

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!

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...

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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!

**Memorial Day...Celebrating the
Red, White and Blue**



Memorial Day is the

perfect time for simple, low ABV, thirst-quenching drinks. Since beer says summer and barbecues, nothing is better than celebrating the weekend with beer cocktails. The classic is the Shandy – equal parts lemon soda and beer. But you can get really creative by just combining your spirit of choice, fruit juice, simple syrup and beer.

One of our favorite beers, Highwheel Betty, is a Kölsch style brew from San Antonio. Mexican beers are a good alternative and also Dogfish Namaste. For spirits, we use gin, vodka, tequila, and Kinsman Rakia – an apricot eau de vie.

Here's a glass lifted to all those service men and women who gave their all!

For recipes, scroll down or clink the links.

Old Glory Kinsman Grog

Old Glory Gin or Vodka Grog

Old Glory Tequila Grog

Gin and Beer Tonic



Kinsman

This cocktail is refreshing and light. The taste is apricot, lemon and beer. To create this cocktail, I tried first lemon, then lime then grapefruit juices. I put a splash of Rakia in a shot glass along with each different juice and simply tasted them. After making the choice of lemon, I added the Rakia and lemon juice to a shaker without ice. To that I added 1/4 oz simple syrup and tasted the drink. I felt it needed more simple so I added another 1/4 oz. This taste was slightly sweet – which means the finished cocktail, after chilling, will be well balanced. You can use the same methods to create cocktails with the other spirits below.

Ingredients:

- 1 1/2 oz. Rakia
- 2 oz. Fresh lemon Juice
- 1/2 oz. Simple Syrup (1/4 oz – 1 1/2 oz per your taste)
- 6+ oz. Highwheel Betty or your favorite
- Lemon wheel for garnish (Optional)

Directions:

1. Add the Rakia, lemon and simple syrup to a shaker with

- ice. Shake to chill.
2. Strain into beer glass
3. Top with beer
4. Garnish with lemon wheel



Gin or Vodka

The flavor of your beer cocktail will be significantly different depending on your choice of Gin or Vodka. Going deeper, your choice of Gin will also effect the flavor. The use of a flavored vodka will add even more layers of flavor. Whichever of these spirits you choose, the ratios of ingredients are fairly constant: 1:1 Spirit to Juice

The beer you use will effect your choice of juice and the quantity of simple syrup. Which fresh juice is a personal preference but I suggest lemon, lime or grapefruit.

Ingredients:

- 1 1/2 – 2 oz. Gin or Vodka
- 1 1/2 – 2 oz Fresh citrus juice
- 1/4 – 2 oz. Simple syrup
- 6+ oz beer
- Garnish to match your choice of juice – optional

Directions:

1. Add spirit, juice and simple syrup to a shaker with ice. Shake to chill
2. Strain into beer glass, with or without fresh ice, and top with beer
3. Garnish



Tequila

For Tequila beer drinks, we like to use lime, pineapple or grapefruit. The ratios are similar to our Kinsman cocktail. The amount of simple syrup will primarily be determined by the tartness of the juice. Generally more simple with lime and grapefruit and less to none with pineapple. If your pineapple concoction is too sweet for your taste, try using equal amounts of pineapple and lime juice.

Ingredients:

- 1 1/2 oz. Plata tequila
- 1 1/2 – 2 oz. Fresh juice
- 1/4 – 1 1/2 oz. Simple syrup
- 6+ oz beer
- Garnish to match your choice of juice – optional

Directions:

1. Add Tequila, juice and simple syrup to a shaker with ice. Shake to chill
2. Strain into beer glass and top with beer

3. Garnish

Enjoy!

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!

Christmas Libations circa 2015

We offered a number of libations this Christmas Season. A few were favorite cocktails that we rechristened with seasonal names, we added some new ones that we found, and we created a couple of original recipes. Some can be made Zero Proof so everyone can be in on the fun!

Berry Delicious

I got this idea from Porter's Fire, which is a Canadian Whiskey with "cinnamon and hints of vanilla." I haven't been able to find Porter's Fire so I used Fireball. The combination of cinnamon spice and the nutty Amaretto is

awesome.



- 3/4 oz. Fireball Whiskey
- 3/4 oz. Amaretto

1. Combine in a shot glass and serve

Blazing Prancer

If Amaretto works, why not Jägermeister? Especially if the Fireball has been barrel aged. I aged the Fireball in a small jar with a barrel stave for 2 weeks. A little clove and vanilla to go with the cinnamon blends with the herbs in the Jägermeister.

- 3/4 oz. Barrel Aged Fireball Whiskey
- 3/4 oz. Jägermeister

1. Combine in a shot glass and serve

Three Wise Men



Gold, frankincense and myrrh. Too many of these and you'll act like Larry, Moe and Curly!

