

White Russian



While this classic cocktail is white, it isn't from Russia. Nor was it invented by a Russian or even for a Russian! The black Russian was created by a bartender in Brussels for an American Diplomat in 1949. The White Russian first appeared in the 1960's. Whatever the origins, it is delicious and decadent.

Technically, this should be shaken. However, the streaks of white and brown are mesmerizing. So add the cream last, serve it with a stir stick and allow your guest to gawk in awe before they stir in the cream.

Ingredients:

- 2 oz Vodka
- 1 oz Kahlua
- 1 oz Cream

Directions:

1. To a chilled Old Fashioned glass, add a large cube of ice.
2. Add the Vodka and Kahlua and stir gently to chill and combine

3. Add the cream on top.
4. Serve immediately with a stir stick.

Cheers!

Doc's Dirty Martini



Whether you like your Martini with Gin or Vodka, and dirty or down right filthy, *Doc Elliott's Olive Bitters* is the secret to making this Dirty Martini deliciously savory.

- 2 oz. London Dry Gin or Vodka
- 1/2 oz. Dry Vermouth
- 1/4 – 1/2 oz. Olive Juice or Brine to taste
- 1 – 2 Dashes *Doc Elliott's Olive Bitters*
- Garnish with olives

1. Chill a cocktail glass with ice and water
2. Combine ingredients, except garnish, in a mixing glass with ice then stir to chill
3. Strain into chilled cocktail glass

4. Garnish with olives

Cheers!

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!

**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 that all of these erstwhile concoctions containing ginger beer are not *Mules*. Just like the Martini was

co-opted into many forms, the Mule now has countless varieties. So all I can say is: "Smile, deal with it and serve your guests delicious drinks!"

These Mules are all based on muddled cucumbers and seeded jalapeños. What changes is the fruit juice and the base spirit. I started to call these, "South Texas Mules", since I used either Ranger Creek's .36 White Whiskey, or Cinco Vodka which are both distilled here in South Texas. You can use either spirit in any of these cocktails. Each brings its own twist to the party. I found that I preferred the Whiskey with the cranberry and the Vodka with the pomegranate.

Ranger Creek's .36 White Whiskey is their 'White Dog,' or unaged bourbon. It is slightly sweet and a bit grainy with a hint of fruit. It also has the 'bite' of white whiskey. Cinco Vodka has a slight aroma of alcohol, but beneath that is a light, pleasant note of grain. The flavors are mostly neutral, with hints of wheat and some vanilla.

The secret to any cocktail is premium ingredients, but:

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.

You can easily offer all 6 varieties of this Mule at your next party. Pre-slice the cucumber and ginger. Stem the jalapeños and split them down the center lengthwise. They are easy to seed this way. Then just slice them short wise and use 4 pieces to equal 2 slices.

Cucumber Jalapeño Mule

Let's start with lime. This is as close to the classic Moscow Mule as any of these come. I like both the Whiskey and Vodka versions of this. This cocktail is ginger forward with a background freshness from the cucumber. The jalapeño stays

behind the scene enhancing the cucumber.



- 3 – 4 slices of fresh cucumber – I used the English variety
 - 2 slices seeded jalapeño
 - 1 slice Fresh ginger or 1/4 tsp fresh frozen crushed ginger
 - 2 oz. Fresh lime juice
 - 2 oz. White Whiskey or Vodka
 - 1 oz. 2:1 Simple Syrup (2 parts sugar to 1 part water)
 - 6 oz Ginger Beer (I use Goslings or Fever Tree)
 - Slice of lime for garnish
1. Muddle cucumber, jalapeño and ginger with the lime juice in your shaker tin
 2. Add Spirit of choice and simple syrup.
 3. Fill shaker with ice cubes and shake to chill and further muddle: 20-30 seconds
 4. Double strain into Copper Mug or chilled Collins glass over fresh ice.
 5. Add Ginger Beer and garnish

Cucumber Jalapeño Mule with Cranberry



As noted above, I preferred the Whiskey with this, but the Vodka is good too. The recipe is the same as with the lime juice – just substitute the cranberry juice. I use an organic, unsweetened brand. The cocktail is tart with spicy ginger. The cucumber and cranberry go very well together. I generally serve Mules in the appropriate copper mug, but I wanted to picture this with the color. This will make a great

Holiday cocktail – bright red and fizzy!

