

# Dad's Day Cocktails

Looking for a special cocktail for Dad's special day? How about a Mule? Mules are easy to make and easy to customize. So, read on for a few ideas.

## The Secret to Great Mules



Whether you are making a classic Moscow Mule or some variety, the one thing that will take your cocktail over the top is *fresh ginger*. This will mean that you cannot build the Mule in a glass or mug, but the added zing makes the effort worthwhile. The easiest way to use fresh ginger is to purchase frozen crushed ginger at your supermarket. This generally comes in 1 tsp squares. I cut the frozen square into 4 pieces and use 1 per cocktail. Alternatively, slice a coin of fresh ginger from a ginger root and crush it with your muddler in your shaking tin. You don't even need to peel it first.

## Cucumber Jalapeño Mule – 3 Ways (or

**maybe 6 ways!)**



Mules, those descendants of the Moscow Mule in all their forms, are becoming more and more popular. Why? Because they are a) easy to prepare and b) taste great. What better cocktail to serve your guests than this popular libation? Now, you Moscow Mule aficionados out there can rightly complain...

Continue reading

## **Rocky MuLe**



I have created several cocktails with Dorçol's Kinsman Rakia Apricot Brandy\*. It makes for an interesting twist on anything made with gin or vodka, (or

tequila or bourbon for that matter). For this Mule, I tried 3 different apricot brandies whose brands will go unmentioned. They were either too sweet,...

Continue reading

Cheers!

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## Memorial Day...Celebrating the Red, White and Blue



Memorial Day is the perfect time for simple, low ABV, thirst-quenching drinks. Since beer says summer and barbecues, nothing is better than celebrating the weekend with beer cocktails. The classic is

the Shandy – equal parts lemon soda and beer. But you can get really creative by just combining your spirit of choice, fruit juice, simple syrup and beer.

One of our favorite beers, Highwheel Betty, is a Kölsch style brew from San Antonio. Mexican beers are a good alternative and also Dogfish Namaste. For spirits, we use gin, vodka, tequila, and Kinsman Rakia – an apricot eau de vie.

Here's a glass lifted to all those service men and women who gave their all!

For recipes, scroll down or click the links.

Old Glory Kinsman Grog

Old Glory Gin or Vodka Grog

Old Glory Tequila Grog

Gin and Beer Tonic



## Kinsman

This cocktail is refreshing and light. The taste is apricot, lemon and beer. To create this cocktail, I tried first lemon, then lime then grapefruit juices. I put a splash of Rakia in a shot glass along with each different juice and simply tasted them. After making the choice of lemon, I added the Rakia and lemon juice to a shaker without ice. To that I added 1/4 oz simple syrup and tasted the drink. I felt it needed more simple so I added another 1/4 oz. This taste was slightly sweet – which means the finished cocktail, after chilling, will be well balanced. You can use the same methods to create cocktails with the other spirits below.

### Ingredients:

- 1 1/2 oz. Rakia
- 2 oz. Fresh lemon Juice
- 1/2 oz. Simple Syrup (1/4 oz – 1 1/2 oz per your taste)
- 6+ oz. Highwheel Betty or your favorite
- Lemon wheel for garnish (Optional)

### Directions:

1. Add the Rakia, lemon and simple syrup to a shaker with

- ice. Shake to chill.
2. Strain into beer glass
3. Top with beer
4. Garnish with lemon wheel



## Gin or Vodka

The flavor of your beer cocktail will be significantly different depending on your choice of Gin or Vodka. Going deeper, your choice of Gin will also effect the flavor. The use of a flavored vodka will add even more layers of flavor. Whichever of these spirits you choose, the ratios of ingredients are fairly constant: 1:1 Spirit to Juice

The beer you use will effect your choice of juice and the quantity of simple syrup. Which fresh juice is a personal preference but I suggest lemon, lime or grapefruit.

### Ingredients:

- 1 1/2 – 2 oz. Gin or Vodka
- 1 1/2 – 2 oz Fresh citrus juice
- 1/4 – 2 oz. Simple syrup
- 6+ oz beer
- Garnish to match your choice of juice – optional

**Directions:**

1. Add spirit, juice and simple syrup to a shaker with ice. Shake to chill
2. Strain into beer glass, with or without fresh ice, and top with beer
3. Garnish



## Tequila

For Tequila beer drinks, we like to use lime, pineapple or grapefruit. The ratios are similar to our Kinsman cocktail. The amount of simple syrup will primarily be determined by the tartness of the juice. Generally more simple with lime and grapefruit and less to none with pineapple. If your pineapple concoction is too sweet for your taste, try using equal amounts of pineapple and lime juice.

### Ingredients:

- 1 1/2 oz. Plata tequila
- 1 1/2 – 2 oz. Fresh juice
- 1/4 – 1 1/2 oz. Simple syrup
- 6+ oz beer
- Garnish to match your choice of juice – optional

### Directions:

1. Add Tequila, juice and simple syrup to a shaker with ice. Shake to chill
2. Strain into beer glass and top with beer



### 3. Garnish

Enjoy!

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## Cinco de Mayo



Cinco de Mayo was originally observed to commemorate the Mexican Army's victory over the French at Puebla in 1862. Today, it is usually celebrated in the US by indulging in chips, salsa and margaritas. While margaritas are really, really good, we would like to offer a few additional tequila cocktails to enjoy. (And maybe some food as well!)

