

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
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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 *Doc Elliott's Actually Bitter Orange Bitters*, (I wonder why?), but Suze Orange Bitters work 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
- 1-2 Drops *Doc Elliott's Actually Bitter 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

Basic Ingredients

What you buy will depend on:

1. How much you want to spend
2. How many different types of drinks you want to make
3. How much room you have to dedicate to your bar

There are three ways to approach starting out, no matter what the answer to the above questions. The first is to drop \$1,000 and buy multiple brands of every base liquor and every liqueur you can find. I don't recommend this, even if you have the money. You'll end up with a bunch of bottles you

will never use. The second way is to select 1 to 3 drinks that you really like and expect to make often. Buy just the ingredients for those drinks. Then, after those are perfected, you can venture out and add to your repertoire. Lastly, you can spend a little more and purchase all of the popular base liquors. There is a new book out, The 12 Bottle Bar: A Dozen Bottles. Hundreds of Cocktails. A New Way to Drink by David Solmonson and Lesley Jacobs Solmonson. I have only read reviews and some excerpts, but it appears to be really good. The idea is that with a modest selection of ingredients, you can make virtually every popular cocktail. I'll come back to this.

The single most important thing that will determine the quality of your cocktails will be the ingredients. The difference between crap and premium is \$10 – \$15 per bottle. If you want to start with 3 base liquors but do not wish to spend the additional \$30 – \$45 to buy 3 premium brands, settle for 1 or 2 bottles. This includes vermouth's and liqueurs. Plan on spending \$2 – \$3 per drink when using premium liquors.

Another consideration when determining cost is the shelf life of vermouth and other fortified wines. Once opened, these deteriorate rapidly. You would not expect wine to be good after it was opened and left in the cabinet for a week. Fortified wines last longer, but only a little. Dry vermouth will last about a week refrigerated, while sweet vermouth will last considerably longer. You can try buying small bottles, but they tend to be poorer quality. Bottom line, if you like martinis, you better figure \$10-\$15/week for dry vermouth, or \$6-\$7 for poorer quality, small bottles.

Now, back to how many bottles to buy. I like the 12 bottles idea, but more as a goal rather than a start up. I suggest you start by answering the question: "Self! What do I want to make?" Then go out and buy the required ingredients. Let's say you choose old fashioned's and martinis. Pick out premium brands of gin, bourbon, bitters and vermouth. After you use

up most of a bottle, replace it with a different brand. Summer coming up? Add white rum, silver tequila and a curacao and you now can make mojitos and margaritas. You get the idea.

The price of a bottle may not indicate it's quality. If you're not sure which brands to try, do a little research. Go to web sites like <http://smallscreennetwork.com>, Liquor.com or abarabove.com. See which brands they are using in which drinks. While sometimes they are sponsored, these guys seem to only offer the best.

So, there it is. I'm not telling you what brands to buy or even what liquors to start with. It's all up to you!

Negroni

This is my personal favorite drink. I doubled down on the bitterness by adding bitters and the flamed orange zest. I serve it in a double old fashioned with an ice sphere.



- 1 1/2 oz. Plymouth Gin
- 1 1/2 oz. Campari
- 1 1/2 oz. Sweet Vermouth
- 2 Dashes Angostura Orange Bitters

- 2 Dashes Regan's Orange Bitters
- Fat Orange Zest

1. Chill an old fashioned glass with ice and water
 2. Combine all ingredients, except the zest, in a mixing glass and stir with ice
 3. Strain over fresh ice in chilled glass
 4. Flame the fat orange zest over the drink and drop it in.
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Wet (or Sweet) Martini

- 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ oz. Gin
- $\frac{1}{2}$ oz. sweet vermouth
- 2-3 drops orange bitters

1. Chill cocktail glass with ice and water
 2. Add all ingredients to shaker
 3. Shake well with ice 10 – 15 sec.
 4. Strain into chilled glass
 5. Garnish with maraschino cherry
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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
- 1/2 – 1 dash Doc Elliott's Olive Bitters to taste

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

Cheers!

Classic Martini

From the middle of the last century, the martini became basically gin or vodka on the rocks. The vermouth that originally was prominent, became a splash or even a wash. This is how to make that cocktail.



- 1 1/2 oz. Dry London gin such as Bombay Sapphire or Vodka
 - Fresh Dry Vermouth
 - An olive for garnish
1. Chill a martini glass with ice and water
 2. Fill a mixing glass with ice and add a splash of dry vermouth and swirl the glass.
 3. empty the vermouth but retain the ice.
 4. Add the Gin or Vodka and stir to chill.
 5. Strain into the chilled glass and drop in the olive.
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Dry Martini with Gin and Lillet

I decided to play with my Dry Martini. Using the St George Botanivore Gin, I substituted Lillet Blanc for the vermouth. The result is a very pleasant drink. Goes well with our Olive Poppers.



Olive Poppers

- 2 oz. St. George Botanivore Gin
- 1 oz. Lillet Blanc
- 1-2 drops *Doc Elliott's Actually Bitter Orange Bitters*
- Lemon Zest



Dry Martini
with Lillet

1. Chill a martini glass with ice and water
2. Add all ingredients, except the Lemon Zest, to a mixing

glass and stir with ice

3. Strain into chilled glass and garnish with the lemon
zest

Cheers!