- 3 – 4 slices of fresh cucumber – I used the English variety
 - 2 slices seeded jalapeño
 - 1 slice Fresh ginger or 1/4 tsp fresh frozen crushed ginger
 - 2 oz. Unsweetened cranberry juice
 - 2 oz. White Whiskey or Vodka (I preferred the White Whiskey)
 - 1 oz. 2:1 Simple Syrup (2 parts sugar to 1 part water)
 - 6 oz Ginger Beer (I use Goslings or Fever Tree)
1. Muddle cucumber, jalapeño and ginger with the cranberry juice in your shaker tin
 2. Add Spirit of choice and simple syrup.
 3. Fill shaker with ice cubes and shake to chill and further muddle: 20-30 seconds
 4. Double strain into Copper Mug or chilled Collins glass over fresh ice.
 5. Add Ginger Beer

Cucumber Jalapeño Mule with Pomegranate

The pomegranate adds a rich note and is not as tart as either the lime or cranberry varieties above. I used Pom brand which is unsweetened, but is sweeter than some others I've had. The recipe is a bit different because of the sweetness of the Pom. You might need to adjust the pomegranate to simple syrup ratio if you use a different brand.

- 3 – 4 slices of fresh cucumber – I used the English



variety

- 2 slices seeded jalapeño
 - 1 slice Fresh ginger or 1/4 tsp fresh frozen crushed ginger
 - 2 1/2 oz. Unsweetened pomegranate juice
 - 2 oz. White Whiskey or Vodka (I preferred the White Whiskey)
 - 1/2 oz. 2:1 Simple Syrup (2 parts sugar to 1 part water)
 - 6 oz Ginger Beer (I use Goslings or Fever Tree)
1. Muddle cucumber, jalapeño and ginger with the pomegranate juice in your shaker tin
 2. Add Spirit of choice and simple syrup.
 3. Fill shaker with ice cubes and shake to chill and further muddle: 20-30 seconds

4. Double strain into Copper Mug or chilled Collins glass over fresh ice.
5. Add Ginger Beer

So there they are. These will be a simple way to offer multiple varieties of Mules to your guests.

Cheers!

A Tonic Bar for Your Next Party



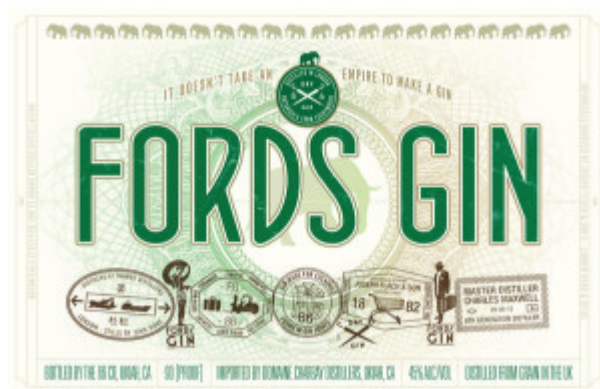
As busy host/hostess, anytime you can offer a fun, engaging, self-serve cocktail bar, expect your guests to rave about your entertaining prowess! A tonic bar is a simple way to allow your guests open access to create their own drinks while you get to enjoy your party too. Its versatility works great for casual outdoor gatherings and equally well for holiday festivities.



Before we address the blue print for a great libation station, let's look at the recent transformation of the venerable Gin and Tonic. About ten years ago, the "Gin Tonic" became the rage in Spain. Bars developed their own, proprietary Tonic Waters with which they prepared beautiful cocktails in over-sized, stemmed wine glasses, filled with colorful fresh citrus and herbs. Drinking establishments take pride in featuring their version of the "Gin Tonic."

The most important ingredient in gin, and the one necessarily present in all gins, is juniper. Beyond that, it's the Wild West, because there is no minimum amount of juniper required for a spirit to be labeled 'gin.' A single juniper berry in a vat of spirit qualifies as 'gin.'

I had an opportunity to discuss Gin and Tonics with Jason Kosmas, Co-founder of The 86 Company, (Fords Gin among others), Co-founder of Employees Only and Co-author of Speak Easy. According to Jason, just about any premium brand of gin can be used for Gin and Tonics. Jason prefers that juniper be an actual flavor present in gin, followed by citrus and various herbs. When determining what will go best with any particular gin, Jason encourages us to "read the back label" and see what is in the gin. With Fords Gin, he suggests creating a cocktail with the addition of grapefruit, coriander, lemon, and jasmine.



When it comes to tonic water, there are

several good premium brands readily available. Jason mentioned Fever Tree, East Imperial and Q Tonic. He looks for natural ingredients and sugars. The flavor should be quinine first and dry rather than sweet.

For garnishes, Jason looks to rosemary for “woody,” and he likes grapefruit, dried spices, star anise, aromatic berries such as strawberry, cucumber and/or fresh lavender. For sweeteners, he recommends agave, dried flowers and even herbal tea blends.

Of course, as Jason says: “It can’t be a Gin Tonic without the big, stemmed wine glass!”