## Grapefruit Tequila Sour



This has just the right balance of sweet, tart and sour. It will be prettier with white grapefruit juice, but we usually can only get ruby reds. Just be sure to use fresh juice. Continue reading →

## San Antonio Cloud



I found the recipe on a scrap of paper along with a bunch of other little “notes to self” hiding in my desk a few years ago. There was no reference on it, so I have no idea where it came from. Anyway, it’s a tequila based cocktail with the tartness and color of pomegranate. The elderflower foam floating on top makes for a pretty as well as delicious drink. Continue reading →

# Tequila Old Fashioned



This is another bitters forward old fashioned. The tequila is perfectly complimented by the sweet, smoky agave and the chocolate and spices of the bitters. Continue reading →

# Yucatan Old Fashioned

This is a smoky, spicy version of the Tequila Old Fashioned. You can use an iSi Whipper for instant gratification, or give yourself a couple of days to let the tequila infuse with the chipotle. Either way, this is an impressive, complex cocktail. Continue reading →



# Tequila Manhattan



Definitely not a chocolate martini, this is a southwestern makeover of the Manhattan. Continue reading →

## Rosita Cocktail

I'm fairly certain that this is Robert Hess's version, but the Rosita Cocktail first appeared in a Mr. Boston recipe book in the 1980's. The plata tequila blends nicely with the complex flavors of the sweet and dry vermouths and the herbal/bitterness of the Campari. Continue reading →



## Tequila Moonlight

This was our entry into MxMo, "The Unknown." The combination of Reposado Tequila, Cocchi Rosa and Kahlua Midnight makes a perfect after dinner drink.



Continue reading →

Now, how about some snacks to go with these drinks!

**Smoked Gouda-Chorizo Jalapeno Poppers**



Jalapeno Poppers

These are easy and quick to make, and the filling can be made ahead of time. Continue reading →

## Fish Tacos

This is our version of the iconic street food.



These are great with whatever fish you have on hand. We usually use tilapia or mahi mahi. The tacos can be made with flour or corn tortillas or with lettuce wraps.

Continue reading →

Finally, if you really *NEED* a margarita, here are three of our most requested:

## Jalapeño Margarita



This margarita is a new favorite because of its subtle taste of jalapeño with the slightest bit of heat on the finish. Continue reading →

## **Classic Margarita #1**



A simple but classic margarita on the rocks. Beware: the sweetness hides the alcohol content. Continue reading →

## **Cadillac Margarita**

This is our Classic Margarita #2 dressed up with Grand Marnier Foam. It's not as tart as #1 – nor as strong! Continue Reading →



Have fun but stay safe!

Cheers!

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# Burn's Night Libations

Even if you do not play the Pipes or wear a kilt, Burn's Night is another good reason to raise a glass. Here are two Scotch cocktails to help celebrate the Baird.

## Blood, Smoke and Sand



This cocktail is simply a Blood and Sand with a little smokey twist. According to an article by Gary Regan, the Blood and Sand first appeared in Harry Craddock's *The Savoy Cocktail Book* and was probably named after the 1922 silent movie. History aside, the Blood and Sand is an elegantly simple cocktail. It is equal parts scotch, Cherry Herring, sweet vermouth, and orange juice, shaken and served straight up. You can change the

flavor of this drink a little by switching around different types of vermouth but the key ingredient is scotch. I prefer a Highland Single Malt or a smooth blend for this cocktail. The complexities of a Speyside are lost in this drink and an Islay can be over powering, but a touch of smoke is a great addition. This version of a Blood and Sand gets that smokey twist from a mist of Laphroig as a garnish. Just fill an atomizer with Laphroaig and you're good to go.

- 3/4 oz. Monkey Shoulder Blended Scotch
- 3/4 oz. Cherry Herring
- 3/4 oz. Carpano Antica Sweet Vermouth





- 3/4 oz. Fresh Orange Juice
- Mist of Laphroaig Single Malt Scotch
- Orange peel for garnish

1. Chill a cocktail glass with ice and water
2. Combine first 4 ingredients in a shaker with ice and shake to chill
3. Double strain in to the chilled cocktail glass
4. Express the orange peel over the drink and float the peel
5. Apply 2 or 3 mists of Laphroaig from the atomizer over the drink
6. Serve immediately

## The Rusty Nail



I have seen Rusty Nail recipes use anywhere from 4:1 Scotch:Drambuie to 1:1. Since the exact ratio is variable, you should get a decent cocktail even from an inexperienced bartender. In addition, you can add bitters and/or a twist of lemon. Muddle a lemon peel and bitters in an old-fashioned glass, and then build the drink adding ice, Scotch and Drambuie. This is my version of this cocktail:



- 1 1/2 oz. Monkey Shoulder Blended Scotch
- 3/4 oz. Drambuie
- 1 dash Dale DeGroff's Pimento Bitters – optional
- 1 lemon peel – optional

1. Chill an Old Fashioned Glass with ice and water
2. Combine the Scotch, Drambuie and bitters (if using) in a

- mixing glass with ice and stir to chill
3. Strain into chilled glass over a large fresh ice cube
  4. Express the lemon peel over the cocktail and discard the peel.

I like adding the bitters. They decrease the sweetness of the Drambuie without detracting from its flavors. The lemon peel adds further complexity.

So, a fresh glass, a chunk of ice, some Scotch and a little Drambuie – you're good to go!!

## The Smokin' Nail

For a twist on the Rusty Nail, try smoking the cocktail with Chai Tea. The smoked chai tea really plays along with the background Drambuie. In addition, your guests will be impressed! This requires a Smoke Gun.



Smokin' Nail

- 2 ozs. Scotch
  - 1/2 ozs. Drambuie
  - 1 lemon zest
  - 1 dash Jerry Thomas Bitters – sub Angostura
  - 1 tsp. Chai tea
1. Smoke tea in gun with the tube placed in a lidded decanter. When decanter is full of smoke, remove smoke

tube and seal.

2. Chill a single old fashioned glass with ice and water.
3. In a mixing glass, muddle lemon zest with the Drambuie and bitters
4. Add Scotch and ice. Stir to chill. Strain into smoke filled bottle and reseal. Give the drink a few good shakes in the smokey bottle.
5. Pour drink over fresh ice in the chilled old fashioned glass.
6. You can use the smokey bottle for 2 or 3 drinks.

Cheers!

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# **New Years 2021**



2021 brings optimism of a better year, but still it is our castles that provide comfort and safety. So, to enhance our

personal palace celebrations, I've created regal cocktails, one purple, one gold.

**"Amethyst Ambrosia"** Amethyst...bringing tranquility, calm and serenity through its clear, cool brilliance. Ambrosia...nectar of the gods.

**"Midas Elixir"** Gold, symbol of luck and prosperity, is believed to rejuvenate the endocrine system, regenerate tissue and skeletal system, and balance the right and left brain. Elixir, the sweet liquid of longevity.

