

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!

Rosemary (No. 2)

I came across this drink on Pinterest. It is a beautiful cocktail. When you sip it, the first thing you note is the aroma of the oil from the rosemary, followed by the richness

of the foam. The flavor is slightly bitter orange with the rosemary enhancing the herbal tones of the Campari and Aperol. It was created by Balena's lead mixologist Natalia



Cardenas. I have altered it only slightly. I include it here because it is a perfect example of two things:

1. The use of fresh herbs in cocktails
2. Combining two similar spirits, in this case Campari and Aperol



Fresh herbs are an excellent way to underscore flavors in liqueurs and liquors. For instance, thyme goes very well in drinks containing Chartreuse or Aperol. When constructing a drink in which I'm considering fresh herbs, I will first make up the drink without herbs or garnish. Tasting at this point enables me to pick out flavors that I want to accentuate, (See note below). I can then crush the herb in my fingers and sip the drink from a shot glass. If the aroma of the herb goes with the drink, I can decide whether to just use the herb as a garnish or push it further by stirring it (a little more flavor) or shaking it (a lot more flavor) with the drink.



Combining similar spirits to achieve balance is a fairly common trick. Just take a look at some Tiki recipes with multiple rums. In this drink, Cardenas has used Campari and Aperol. Campari is bitter/herbal-fruity while Aperol is herbal-fruity/bitter. Both have flavors of orange. Combined the bitterness is lessened while the herbal notes are enriched.

Here is the recipe:

- 3/4 oz. Campari
 - 3/4 oz. Aperol
 - 1 oz. Lemon juice
 - 1/2 oz. Simple syrup
 - 1 egg white
 - 10 Rosemary sprigs
1. Combine all of the ingredients, except 1 rosemary sprig, in a shaker without ice. Shake for 10-15 sec.
 2. Add Ice cubes (not crushed ice) to the shaker and shake until chilled, about 20-30 sec.
 3. Double strain into a chilled coupe
 4. Briefly pass the remaining rosemary sprig over a flame to release the oils before dropping it onto the drink.

Cheers!

Note: The Flavor Bible by Karen Page and Andrew Dornenburg is an excellent source of flavor combinations.

Aperol Spritz



An Aperol Spritz is a popular and refreshing Italian cocktail that has gained widespread popularity, especially during the warm summer months. It is known for its vibrant orange color and light, bubbly taste. It dates back at least to the 1950's, but became increasingly popular in the 2000's

Ingredients:

- 4 $\frac{1}{2}$ oz. Champagne
- 2 $\frac{1}{2}$ oz. Aperol
- 1 oz. club soda

Directions:

1. Fill chilled cocktail glass with ice.
2. Pour champagne over ice
3. Add Aperol and club soda
4. Garnish with lime peel.

Cheers!

The Vacation

Cachaça (Ka SHAH sa) is the national beverage of Brazil. It is an agricole which is distilled from fresh sugar cane rather than molasses like rum.

- 1 1/2 oz. cachaça
- 3/4 oz. lemon juice
- 3/4 oz. Aperol
- 1/2 oz. rich simple syrup
- dash peach bitters
- one egg white

1. Chill a champagne flute with ice and water
2. Shake all ingredients with ice in a shaker
3. Strain into chilled champagne flute

I'm Not Dead Yet

- 1 1/2 oz Rye Whiskey
- 3/4 oz St. Germain Elderflower Liqueur
- 3/4 oz Aperol
- 1-2 dashes rhubarb bitters

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

Petruchio Cocktail

- 1 oz. Plymouth Gin
- 1 oz. Aperol
- $\frac{1}{2}$ oz. Lemon juice
- $\frac{1}{4}$ oz. 2:1 simple syrup
- Dash orange bitters
- 1 egg white or 3 Tbl. Pasteurized egg whites

1. Chill cocktail glass
2. Add all ingredients to a shaker and dry shake to break down egg whites
3. Add ice and shake well 10 – 15 sec.
4. Strain into chilled glass

I'm Not Dead Yet

The spice in the rye goes well with the herbal elements of the St. Germain and bitterness of the Aperol. You can cut the St. Germain down to $\frac{1}{4}$ oz, but you will need to reduce the bitters as well.

- 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ oz Rye Whiskey
- $\frac{3}{4}$ oz St. Germain Elderflower Liqueur
- $\frac{3}{4}$ oz Aperol
- 1-2 dashes rhubarb bitters