The Tonic Bar

To engage your guests with making their own Gin Tonics, set your Tonic Bar up in an easily accessible area where multiple people can be actively concocting. Your actual tonic bar can be as minimalist or as expansive as you like. You can offer only a single gin, vodka or rum, or multiple choices of each. We include little tasting cups so that our guests can sample the spirits before selecting one. (The plastic tasting cups were one lifetime supply purchase from Costco – approximately a thousand for \$10!)



Fever Tree, Tonic Syrups for Rum and for Gin

Now for the tonic water. We like to offer at least one house

made tonic syrup. A small amount of tonic syrup is added to carbonated water in the drink to make tonic water, (our recipes are here). These syrups are designed for a specific spirit and make wonderful cocktails. However, we have found that while our guests like it when we make one these for them, when left on their own, they will usually opt for bottled tonic water. We continue to offer the tonic syrup, but we always include one premium brand of tonic water – usually Fever Tree. We also use the small bottles so that there is no measuring required.

However many choices of spirit you offer, don't skimp on the garnishes. Arrange bunches of fresh herbs in single old fashioned glasses, with small bowls of sliced citrus and berries. If some of your herbs are less than attractive, pinch off the leaves and present them in small bowls as well. Release your imagination with the variety of flavors, colors and textures of garnishes and the containers in which you offer them. The more inviting the presentation, the more your guests will be encouraged to experiment and enjoy their mixology talents. Here are some suggestions:

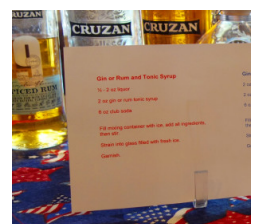


- Lemon & Lime Wheels
- Lemon & Lime Peels
- Grapefruit Peels
- Sliced Berries
- Cucumber Slices

- Fresh Lavender
- Fresh Rosemary
- Fresh Thyme/Lemon Thyme
- Fresh Sage
- Kaffir Lime Leaves
- Lemon Grass
- Fresh Cilantro
- Fresh Pineapple
- Coriander
- Fresh Hibiscus Flowers



Set up your Tonic Bar
where it is easily
accessible



Little
recipe
placards
make it easy
for your
guests

As noted above, set your Tonic Bar up in an easily accessible location. We use a round table. Set out your bottles of spirits, a few bottles of tonic water along with a bottle opener, and garnishes. You might want to set your glassware and ice bucket on a separate counter. This will minimize the chance that they get knocked over while someone is reaching for ingredients. We always include a written recipe with suggestions of garnishes for each spirit. This will eliminate any anxiety your guests may have over not knowing what to make. You want to keep it simple and fun.



A knife and cutting board allows guests to prepare their own garnishes

To get things started, make up a Gin Tonic so everyone can see how it's done. Those guests can then show any late comers when they arrive. You will then only need to refresh any garnishes, tonic water bottles and ice.

Recipe for Gin, Rum or Vodka

Tonics

- 2 oz Spirit – either Gin, Rum or Vodka
- 6 oz. Tonic Water (1 1/2 oz Tonic Syrup and 4 1/2 oz. Carbonated Water)
- Optional dash of simple syrup for gin or vodka/demerara simple syrup for rum
- Garnish – see below

Instructions:

1. Add ice cubes to a large, stemmed wine glass
2. Add garnishes except for any citrus peels for expressing
3. Add your Spirit of choice
4. Slowly add the Tonic Water (or Tonic Syrup followed by the carbonated water).
5. Express any citrus peels and serve

Suggested Garnishes:

Gin or Vodka

- Lemon & Lime Wheels
- Lemon & Lime Peels
- Grapefruit Peels
- Sliced Berries
- Cucumber Slices
- Fresh Lavender
- Fresh Rosemary
- Fresh Sage
- Kaffir Lime Leaves
- Lemon Grass

Rum

- Lemon & Lime Wheels
- Lemon & Lime Peels
- Sliced Berries
- Kaffir Lime Leaves
- Fresh Cilantro
- Fresh Pineapple
- Coriander
- Fresh Hibiscus Flowers
- Lemon Grass



Rum Tonic
with House
Made Tonic
Syrup

We have found that our guests enjoy the opportunity to experiment with the Tonic Bar. By offering multiple choices of gin, vodka and rum along with a myriad of garnishes, you enable your guests to explore a range of Gin Tonics. Our guests tend to lower the amount of spirit in each drink thus allowing themselves to try multiple variations. If some of your guests may be a

little more stayed or if you just wish to expand the offerings, set out a few old fashioned glasses so someone can make a standard Gin or Vodka and Tonic. Throw in a bottle of vermouth and martini glasses and your guests can head down that road. As always, we offer self serve wine and beer along with non-alcohol options.