When you lift a glass to toast the new year...here's wishing that "Cheers" brings you just that...the hope of a year filled with renewal and joy!

### **Midas Elixir**

#### *Ingredients:*

- 1 1/2 oz. London Dry Gin
- 3/4 oz Cocchi Americano
- 1/4 oz. Kina al Avion d'Or
- Lemon peel for garnish

#### *Instructions:*

1. Chill a cocktail glass with ice and water
2. Combine all ingredients except the garnish in a mixing glass with ice and stir to chill.
3. Double strain into the chilled cocktail glass
4. Express the lemon peel over the drink.

### **Amethyst Ambrosia**

In this cocktail the vermouth and St. Germain build on the herbal and floral flavors of the gin for a complex and appealing aperitif. The beautiful purple color of the Empress Gin creates a stunning drink. You can substitute any of the new style gins such as Hendrix, Monkey 47 or Uncle Val's

Botanical.

*Ingredients:*

- 1 1/2 oz. Empress Gin
- 3/4 oz Bianco Vermouth
- 1/4 oz. St. Germain Elderflower Liqueur
- Lemon peel for garnish

*Instructions:*

1. Chill a cocktail glass with ice and water
2. Combine all ingredients except the garnish in a mixing glass with ice and stir to chill.
3. Double strain into the chilled cocktail glass
4. Express the lemon peel over the drink.

Cheers!

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## Why You Should be Barrel Aging at Home



Barrel aging at home is fairly simple, not ridiculously expensive and seriously worth doing. The in's and out's of getting started are covered in our Barrel Aged Cocktails page. While simply barrel aging cocktails is reason enough to get started, the real magic occurs when you age something in a barrel previously used for a different cocktail or spirit. For instance, tequila aged in a barrel previously used to age sherry, bourbon, Manhattans

and gin. Or White Whiskey aged, first in a new charred barrel, then aged further after Negroni's and a Martini. Each of these take on flavors far beyond those found in a charred barrel alone. Thus, the fun!

Here are some examples of what we've been putting in our barrels.

Negroni Barrel Aged White Whiskey

Boulevardier with Negroni Aged White Whiskey

Barrel Aged Sherry

Manhattan 2.0 with Barrel Aged Sherry



Sherry Cask Aged Bourbon

Manhattan 3.0 with Sherry Cask Aged Bourbon

Whiskey/Negroni Barrel Aged Tequila

Whiskey/Negroni Barrel Aged Tequila Manhattan

Sherry Aged Gin

Sherry Aged Gin Wet Martini

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## Hudson White Whiskey



We used Hudson White Whiskey to flavor a new, charred oak barrel. It went in, first for 1 month, then back into the barrel for 2-3 week stents between Negroni's. A Martini also spent some time in that barrel as well. The Whiskey came out with a nice color. The nose is caramel, vanilla, clove, herbal with a touch of corn whiskey. The flavor is slightly sweet corn whiskey with the oak, caramel, vanilla and herbs. There is a background of gin with a touch of bitterness on the finish. We used it to make an excellent Boulevardier:

## Boulevardier with Negroni Aged White Whiskey



- 1 oz. Negroni Aged White Whiskey
- 1 oz. Dolin Sweet Vermouth
- 1 oz. Campari
- Fat orange peel for garnish

1. Chill an old fashioned glass with ice and water
2. Combine all ingredients, except the garnish, in a mixing glass with ice and stir to chill
3. Strain into chilled old fashioned over fresh, large ice
4. Express orange peel over drink and float the peel

## Barrel Aged Sherry



We used Lustau East India Solera Sherry to flavor a second new, charred oak barrel. The barrel was then used to age Bourbon Manhattans. These were aged alternating with the

Sherry 3 or 4 times. The barrel was then used to age bourbon, a Tequila Manhattan and gin. The sherry revisited the barrel for 2 – 3 weeks between each cocktail or spirit. The sherry has a bit of color added. The nose is sherry with vanilla, clove and a bit of caramel. The flavor is dried fruits: current, apple, apricot and raisin. I have used it in a number of cocktails that call for sherry. It imparts a slightly mellow flavor along with the sherry you'd expect. Here is our Sherry'd Manhattan:

## **Manhattan 2.0 with Manhattan/Bourbon/Tequila Barrel Aged Sherry**

For the the bourbon in this cocktail, we tried Basil Hayden and Belle Mead. Both were excellent. The bourbon brings flavors of maple, tobacco, smoke and vanilla. This blends well with the rich, earthy Carpano Antica's tastes of herbs, spice and slight bitterness. The aged sherry intermingles with the Italian Vermouth, smoothing the bitterness and adding to the richness. Here is the recipe:



Manhattan 2.0

- 1 1/2 oz. Bourbon

- 3/4 oz. Carpano Antica
- 1/4 oz. Manhattan/Bourbon/Tequila Barrel Aged Sherry
- 1/8 tsp. Grand Marnier
- 1 dash Angostura Orange Bitters
- Garnish: Luxardo Maraschino Cherries and an orange peel

1. Chill a cocktail glass with ice and water
2. Add the ingredients, except the garnish, to a mixing glass with ice and stir to chill
3. Strain into the chilled cocktail glass
4. Add the cherries, (or place them on a pick), and express the orange peel over the drink and discard.

## Sherry Cask Aged Bourbon



This is one of my favorites. The Sherry Cask Aged Bourbon alone makes barrel aging at home worth while! I used Russel's 10 yr Old Bourbon. For an aged bourbon, Russel's has a lot of spice. Aging in a Sherry Cask which had previously been used to age Manhattans mellowed the spice. There are significant flavors from the charred oak barrel:

oak, clove, vanilla, and caramel. You can also taste the sherry along with dried fruit, possibly from the Manhattans.

[fruitful\_sep]

## Manhattan 3.0 with Sherry Cask Aged Bourbon

This cocktail is similar in concept to a barrel aged Manhattan cocktail. However, since the bourbon has taken on flavors from the Sherry barrel while the vermouth was not exposed to

the barrel or allowed to oxidize, the flavor is significantly different. As noted above, the Sherry Cask Aged Bourbon brings flavors from the charred oak barrel: oak, clove, vanilla, and caramel with a touch of aged Sherry. The unaged Carpano Antica maintains its rich flavors of fruit and almonds with spice and a slight bitterness on the finish. Together, they create a fabulous cocktail.