- 1 1/2 oz. Ford's Gin
- 3/4 oz. Carpano Bianco Vermouth
- 1/4 oz. St. Germain Elderflower Liqueur
- Edible Gold Stars (available here) for garnish

1. Chill a cocktail glass with ice and water
2. Combine gin, vermouth and St. Germain in a mixing glass with ice and stir to chill
3. Strain into chilled cocktail glass
4. Gently float a few gold stars on the surface and serve

Elf Magic

Better than dessert—Chocolate
mint cream. (Yes, it's a
Grasshopper)



- 1 oz. Crème de Menthe
- 1 oz. Crème de Cacao
- 2 oz. Heavy Cream

1. Chill a cocktail glass with ice and water
2. Combine all ingredients in a shaker with ice and shake to chill
3. Strain into chilled cocktail glass



Frosty Night

A Holiday version of a Cosmopolitan. This cocktail is pretty and sophisticated.

- 1 ½ oz. vodka
- 1 oz. White grapefruit juice
- 1/2 oz. Cointreau
- 1/2 oz. Simple Syrup
- 4-6 fresh cranberries for garnish

1. Chill a cocktail glass with ice and water
2. Combine all ingredients, except garnish, in a shaker with ice and shake to chill
3. Strain into chilled cocktail glass
4. Either float the cranberries on the drink or skewer them on a pick.
5. Serve

Rudolph Bubbly

Even Champagne can use a little dressing up! This is from Chris Tunstall at abarabove. I am re-posting it here because making a syrup from jellied cranberry sauce is a great idea, (for other awesome ideas, you should check out their site).



- 2 oz. Cranberry Syrup – see below
- 4 – 6 oz. Champagne (or Sparkling Cider)

1. Chill a cocktail glass champagne flute with ice and water
2. Add Cranberry syrup to glass and top with Champagne or cider

Cranberry Syrup

The syrup is extremely easy. It will take about 15 minutes, including time to cool. You will need:

- 1 – 14 oz can jellied cranberry sauce
 - 2/3 cup sugar
 - 2/3 cup water
1. In a quart sized microwavable container, melt the cranberry sauce on high in 30 second intervals, stirring in between.
 2. Meanwhile, using a small sauce pan on the stove, dissolve the sugar in the water.
 3. When the the sugar is dissolved, add the melted cranberry sauce and stir to combine.
 4. Allow to cool. This will keep refrigerated in a sealed glass bottle for at least a week.

Santa Sparkle



Mint with a little sparkle! Can be Zero Proof.

- 2 oz. Crème de Menthe or Crème de Menthe syrup
- 4-6 oz. Champagne or Sparkling Grape Juice
- Chill a cocktail glass champagne flute with ice and water
- Add Crème de Menthe to glass and top with Champagne or Grape Juice

Holly Leaf

Creamy mint richness.



- 1 oz. Crème de Menthe or Crème de Menthe syrup
- 2 oz. Heavy Cream

1. Chill a cocktail glass with ice and water
2. Combine all ingredients in a shaker with ice and shake to chill
3. Strain into chilled cocktail glass

Cheers!

A Tonic Bar for Your Next Party



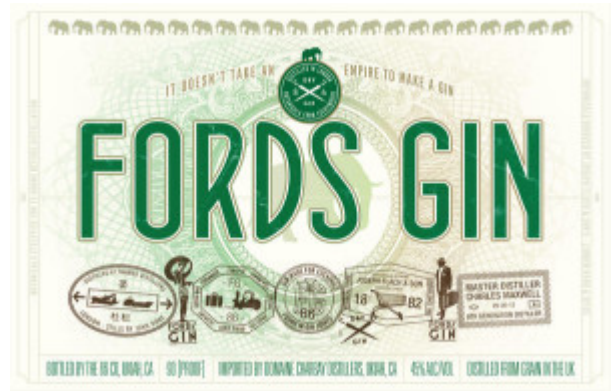
As busy host/hostess, anytime you can offer a fun, engaging, self-serve cocktail bar, expect your guests to rave about your entertaining prowess! A tonic bar is a simple way to allow your guests open access to create their own drinks while you get to enjoy your party too. Its versatility works great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

Tonic Syrup: for Gin, Vodka or Rum and Tonics

Making tonic water at home and in bars became a widespread fashion in the early 2000's. An internet search for 'DIY tonic water' will result in a number of recipes. Jeffrey Morgenthaler posted a recipe in 2008, (found [here](#)), which became one of the most popular. Since then, he has published a newer version in his book, *The Bar Book: Elements of Cocktail Technique* . I like his new version, which can be found on line [here](#), because he separates the aromatics from the quinine. This lends itself to easy modification. My recipe for tonic syrup for use with gin differs only slightly from his.

What has become apparent over the last decade is that

Making tonic water at home is dangerous!

Tonic water is primarily carbonated water and quinine. Quinine is most famous for treating the symptoms of malaria. Mixing gin and quinine dates to the British in various malaria prone climes

where soldiers used gin to make the bitter quinine more palatable. In those days, quinine was extracted from cinchona bark in a process not unlike making tea. Since World War II, quinine has been manufactured as a white powder formed into pills. You can purchase quinine pills over the internet and dissolve them to use in tonic water. This is a bad idea. It would be very easy to poison yourself and guests with too much quinine. The recipes noted above and the ones you will find on the internet will use cinchona bark as the British did. The problem is that you can't know how much quinine is extracted from the cinchona bark. Many people have developed *cinchonism*, the symptoms of quinine poisoning, from drinking DIY tonic water. These symptoms include flushed and sweaty skin, ringing in the ears, abdominal pain, nausea, vomiting, diarrhea, headaches, rash, high pitched hearing loss and dizziness. Larger doses can result in deafness, blindness, somnolence, shock, cardiac arrhythmias and death. All of these symptoms will go away when the quinine is metabolized. Well, except the death part.