Cheers!

National Create a Vacuum Day!



February 4 is National Create a Vacuum Day. So, in cocktailian fashion, you need to create a vacuum today! Ever wonder why your cocktail shaker is so hard to open after you've shaken your drink? As you shake your drink with ice, the liquid and air in the shaker cool and contract – causing a vacuum to form. This is what holds the shaker together and makes it hard to open.

Thus, you can make your very own vacuum. Now try

out a daiquiri, margarita, sour or something new, and SHAKE IT UP, BABY!!! Here are a few suggestions:

The Z



The Z

This is one of our favorite daiquiris. Simple, fresh ingredients and you can feel the warmth of the sun and the sounds of the surf! Hemingway, here we come.

[Get the recipe here](#)

Ten Four



Ten Four

Combine fresh cinlantro and jalapeno with the magic of Chartreuse and Cinco Vodka. Need a little Grover Washington to go with that?

Get the recipe here

The Mayahuel



The Mayahuel

Mayahuel was the Aztec Goddess of the maguey of which the agave is a type. She was the mother of the “400 rabbit” gods of drunkenness. This margarita plays on the agave with tequila, agave orange liqueur, and agave nectar.

Get the recipe here

Whiskey Sour



Belle Meade Sour

Smooth, vanilla, caramel, smoke and all of the other wonders of bourbon combined with sweet/tart lemon. Now we're talking!

Get the recipe here

So, honor the day and create a few vacuums!

Cheers!

Ten Four

I offer up this drink in honor of National Vodka Day, which is also National Taco Day, and in 2014, falls on Saturday, October 4. This just happens to coincide with our daughter's wedding day. Her Groom has suggested the name and I think it covers all of the bases.



I didn't want to just make up another version of a cilantro-lime martini. The Chartreuse accentuates the herbal cilantro while the pepper adds a nice background bite.

- 1 1/2 oz. vodka
 - 1 oz fresh lime
 - 1/2 oz Chartreuse
 - 1/2 oz. simple syrup
 - 1 slice jalapeno seeded
 - 1/8 cup fresh cilantro
 - 1 jalapeno stuffed olive for garnish – optional.
1. Combine all ingredients, except the garnish, in a shaker with ice cubes (not crushed ice). Shake until well chilled.
 2. Double strain into a chilled cocktail glass.

3. Garnish with the olive (optional)
Cheers!

Chocolate Martini

The hardest part about this drink is rimming the glass. Plus you can easily play with this by subbing vanilla or orange vodka, etc.

- 1 oz. Vodka
- 1 oz. Frangelico
- 1 oz. Creme de Cacao, preferably white
- Optional chocolate for rimming glass – see note

1. Chill a martini glass with ice and water
2. Stir all ingredients in a mixing glass with ice
3. Strain into chilled glass

Note: Here are a few ways to rim a glass for this drink:

1. Use dark or semi sweet chocolate and melt with a small amount of water. Allow to cool slightly, then dip the glass rim into the melted chocolate. After all excess chocolate has dripped off, set the glass upright in the freezer until ready to use.
2. Use melting chocolate. Melt the chocolate as per package instructions. Allow to cool slightly, then dip the glass rim into

the melted chocolate. This will stay hard at room temperature and can also be used in a small squirt bottle to actually decorate the glass.

3. Use finely chopped dark or semi sweet chocolate. Moisten the rim of a dry, chilled glass with water or vodka and dip into the chocolate.
 4. Use black decorating sugar. Moisten the rim of a dry, chilled glass with water or vodka and dip into the chocolate.
-

Pomegranate Martini

- 2 oz. PAMA Pomegranate Liqueur
 - 1 oz. vodka
 - $\frac{1}{4}$ oz. Grand Marnier
 - St Germain Elderflower Foam
1. Chill cocktail glass with ice and water
 2. Stir all ingredients, except foam, with ice
 3. Add St. Germaine Elderflower Foam to chilled glass
 4. Strain drink through foam into glass
 5. Repair foam and flame drink with Misto of Chartreuse
-

Dark Chocolate Martini

This works best if you chill or freeze the vodka. Makes a fun Halloween concoction.

- Raw sugar
 - Finely chopped dark chocolate
 - 2 oz. chilled vodka
 - 2 oz. chocolate liqueur such as Godiva or Starbucks
 - 1 dash orange juice
1. Chill a martini glass with ice and water
 2. Combine sugar and chocolate.
 3. Empty and dry the glass then moisten rim with orange juice or water and coat with mixture.
 4. Combine vodka, chocolate liqueur and orange juice in a mixing glass with ice
 5. Stir to thoroughly chill, but do not over dilute.
 6. Strain into rimmed glass
 7. Garnish with an orange wedge