- 2 oz. Sherry Cask Aged Bourbon



- 1 1/2 oz. Italian Vermouth (sweet)
- 1 tsp Grand Marnier
- 1 – 2 dashes Angostura Orange Bitters
- Orange peel and Maraschino cherries for garnish

1. Chill a cocktail glass with ice and water.
2. Stir to combine all ingredients, sans cherries, in a mixing glass with ice.
3. Strain into chilled cocktail glass, express the orange peel and garnish with the cherries

## **Negroni/Whiskey Barrel Aged Tequila**



I used Milagro Plata Tequila and aged it for 2 weeks. The barrel was the one described above with Hudson's White Whiskey alternating with Negroni and a one time Gin Martini. With this aging, I had placed the aged White Whiskey in the barrel just prior to the Tequila. I suspect that the flavor profile might be significantly different if the Tequila had followed a Negroni instead. In the 2 week time, the Tequila took on a little color and a lot of flavor. I was aiming for a primary Tequila flavor with background barrel notes. I was not trying to create Repasado from Plata. After the 2 weeks, the flavor of charred oak was fairly prominent but it was still Tequila and it had picked up vanilla and clove from the oak and spice from the whiskey/Negroni. There was also some dried fruit and herbs from the Negroni. After a few weeks in the bottle, the charred oak flavor diminished some while the rest of the flavors remained.



## Whiskey/Negroni Barrel Aged Tequila Manhattan

In our standard Tequila Manhattan, I use Lillet Rouge instead of vermouth. This cocktail calls for a much lighter touch so Dolin Sweet Vermouth fits nicely. Sticking with the Tequila theme, I used Agavero Orange Liqueur as the sweetener. It has a nice orange flavor and is a little sweeter than Grand Marnier. If you need to substitute, use more Grand Marnier or add a dash of simple syrup. I wanted to keep the “Manhattan” flavors as much as possible so I went with Bitter Truth’s Jerry Thomas Own Decanter Bitters. The maraschino cherry brings the last touch of sweetness while the bitters up the complexity.

- 1 1/2 oz. Whiskey/Negroni Barrel Aged Tequila





- 1/2 oz. Dolin Sweet Vermouth
- 1/4 oz. Agavero Orange Liqueur
- 4 drops Bitter Truth's Jerry Thomas Own Decanter Bitters sub Angostura
- Maraschino cherry

1. Chill a cocktail glass with ice and water
2. Combine all ingredients but the garnish in a mixing glass with ice and stir to chill
3. Strain into chilled cocktail glass and garnish with the cherry.

## Sherry Barrel Aged Gin



The most distinctive thing about gin is the fresh, herbal flavor. This is true whether you prefer a heavy juniper London Dry or one of the New American Styles. In my use,

barrel aging any gin cocktail flattens those herbal notes. They are still there, but the bright, fresh aspect is gone. What is added by the barrel aging process depends almost entirely on what was previously in the barrel and how long the gin is aged. The process works very well for a Negroni – not so much for any type of Martini.

I have seen Sherry Aged Gin on the market, so I wanted to try this with my Sherry barrel. I chose Ford's Gin, one of my favorite London Dry's. The barrel had been used to age Sherry, several Manhattans, including a Tequila Manhattan and bourbon. The Sherry went back into the barrel between each Manhattan and before and after the bourbon. So, it had last been used for Sherry just prior to the Gin. Of note, this barrel was reaching the end of its life. Ultimately, you extract all of the flavors – just like a tea bag. After the Gin, I put the Sherry back in the barrel for 4 weeks, then followed it with Bourbon. The Bourbon required 8-10 weeks to achieve the flavors that previously had taken only 4 weeks. After that, the barrel was done!

The Gin was aged for 4 weeks. What came out was straw colored. As noted earlier, the Gin loses some of the brightness of the botanicals but gains a touch of charred oak, a bit of bitterness, clove, cinnamon, dried fruit herbs from the vermouth in the Manhattans along with a bit of spice from the Bourbon. There is a definite touch of Sherry. All in all, aging the Ford's Gin in the Sherry/Manhattan/Bourbon Barrel was one of our best outcomes. Definitely worthy of a repeat!

## **Sherry Barrel Aged Gin Wet Martini**



I wanted to enhance all of the flavors of the aged Gin and you'll notice that this goes very light on the sweet vermouth. With so little sweetener, the bitterness of the charred oak comes through. The overall nose is Gin with a touch of oak. Flavors are London Dry Gin with a flattening of the herbal notes and a bittersweet background of Sherry/Charred Oak. The barrels previous Manhattan occupants add some dried fruit, herbs and spice. I tried this with and without expressing a lemon peel, but couldn't decide which I liked better. So, I'll leave the garnish to you!

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- 1 1/2 Sherry Barrel Aged Gin
  - 1/4 oz. Dolin Sweet Vermouth
  - 4 drops Regan's Orange Bitters
  - Lemon peel for garnish – optional
1. Chill a cocktail glass with ice and water
  2. Combine all ingredients in a mixing glass with ice and stir to chill
  3. Strain into chilled cocktail glass
  4. Garnish with the lemon peel if using

Well, these are some of my ideas for barrel aging. In reality, and part of the adventure, is that none of these will be 100% reproducible! I highly recommend that you try this at home. The barrels are not expensive and the outcomes are definitively worth the little effort involved. The process will require you to frequently sample some tasty cocktails and spirits as they age. It's a tough job...

Cheers!

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# Cocktails & Girl Scout Cookies?

It's Girl Scout Cookie season and the little girls, with Mom's in tow, can be found in front of grocery stores and pharmacies across the Nation. The ones I met were very pleased to sell me 2 boxes of each variety. Of course I wasn't purchasing all of those boxes just to fuel a cookie binge. I was interested in a more scholarly pursuit: What cocktail will go with my favorite Girl Scout cookie and which Girl Scout cookie will best pair with my favorite cocktail?



