

Creating New Cocktails with Fortified Wines

Using vermouth or another fortified wine, along with a base liquor and flavoring liqueur, is a simple way to make a good cocktail. [Jamie Boudreau](#) calls this the “Golden Ratio.” It is:

- 1 1/2 oz. Base Liquor (gin, vodka, rye, tequila, etc.)
- 3/4 oz. Fortified Wine (sweet or dry vermouth, Lillet, Punt e mes, Cocchi Americano, etc.)
- 1/4 oz. Liqueur (you can go wild here!)



This is the starting point. A way to taste a new liqueur, develop a “custom” drink or recreate a cocktail you enjoyed. For instance, I had a cocktail that contained Hendricks, sweet vermouth and Chartreuse. Starting with the “Golden Ratio,” playing with green vs yellow Chartreuse, and tinkering with the ratio, I settled on this:

- 1 1/2 oz. Hendricks Gin
- 3/4 oz. Dolan Sweet Vermouth
- 1/2 oz. Green Chartreuse
- Lemon zest

Another “for instance”: I was trying Cocchi Americano in various drinks. To me, Cocchi Americano does not have the spice of a premium sweet vermouth. What it does have is an herbal/bitter note. I chose St. George’s Botanivore Gin as the base – herbal but not as much as Hendricks. For the liqueur, I used St. Germain Elderflower Liqueur vs Luxardo



Maraschino Liqueur. Here are the finals:

- 1 1/2 oz. St. George’s Botanivore Gin
- 3/4 oz. Cocchi Americano



- 1/4 oz. St. Germain Elderflower Liqueur
- 4-5 drops Rhubarb Bitters
- Lemon zest

and

- 1 1/2 oz. St. George’s Botanivore Gin
- 3/4 oz. Cocchi Americano



- 1/2 oz. Luxardo Maraschino Liqueur
- 4-5 drops Rhubarb Bitters
- Lemon zest

Both of these drinks are good. Your guests will be impressed. They may not order a second, but they will enjoy their first.

Now. lets push this a little further. Substitute Aperol for the Cocchi Americano. Aperol is not a fortified wine but it has a low ABV (11%) and is herbal/bitter.



- 1 1/2 oz. St. George's Botanic Gin
- 3/4 oz. Aperol
- 1/4 oz. St. Germain Elderflower Liqueur
- 4-5 drops Rhubarb Bitters
- Lemon zest
- Sprig of fresh thyme for garnish

All of the above are stirred with ice in a mixing glass, strained into a chilled cocktail glass and garnished.

Now for one more stretch. The first cocktail listed above with Hendricks, sweet vermouth and chartreuse. Add cucumber

and shake with ice and you have the [Lido Martini](#).



Remember to use all premium liquors and liqueurs, and fresh premium vermouth.

Tequila Moonlight



Mixology Monday

This is my entry into the [MixologyMonday LXXXIX](#), hosted by [abarabove](#). September's theme is "The Unknown." The challenge is to venture out and do something new. So I have chosen Kahlua Midnight and pecan infused tequila.

This drink is a testament to the fact that my wife and I are not good together in a liquor store. Thus, not so very long ago in a liquor store not so very far away, she walks up to me and I point out a bottle of Ancho Reyes and say, "If you weren't here, I'd buy this." Her response as she wonders down the aisle is, "Oh! We have to get this Hibiscus Liqueur."

Then we both spot the Kahlua Midnight. We ended up buying all three. This is why I usually stop by the liquor store on the way home from work. It's less expensive.

The Ancho Reyes and Hibiscus liqueur were tried immediately with good results. I've been thinking about the Kahlua Midnight. Coffee, at least in my mind, goes with chocolate and pecans. This led back to my thoughts of trying to infuse something with nuts. Thus the Tequila Moonlight.



Tequila Moonlight

In the creation of this, I compared silver, reposado and anejo tequilas combined with Cocchi Rosa, Dolan Sweet Vermouth, Punt e Mes, and Lillet Rouge. The reposado and Cocchi Rosa won with the sweet vermouth a close second. The Punt e Mes was too bitter and the Lillet too mild.

I tried using [nitrogen cavitation](#) to infuse the tequila with pecan, cocoa and bitter orange. The cocoa and orange came through but the pecan flavor was missing. It took 7 days in a mason jar to adequately infuse the pecan flavor.

So here's the drink:



Tequila Moonlight

- 1 1/2 oz. Pecan Infused Milagro Reposado Tequila – see below
 - 3/4 oz. Cocchi Rosa
 - 1/2 oz. Kahlua Midnight
 - Garnish: brandied cherry such as Luxardo and an orange zest
1. Chill a cocktail glass with ice and water
 2. Stir all of the ingredients, except the garnish, with ice in a mixing glass.
 3. Strain into chilled cocktail glass
 4. Drop the cherry into the drink, express the oils from the orange zest over the drink and drop it in.

Pecan Infused Tequila



Pecan Infused Tequila

- 8 oz. Milagro Reposado Tequila
- 1/3 cup toasted pecans, roughly chopped
- 1/2 tbs Cocoa nibs
- 1/2 tbs Dried bitter orange peel (available on line)

Combine all ingredients in a mason jar and seal. Store in a cool place, shaking daily, for 5-7 days. Pass through a fine mesh strainer, followed by a gold coffee filter and finally a paper coffee filter. Decant into a bottle. Will keep indefinitely, but the flavor will fade after a few months.

