcontinent, it certainly would have qualified as one. British officers stationed in India in the nineteenth century were living under the constant threat of malaria, scurvy, and various other subtropical illnesses, and so their favorite spirit was mixed with quinine and citrus. A legend was born.

Last, but definitely not least, is Champagne, which is appreciated at any time of the year. There are many cocktails, both modern and classic, that have benefited greatly from the addition of an ounce or two of fine bubbly, and plenty are perfect for summertime pleasure. When the summer heat sets in, enjoy Champagne cocktails served on ice.

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Samba Swizzle

By Kristen Schaefer, lead bartender, Rhumbar, Las Vegas, and Barmagic of Las Vegas



- 1½ oz Zaya Rum
- ¾ oz Domaine de Canton Ginger Liqueur
- 1 oz Monin coconut syrup
- 2 oz Rhumbar fresh daiquiri mix*
- 2 dashes orange bitters
- Candied ginger pieces for garnish

Combine rum, ginger liqueur, coconut syrup, daiquiri mix, and orange bitters in mixing glass. Stir thoroughly, and serve over crushed ice in double rocks glass. Garnish with two candied ginger pieces.

*2:1 fresh lime to dark cane syrup