Once home with my boxes, I quickly realized that, with 8 different cookies and hundreds of possible cocktails, this was going to require more than one person's liver! So I assembled a tasting panel. My panel was comprised of foodies and cocktail geeks.



First on the agenda was to taste and rank the cookies. Not surprising, the Samoa was rated highest with 5 stars. Tied for second were the Rah-Rah-Rasins and Thin Mints with 4 stars, followed by Savannah Smiles. The Tagalongs, Do-si-dos and Trefoils rounded out the field.



Pairing the cookies with cocktails came next. The cocktails, listed nearby, were served in the order shown. The panel first rated each cocktail, then tasted the cookies with that drink. The best pairings for that cocktail were then noted. This meant that each cocktail could pair with multiple cookies and each cookie might go with several cocktails. When all of the cocktails had been served, the panel then went back and selected the best cocktail for each cookie.



The highest rated cocktail was the Irish Coffee followed closely by the Irish and Tequila Manhattans. The Bourbon Manhattan and the St. Hubertus' Fix were also favored. The remaining cocktails rated fairly equally except, on the other end of the spectrum, let's just say this was not a big gin crowd!

Prior to the tasting, I spent some time figuring out what cocktails might work with these cookies. It was immediately evident that fruit, citrus and sour weren't working. I included the Ten Four, Cynar Sour and Rakia Ximenez to see if the panel agreed. While the panel liked these cocktails, they didn't find much to pair them with.



I was a bit surprised by a few of the results. The Tequila Manhattan was a panel favorite, but paired with very little. Except, it was the runaway favorite to pair with the Thin Mint. I expected the Irish Coffee to pair with the Thin Mint, but only one panel member selected that pairing and then not as a favorite. There were some other surprises, but let's get on with the pairings.

## The Cocktails

1. Vodka Martini
2. Gin Martini

3. Irish Manhattan
4. Bourbon Manhattan
5. Old Fashioned Tent Revival
6. Tequila Manhattan
7. Barbancourt Old Fashioned
8. Irish Coffee
9. Tequila Old Fashioned
10. Plymouth Old Fashioned
11. St. Hubertus' Fix
12. Ten Four
13. Rakia Ximenez
14. Cynar Sour

## The Cookies

- Do-si-dos
- Tagalongs
- Rah-rah-raisins
- Toffee-tastic
- Thin Mints
- Trefoils
- Samoas
- Savannah Smiles

Open the tabs below to see the results:

Martini



I made both the Gin and Vodka Martinis in a mid century style with very little vermouth. As I noted earlier, none of the panel members are gin drinkers. They did, however, like the Vodka Martini and thought that it paired well with the buttery Trefoil and sugar dusted, lemon of the Savannah Smiles.

## Mid Century Vodka Martini

- 1 1/2 oz. Premium Vodka such as Cinco
  - Premium Vermouth such as Carpano Dry
  - Garnish of your choice
1. Chill a martini glass with ice and water
  2. Pour a dash of vermouth into a mixing glass and swirl to coat. Discard the vermouth
  3. Add the gin to the mixing glass, fill with ice and stir to chill
  4. Strain into chilled martini glass and garnish

## Mid Century Gin Martini

To make this, substitute Gin for the Vodka and proceed. I used Ford's. Now, I like gin a lot and regardless of the tasting panel, I thought that the Gin Martini went very well with the Savannah Smiles!

The Manhattan

There were 3 different Manhattans: Irish, Bourbon and

Tequila. All were rated highly by the panel and paired well with several of the cookies.

## Irish Manhattan

This version of the classic received 4.5 Stars from the panel. They chose it has the hands down favorite to pair with both the chocolate peanut butter Tagalong and the Oatmeal raisin Rah-rah-raisin.



While rye and bourbon are the classics in the Manhattan, I don't see any reason not to try an Irish Whiskey. Specifically the Tullamore Dew 10 year old Single Malt. As I've noted before, the Tullamore Dew has the earthy, grassy flavors of Irish whiskey with the flavors of fruit, (apricot, pineapple, raisin) and wood. Just the depth of flavors that blend with vermouth.

- 1 1/2 oz. Tullamore Dew 10 year old Single Malt Irish



Whiskey

- 3/4 oz. Sweet Italian Vermouth
- 1 dash Grand Marnier (1/8 tsp)
- 1 – 2 dashes Angostura Orange Bitters
- brandied cherries for garnish

1. Chill a cocktail glass with ice and water.





2. Stir to combine all ingredients, sans cherries, in a mixing glass with ice.
3. Strain into chilled cocktail glass and garnish with the cherries

## Bourbon Manhattan

The panel paired this classic Manhattan with the Rah-rah-raisin as well but did not think it went as well as the Irish Manhattan. They did, however, pair the Bourbon Manhattan as best cocktail with the coconut caramel Samoa.



For the bourbon Manhattan, I used Russell's Reserve 10 Year Old. This is a bit of a lighter bourbon, but still has the sweet and spicy notes you expect from a quality aged bourbon. Note that in addition to using a higher ratio of vermouth, the recipe includes more Grand Marnier.

- 2 oz. Russell's Reserve 10 Year Old Bourbon
- 1 1/2 oz. Italian Vermouth (sweet)
- 1 tsp Grand Marnier
- 1 – 2 dashes Angostura Orange Bitters
- brandied cherries for garnish

1. Chill a cocktail glass with ice and water.



2. Stir to combine all ingredients, sans cherries, in a mixing glass with ice.

3. Strain into chilled cocktail glass and garnish with the cherries

## Tequila Manhattan

This cocktail was rated as the favorite match up with the Thin Mint. As I noted above, I was surprised but have to agree that it pairs very well.



Definitely not a chocolate martini, this is a southwestern makeover of the Manhattan.



- 2 oz. Milagro Añejo Tequila
  - 1 oz. Lillet Rouge
  - bar spoon (1/8 oz.) of agave nectar
  - dash chocolate bitters
  - Orange zest
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 wide orange zest

## Old Fashioned

I did not include a classic Old Fashioned. Each of the 3 I did, have some significant variation. The Old Fashioned Tent Revival has agave syrup and is spicy. The Tequila Old Fashioned obviously switches the spirit and uses agave and molé bitters. The Barbancourt Old Fashioned with aged rum was rated as the best pairing for the peanut butter sandwich Do-si-do.