The Manhattan

Basically brown liquor and fortified wine. The classic is rye or bourbon with sweet vermouth. However, you can use any sweet vermouth type product, such as pictured.



Take a look at these simple variations.

[The Manhattan](#)

[Gary's Redo Classic Manhattan](#)

[Tequila Manhattan](#)

Make some Cocktails!

There are several popular cocktails that are simple to make and require only a few ingredients. Check out these:

- **The Old Fashioned**

The first cocktail. It is a base liquor, usually rye or bourbon, plus bitters and a sweetener. That's it. No red candy cherries and no muddling orange peels. So check out [these](#) examples to get started

- **The Martini**

Either gin or vodka. Add a fortified wine, typically vermouth, and stir. Sorry James. This cocktail is easy

to make and to customize. Look [here](#) for examples

- **The Manhattan**

A popular classic cocktail that has remained virtually the same for decades. Check out the classic and some variations [here](#).

- **The Margarita**

The famous drink from Mexico. Use good tequila and fresh lime. [Here](#) are a few easy recipes.

- **Sours**

This is a wide ranging group of drinks. From a whiskey sour to Tiki drinks, they're booze and juice. Look [here](#) and start shaking.

Lido Martini

This drink plays on the faint cucumber note in Hendrick's and doubles down with the herbal Chartreuse. Allowing the ice cubes to muddle the cucumber in the shaker, produces just the right flavor intensity. Unless, of course, you want your cocktail to taste like a salad!



- 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ oz. Hendricks' Gin
- $\frac{3}{4}$ oz. Sweet Vermouth
- $\frac{1}{4}$ oz. Chartreuse
- 3 -4 thin slices of English Cucumber
- Lemon Zest for Garnish

1. Combine all ingredients except the lemon zest in a shaker with ice cubes (not crushed). Shake for 30-45 sec.
2. Double strain into chilled coup or martini glass and express the lemon zest. Float the zest.

Vieux Carré

- $\frac{3}{4}$ oz. rye whiskey
- $\frac{3}{4}$ oz. brandy
- $\frac{3}{4}$ oz. sweet vermouth
- $\frac{1}{4}$ oz. Benedictine
- dash Peychaud's Bitters
- dash Angostura Bitters

1. Chill an old fashioned glass with ice and water
2. Combine all ingredients in a mixing glass and stir with

ice

3. Strain over fresh ice in chilled glass
 4. Garnish with thick lemon twist
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The Manhattan

Sazerac is my rye whiskey of choice. Made at the Buffalo Trace Distillery, it is spicy and sweet with flavors of orange peels, pepper and allspice. It blends very well with the Italian Vermouth. Note that this is the same recipe as the Irish Manhattan, just substituting the Irish Whiskey for the rye.



- 1 ½ oz. rye whiskey
 - ½ oz. sweet vermouth
 - 2 dashes Angostura Bitters
1. Chill a cocktail glass with ice and water
 2. Combine all ingredients in a mixing glass and stir with ice
 3. Strain into chilled glass
 4. Garnish with a cherry

Vodka Martini

- 2 oz. vodka
- $\frac{1}{2}$ oz. St. Germain Elderflower Liqueur
- $\frac{1}{2}$ oz. sweet vermouth
- dash rhubarb bitters

1. Chill cocktail glass with ice and water
2. Combine all ingredients in a mixing glass and stir with ice
3. Strain into chilled glass

Rosita Cocktail

- 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ oz. plata tequila
- $\frac{1}{2}$ oz. sweet vermouth
- $\frac{1}{2}$ oz. dry vermouth
- $\frac{1}{2}$ oz. Campari
- dash of Angostura Bitters

1. Stir with ice
 2. Strain into an ice filled rocks glass
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Gary's Dry Martini

The original martini contained a lot of vermouth, even equal to or more than the gin, and orange bitters. But over time, the vermouth became a drop or two or just a rinse, and the orange bitters were lost entirely. This is my version of that classic martini. I use St. George Botanivore Gin and Dolin Vermouth. The Botanivore has a nice herbal flavor without a lot of juniper. Also, use fresh good vermouth, it will cost \$12.95 instead of \$9.95. Vermouth goes bad overnight after opening unless you refrigerate it. Then it will last a week or so, (All right, dig that old bottle out of your cabinet you opened 5 years ago and throw it out!)

I like my Elliott's Apothecary Orange Bitters, (I wonder why?), but Fee Brothers works well. Also, the garnish is essential. The olive and the lemon zest impart a very different character to the drink. I suggest you try this drink both ways.

- 1 1/2 oz. St. George Botanivore Gin
- 3/4 oz. Dolin Dry Vermouth
- a short dash of orange bitters
- 1 jalapeno stuffed olive or a lemon zest for garnish

1. Chill a martini glass with ice and water
2. Add all ingredients, except the olive, to a mixing glass and stir with ice
3. Strain into chilled glass and garnish with the olive on a fancy pick or the lemon zest