

MxMo CIX – Vinegar



Mixology Monday

This month's Mixology Monday is hosted by Adam of the Mr. Muddle blog. He has chosen the theme of vinegar, as in the Shrub. A shrub is simply fruit, sugar and vinegar. They are generally sweet/tart and you can enjoy them with a little carbonated water or mix them in cocktails. This month I've gone a bit overboard and am offering 4 cocktails using vinegar. Three using shrubs and one vinegar, (specifically pickled jalapeno juice).

A few years ago, I ventured into making a shrub at home. I don't often have total failures, but that was one of them! Jump forward to a few months ago and, while wondering through the liquor store, I came across a Strawberry Balsamic Black Pepper Shrub from Shrub Drinks. I started playing with it and came up with the following:

Fords Gin with Balsamic Black Pepper Shrub



The Strawberry Balsamic Black Pepper Shrub is tart like you would expect but it is also pretty sweet. To offset the sweetness, I added Salers. In addition to bitterness, Salers also has serious botanical flavors that go well with the Fords and a touch of earthiness. Salers is a bit of an acquired taste so you might want to reduce it to 1 tsp. The purpose of the few ice cubes is to chill and dilute only slightly. The flavors are the gin, the sweet/tart shrub, the Salers' botanicals and a touch of savory from the black pepper garnish. The recipe makes 2 shots:

- Lemon peels plus additional for garnish
 - 2 oz. London Dry Gin such as Fords
 - 1/2 oz. Strawberry Balsamic Black Pepper Shrub
 - 1/4 oz. Salers
 - Freshly ground black pepper
1. Prepare the shot glasses by expressing the lemon peels over the glasses and then wiping the inside and rim of the glass with the peel. Discard the peels
 2. Combine the gin, shrub and Salers in a mixing glass with 1 or 2 ice cubes
 3. Gently stir to slightly chill and dilute
 4. Strain into 2 shot glasses.
 5. Top the shots with 1 turn of black pepper
 6. Garnish with an additional lemon peel

Tequila Shots with Tomatillo Lime Serano Shrub



These are similar in concept to the above. Obviously, tequila and lime go together. This shrub has the tartness of the vinegar, but is not as sweet as the balsamic shrub. The tartness adds to the drink and the fresh pepper brings just a touch of tingle. This recipe also makes 2 shots.

- 1/2 oz. Fresh lime juice
- 2 slices fresh serano jalapeno – seeded or not
- 2 oz. Plata Tequila
- 3/4 oz. Tomatillo Lime Serano Shrub from Shrub Drinks
- 3 drops 10% Saline or a few grains of salt – optional



- Lime wedge for garnish

1. In a shaker tin, muddle the jalapeno and lime juice
2. Add the tequila and shrub and shake briefly with a few ice cubes. Don't over dilute or chill.
3. Double strain into 2 shot glasses.
4. Garnish with the lime wedge and serve

Shrub Collins



This is a twist on the classic way to drink shrubs – just add water. This cocktail brings the complexity of sweet vermouth and fresh lemon juice to the sweet/tart shrub. You can use any shrub for this and can substitute a different fortified wine and/or add a spirit. The concept makes for a refreshing summer drink.

- 1 oz Sweet Vermouth – your favorite brand
- 1 oz Fresh lemon juice
- 1/2 oz. Strawberry Balsamic Black Pepper Shrub
- Carbonated water
- Lemon wheel for garnish

1. To an Ice filled Collins or highball glass add the first three ingredients.
2. Top with the carbonated water
3. Garnish with the lemon peel and serve

Dirty Cajun Martini



Where the dirty martini meets the Cajun martini: Hendrick's Gin, dry vermouth and pickled jalapeno juice. Guaranteed to tickle your tongue.

- 2 oz. Hendrick's Gin
- $\frac{1}{2}$ oz. dry vermouth
- $\frac{1}{4}$ oz. pickled jalapeno juice

1. Chill cocktail glass with ice and water
2. Add all ingredients to a mixing glass with ice
3. Stir to chill 10 – 15 sec.
4. Strain into chilled glass
5. Garnish with jalapeno stuffed olive or jalapeno spear

Cheers!