## Barbancourt Old Fashioned

The spice of the habanero shrub and the touch of sweetness of the agave complement the dark complex flavors of the aged rum.



- 2 ozs. 15 Year Old Barbancourt Rum
- 1-2 dashes Bitter Truth Habanero Shrub
- 1/8 oz. Agave Nectar

1. Chill an old fashioned glass with ice and water
2. Add all ingredients to a mixing glass and stir with ice
3. Strain into chilled old fashioned glass over fresh ice

## Irish Coffee

This was the unanimous favorite of the evening. The panel thought it went with everything except the Savannah Smiles. It tied the Barbancourt Old Fashioned for best with the Do-si-do and the Bourbon Manhattan for pairing with the Samoa.

# Irish Coffee

I make these with strong coffee, Bushmill's, very little sweetener and lightly whipped, unsweetened heavy cream.



- 1 1/2 oz. Bushmill's Irish Whisky
- 1-2 dashes 2:1 simple syrup
- 4-6 oz. very hot dark coffee (I use Starbucks Sumatra Blend)
- 2-3 Tbl. Lightly whipped cream

1. Prepare the coffee
2. Lightly whip a small amount of heavy whipped cream – about 1/4 cup, until it just peaks
3. In an Irish Coffee mug or other mug of choice, add the Whisky, simple syrup and coffee.
4. Stir gently and top with the whipped cream

St. Hubertus Fix

This was a bit of a surprise for me. I wasn't sure what my panel might think of this cocktail. I found this drink at Cool Hunting. Its primary flavor is bitter coffee, but the aged rum and the herbal Jägermeister really balance that bitterness and the spice of the Pimento bitters rounds it all

out.



The panel paired this cocktail as best with the Toffee-tastic. They also thought it went well with the Rah-rah-raisin.

## St. Hubertus Fix

- 3/4 oz. Aged Rum – I used Zaya
  - 3/4 oz. Jägermeister
  - 3 oz strong cold coffee – I used 1:1 cold coffee syrup and water
  - 2 dashes of Dale Degroff Pimento Bitters
1. Chill a cocktail glass with ice and water
  2. Combine all ingredients in a mixing glass with ice and stir to chill
  3. Strain into chilled cocktail glass

Rakia Ximénez

My tasting panel liked this cocktail and gave it 4 Stars. They did not pair it well with any of the cookies. In retrospect, it might have fared better if I had served it earlier. I'm pretty sure everyone's taste buds were getting saturated. I think that the dry apricot brandy, the sherry and the touch of heat in this cocktail go well with the

Toffee-tastic. But that's just me!



This cocktail combines the fruit flavors of Dorcol's Kinsman Rakia Apricot Brandy with the sweet sherry flavors of Pedro Ximénez. Then the dried chile notes of the Ancho Reyes weigh in. Finally, on the finish, the slightest heat from the Habero Shrub can be appreciated.



- 1 1/2 oz. Kinsman Rakia Apricot Brandy
- 3/4 oz. Pedro Ximénez Sherry
- 1/4 oz. Ancho Reyes
- 4 Drops Bittermans Habero Shrub
- Orange peel for garnish

1. Chill a cocktail glass with ice and water
2. Combine all ingredients, except the garnish, in a mixing glass with ice and stir to chill
3. Strain into chilled cocktail glass
4. Express the orange peel over the drink and discard the peel

Well, there you have it. You have a few more days to score some Girl Scout Cookies and try a few pairings for yourself.

Cheers!

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# Mixology Monday CV Roundup



## Mixology Monday

The theme for January's Mixology Monday CV was Brace Yourself: to create a cocktail that will fortify the will against that moment just before you step out into the cold. Yes, I live in San Antonio where people bundle up because it's 54 degrees. However, I grew up in the frozen North, so I know cold. Besides, we have winter in San Antonio. It lasts for a week or two, but not all at once. Usually a half day at a time!

Ok. Enough of that. The thing I love about Mixology Monday is the creativity. Keeping up with this crowd is a challenge unto itself! Every month I am pushed to make a cocktail that not only fits the theme, but is a great drink on it's own. This month is no different. The contributions are, once again awesome! There are cold and hot drinks, smokey scotch, spice, herbs, tea, coffee and stout. So here are 14 cocktails sure to warm your cockles, (whatever those are).

First up, Katie at garnishblog brings us the Blood and Smoke. Since she is from Boston, where we know it's not 75 degrees today, we can be pretty sure that Katie knows cold! She *"combined the bright taste of blood orange with the spicy and smoky flavors of rye whiskey and*



*Scotch."* Rye whiskey, blood orange juice, Angostura and a Scotch rinse: I think I might blow off the cold and sit down to have another!

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Second in, Andrea who blogs from Denmark at ginhound, gives us a riff on the Last Word with the Clementina Caliente. She shakes up Illegal Joven mezcal with yellow Chartreuse, Ancho Reyes chile liqueur and fresh squeezed clementine juice. This should help prior to scraping your windshield at -15C!

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Next, our German Mixologist, Pete Barmeister of Meticulouslymixing brings us a recipe for homemade Rosemary Bärenfang, a honey liqueur. He then combines the clove, vanilla, cinnamon and rosemary flavors of the Bärenfang with hot water and Tatratea, a tea liqueur, to create the Carpathian Honey. Pete further encourages us to combine the Bärenfang with a German-style Pilsner for a “*Lazy Man’s Braggot.*” The Bärenfang I need to try, but I’m not sure it will be enough to make me want to hunt bears in winter!



Stacy Markow, our Dallas sommelier, brings us Coffee Milk Punch. She combines a cold brew coffee simple syrup with Rye whiskey, whole milk and pecan bitters. This should make Dallas’ next ice storm a little more tolerable!

Next, Craig joins in with the Winter Cap.\* For this cocktail, Craig warms up Bonal with 151 proof rum then rounds it out with Calvados and the herbal Becherovka. I'm always fond of amari and quin quina drinks, and this one sounds fascinating with the addition of the apple flavors of cider and Calvados.



