

Italian Cousin – a Bitter Sweet Balance

This drink combines the herbal St. George Botanivore Gin with the slightly bitter and equally herbal Aperol and the nutty, bittersweet Luxardo Maraschino Liqueur. The Pimento Bitters add depth of flavor and mellow the sweetness of the Luxardo. It is a very smooth drink. I started out with the following recipe:



- 1 1/2 oz. St. George Botanivore Gin
- 3/4 oz. Aperol
- 1/4 oz. Luxardo Maraschino Liqueur
- 1 Dash Dale DeGroff's Pimento Bitters
- Orange peel for garnish

This ratio, 1 1/2:3/4:1/4, produces a cocktail that bolsters the herbal and floral notes of the Botanivore with the orange, slightly bitter Aperol, with the Luxardo decidedly in the background.

Next up was a ratio of 1:1:1/2

- 1 oz. St. George Botanivore Gin
- 1 oz. Aperol
- 1/2 oz. Luxardo Maraschino Liqueur
- 1 Dash Dale DeGroff's Pimento Bitters
- Orange peel for garnish

This cocktail was more balanced and significantly more bitter. Now I like bitter, so this appeals to me, but the

bitterness hides the herbal flavors just a bit.

Lastly, I used a 1:1:1, (Ah, yes, the Negroni ratio!). To my taste, this brings the herbal flavors of the Botanivore and the Aperol in concert with the bitterness of Aperol's cinchona. You can actually taste the nutty, bittersweet Maraschino, helping to bring everything together.

- 3/4 oz. St. George Botanivore Gin
- 3/4 oz. Aperol
- 3/4 oz. Luxardo Maraschino Liqueur
- 1 Dash Dale DeGroff's Pimento Bitters
- Orange peel for garnish

1. Chill a cocktail glass with ice and water
2. Combine gin, Aperol, Luxardo and bitters in a mixing glass with ice and stir to chill
3. Strain into chilled glass
4. Express the orange peel over the drink and discard the peel.

Which ever way you choose, don't forget the bitters. They really add some depth and a touch of spice.

Cheers!