\*Depending on your browser, you may need to scroll up or down to find the post. Just look for the Mixology Monday logo!

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Frederic Yarm of Cocktail Virgin Slut, Mixology Monday's fearless leader and world famous cat herder, weighs in with Hot Tiger's Milk. Since he too hails from Boston, a certain level of experience with the bitter cold can be assumed! His approach is to distract yourself and bring Don the Beachcomber to the rescue. This 1937 hot Tiki drink combines the flavors of rum, coconut, cloves and butter. As Frederic says, *"The Hot Tiger's Milk greeted the nose with a butter and honey-floral aroma. The rum's caramel danced with the honey on the sip, and the swallow roared with rum, orange, and clove notes. The flavors, especially the orange and clove, built over time as they steeped into the Toddy."* Just might cause one to forget where they are and try stepping out in surf shorts and sandals!

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Joel DiPippa, of Southernnash, Mixology Monday's resident Arkansas gentleman and scholar, brings us an Irish Coffee run a muck with his Hoar Frost's Fall. The fact that Joel can pull 100 proof bourbon, allspice dram and Becherovka out of his cabinet in the middle of a snow storm speaks to his mixologist bonafides. Then, in true scholarly fashion, he creates the recipe while *pondering* shoveling the snow! This hot coffee cocktail will definitely make snow shoveling a little less painful.



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The Le Restaurateur No. 2, brought to us by Ian of Tempered Spirits, is another cocktail with 151 proof demerara rum and Calvados, but this time with yellow Chartreuse and the spices of Angostura and 18-21 Black Currant-Cocoa Bitters. This cocktail has the flavors of baked apple pie with a little funky rum notes thrown in. I agree with Ian that the 18-21 Black Currant-Cocoa Bitters can be hard to find, but they are worth the search!

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Boozenerds, Seattleites Shaun and Christa, bring us the Corbie. This is an oatmeal stout based cocktail with the spice of rye whiskey, the complexity of amaro and the sweetness of maple syrup. I'm not sure if the name "Corbie" is supposed to evoke thoughts of Northern France or of ravens but the cocktail sounds delicious and is now on my *things to make* list!



I have always enjoyed Sazaracs, but a Sazerac Hot Chocolate? Brilliant! Dagreb at Nil Utopia creates an amazing cocktail by substituting a Sazarac for the milk in a hot chocolate and makes an absinthe whipped cream for the top! Gunner, our Chesapeake Bay Retriever, will appreciate me having one of these, since I'll probably decide to stay inside and have another thus enabling him to lie by my chair in front of the fire. Which is where he'd rather be!

Thiago Ceccotti, our Brazilian mixologist who writes at Bartending Notes, gives us a recipe for Quentão. *“Quentão (literally means:Very Hot) is a cachaça based Hot Toddy-style beverage which also resembles a cachaça based Mulled Wine.”* Made with ginger tea, cachaça, vermouth, vanilla liquor, lime juice and Angostura, it sounds like there is a good reason it is popular in Brazil!

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Adam, aka Mr Muddle, joins Mixology Monday for the first time with his 32 Degrees. Another Bostonian, he seems to be well schooled. not only on cold weather, but in cocktails, (check out his blog). As Adam points out, this drink is a *Scaffa*, which is not technically a cocktail, but a mixture of alcoholic components, mixed in a

glass and served unchilled, without ice. The 32 Degrees, made with Dark Rum, Amaro Montenegro, Aquavit and an Absinthe rinse will decidedly “steel the will!”

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Next in was Robin of the Kitchen Shamanism Blog. Don't believe Robin when he says he mixes cocktails with "low knowledge!" He presents us this month with another interesting drink, the Sjørök. Smokey Islay Scotch, sweet Cherry Heering, dark muscovado sugar syrup, Fee Brothers Black Walnut Bitters and hot Lapsang Souchong tea. I may not be able to pronounce "Sjørök," but this smokey cocktail looks like it will keep you warm and smiling!



Well, there are 13 cocktails that should help get you through the winter. Lastly, our contribution this month is two shots: *Into the Wind* and *Frost Buster*. Both are made with barrel aged Fireball Whiskey! Why, you might ask, would we do that to a barrel? Well, [click here to read and find out!](#)

PS: Marius Iordache who blogs at Arcane Potions and attends the Citadel, comes in with a late contribution: a delicious looking Mulled Wine. That should keep you warm on a 0600 march, but then again, I'm pretty certain that drinking is worth at least 150 demerits!



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We really have enjoyed hosting this month's Mixology Monday. Thanks, as always, to Frederik for keeping this most excellent online cocktail party on track and for allowing us to host.

So, until next month,

Cheers!

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## **Christmas Libations circa 2015**

We offered a number of libations this Christmas Season. A few were favorite cocktails that we rechristened with seasonal names, we added some new ones that we found, and we created a couple of original recipes. Some can be made Zero Proof so

everyone can be in on the fun!

## Berry Delicious

I got this idea from Porter's Fire, which is a Canadian Whiskey with "cinnamon and hints of vanilla." I haven't been able to find Porter's Fire so I used Fireball. The combination of cinnamon spice and the nutty Amaretto is awesome.



- 3/4 oz. Fireball Whiskey
- 3/4 oz. Amaretto

1. Combine in a shot glass and serve

## Blazing Prancer

If Amaretto works, why not Jägermeister? Especially if the Fireball has been barrel aged. I aged the Fireball in a small jar with a barrel stave for 2 weeks. A little clove and vanilla to go with the cinnamon blends with the herbs in the Jägermeister.

- 3/4 oz. Barrel Aged Fireball Whiskey
- 3/4 oz. Jägermeister

1. Combine in a shot glass and serve



# Three Wise Men



Gold, frankincense and myrrh. Too many of these and you'll act like Larry, Moe and Curly!

- 1 1/2 oz. Ford's Gin
- 3/4 oz. Carpano Bianco Vermouth
- 1/4 oz. St. Germaine Elderflower Liqueur
- Edible Gold Stars (available here) for garnish

1. Chill a cocktail glass with ice and water
2. Combine gin, vermouth and St. Germaine in a mixing glass with ice and stir to chill
3. Strain into chilled cocktail glass
4. Gently float a few gold stars on the surface and serve

# Elf Magic

Better than dessert—Chocolate  
mint cream. (Yes, it's a  
Grasshopper)



- 1 oz. Crème de Menthe
- 1 oz. Crème de Cacao
- 2 oz. Heavy Cream

1. Chill a cocktail glass with ice and water
2. Combine all ingredients in a shaker with ice and shake to chill
3. Strain into chilled cocktail glass



## Frosty Night

A Holiday version of a Cosmopolitan. This cocktail is pretty and sophisticated.

- 1 ½ oz. vodka
- 1 oz. White grapefruit juice
- 1/2 oz. Cointreau
- 1/2 oz. Simple Syrup
- 4-6 fresh cranberries for garnish

1. Chill a cocktail glass with ice and water
2. Combine all ingredients, except garnish, in a shaker with ice and shake to chill
3. Strain into chilled cocktail glass
4. Either float the cranberries on the drink or skewer them on a pick.
5. Serve

## Rudolph Bubbly

Even Champagne can use a little dressing up! This is from Chris Tunstall at abarabove. I am re-posting it here because making a syrup from jellied cranberry sauce is a great idea, (for other awesome ideas, you should check out their site).



- 2 oz. Cranberry Syrup – see below
- 4 – 6 oz. Champagne (or Sparkling Cider)

1. Chill a cocktail glass champagne flute with ice and water
2. Add Cranberry syrup to glass and top with Champagne or cider

## Cranberry Syrup

The syrup is extremely easy. It will take about 15 minutes, including time to cool. You will need:

- 1 – 14 oz can jellied cranberry sauce
  - 2/3 cup sugar
  - 2/3 cup water
1. In a quart sized microwavable container, melt the cranberry sauce on high in 30 second intervals, stirring in between.
  2. Meanwhile, using a small sauce pan on the stove, dissolve the sugar in the water.
  3. When the the sugar is dissolved, add the melted cranberry sauce and stir to combine.
  4. Allow to cool. This will keep refrigerated in a sealed glass bottle for at least a week.

## Santa Sparkle



Mint with a little sparkle! Can be Zero Proof.

- 2 oz. Crème de Menthe or Crème de Menthe syrup
- 4-6 oz. Champagne or Sparkling Grape Juice
- Chill a cocktail glass champagne flute with ice and water
- Add Crème de Menthe to glass and top with Champagne or Grape Juice

# Holly Leaf

Creamy mint richness.



- 1 oz. Crème de Menthe or Crème de Menthe syrup
- 2 oz. Heavy Cream

1. Chill a cocktail glass with ice and water
2. Combine all ingredients in a shaker with ice and shake to chill
3. Strain into chilled cocktail glass

Cheers!

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# Tepache!

Tepache is pineapple, top removed, chunked, unpeeled, juiced, then mixed with a few spices and sugar and allowed to ferment, uncovered, first at room temperature and then in the refrigerator, with whatever is in the air, for one week. If pineapple juice and hard cider had a baby – it would be tepache. This favorite street drink of Mexico is tropical and slightly pungent with a little funk. Traditionally served alone or with Mexican beer, tepache is making its way onto cocktail menus all over the US.

It first came to my attention when I read a Bon Appétit post last Summer. Then this past July, I spotted an article about a DIY tepache in Imbibe . When I noticed that the recipe was from our friends at Victor Tangos, my curiosity was truly peaked. Victor Tangos is one of the restaurants I try to visit when we're in Dallas. So, I absolutely *had* to head over

there at my first opportunity.



When I had a chance to discuss Victor Tangos' version with Manager Matt Ragan, he said their tepache is basically just the way Bartender Alejandro Galindo's mother used to make hers. According to Matt, they make their tepache in the

restaurant and there is little, if any, variation between batches. They have used it in several cocktails, mainly Tiki drinks, substituting tepache for pineapple juice. During my visit a few weeks ago, they were offering the Tomar de los Muertes, which eschews the rum and combines mezcal and tequila. Matt says that the tepache cocktails have been well received and will continue on the menu for awhile.

I used Alejandro's recipe, which is simple and came out very similar to what I had at Victor Tangos. It was good at the end of the seven days proscribed in the recipe, but got better when allowed to ferment another ten days. You don't have to make your own – just ask at your favorite liquor store. We tried it alone, with beer and in a few different cocktails. I found that the cocktails are best if the amount of tepache is equal to, or less than, the volume of hard spirit. Otherwise, it overwhelms the drink. We settled on 3 favorites: a Tiki variation, a tequila/amaro combination and a gin cocktail.

## **The Potted Tepache Parrot**

This is a riff on Trader Vic's Potted Parrot using tepache rather than orange juice. I also increased the orgeat. The flavors of the ingredients all come through: the rum, the tart/funky tepache, the orgeat and a hint of lemon. Here's

the recipe:



- 2 oz. Cruzan white rum
- 2 oz. tepache
- 1 oz. lemon juice
- 1/2 oz. curacao
- 1/4 oz. simple syrup
- 1/2 oz. orgeat
- 12 oz. crushed ice

1. Chill a Double Old Fashioned glass with ice and water
2. Shake all ingredients with crushed ice
3. Pour unstrained into chilled glass

Next up is:

## The Tepache Tease

The bright flavor of the tequila adds to the tropical pineapple while the plum/cherry notes in the Bonal plays with the pungency of the tepache.





- 2 oz. Tepache
- 2 oz. Plata Tequila such as Milagro
- 1/4 oz. Bonal
- 1 dash 2:1 simple syrup

1. Chill a Double Old Fashioned with ice and water
2. Combine all ingredients in a shaker with ice and shake to chill
3. Strain over fresh ice in chilled glass

And finally:

## **The Tepache Cocktail**

This proves you can have an elegant cocktail that uses

pineapple!



- 1 oz. Plymouth Gin
- 3/4 oz. Tepache
- 1/4 oz. Lemon Juice
- 1 dash (1/8 tsp) 2:1 simple syrup

1. Chill a cocktail glass with ice and water
2. Combine all ingredients in a shaker with ice and shake to chill
3. Strain into chilled glass and serve

Cheers!

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