These DIY tonic waters can be delicious. The problem is the quinine. So why not leave out the cinchona bark and, thus, the quinine. Make the syrup but, instead of adding carbonated water, add commercial tonic water!

I had an opportunity to discuss Gin and Tonics with Jason Kosmas, Co-founder of The 86 Company, (Ford's Gin among others), Co-founder of Employees Only and Co-author of Speak Easy. His take on tonic syrups is to include citrus, coriander and herbs – even herbal tea. Keep in mind that the base spirit you choose will lend itself to various flavors. As Jason pointed out – read the back label for flavor ideas. For syrup used in Rum and Tonics, he would add lime, pineapple, cinnamon and vanilla. (The rest of the interview centered on Gin Tonics and will be included in a future post)



These days, you are not limited to buying tonic water in 1 liter bottles. There are a number of premium tonic waters available such as Fever Tree and Q Tonic. The primary idea of making your own tonic syrup is to customize it for various drinks. These recipes will take about 15 minutes of active and 45 minutes of inactive time.

The only equipment you will need that is slightly out of the ordinary is a digital food or postage scale. Only the precise weight of ingredients ensures that your syrup will be consistent from one batch to the next.

For the Quinine Tincture:

We substitute Luxardo Bianco Bitters

For the aromatic syrup for gin or vodka and tonics:



- 20 gr. citric acid
- 10 gr. whole gentian root
- 1 gr. coriander
- 1 gr. Ceylon soft-stick cinnamon, broken into small pieces
- 30 gr. lemon peel
- 30 gr. grapefruit peel
- 400 gr. sugar
- 500 ml. water
- 2 – 3 to 4 inch sprigs of fresh lavender (optional)
- 1 1/2 oz Luxardo Bianco Bitters



1. Combine all of the ingredients, except the lavender and bitters, in a sauce pan and bring to a boil.
2. Reduce the heat, cover and simmer for 20 minutes
3. Remove from the heat, add the fresh lavender and allow to cool.
4. Strain through a fine mesh strainer.
5. Add the Luxardo Bianco Bitters and store, refrigerated, in a seal-able bottle or jar. It will keep 3-4 weeks before it turns cloudy.

For the aromatic syrup for rum and tonics:

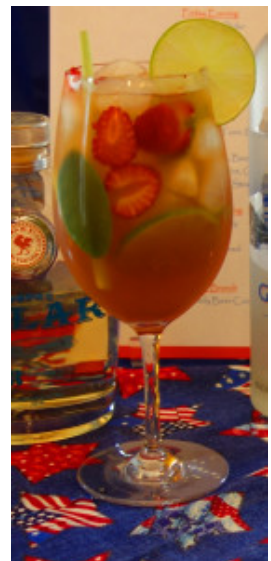


- 20 gr. citric acid
- 10 gr. whole gentian root
- 1 gr. Star Anise
- 2 gr. Ceylon soft-stick cinnamon, broken into small pieces
- 3 Kaffir Lime leaves (Optional – available at Asian Markets)
- 10 gr. lemon peel
- 50 gr. Lime peel
- 400 gr. Turbinado sugar
- 500 ml. water
- 1 1/2 oz Luxardo Bianco Bitters

1. Combine all of the ingredients, except the bitters, in a sauce pan and bring to a boil.
2. Reduce the heat, cover and simmer for 20 minutes
3. Remove from the heat and allow to cool.
4. Strain through a fine mesh strainer.
5. Add the Luxardo Bianco Bitters and store, refrigerated, in a seal-able bottle or jar. It will keep 3-4 weeks before it turns cloudy.

Gin, Rum or Vodka Tonics

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



Rum & Tonic

Method #1

1. Add large 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 Syrup followed by the tonic water.
5. Express any citrus peels and serve

Method #2

1. Fill your large wine glass with large ice and garnish
2. Add the remaining ingredients to a mixing glass with ice and stir

3. Strain into your prepared glass
4. Express any citrus peels and serve

Suggested Garnishes:

You should let your imagination run with the garnishes.

Gin or Vodka

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

Rum

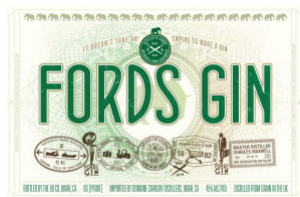
- Lemon & Lime Wheels
- Lemon & Lime Peels
- Sliced Berries
- Kaffir Lime Leaves
- Fresh Cilantro
- Fresh Pineapple
- Corriander
- Fresh Hibiscus Flowers
- Lemon Grass



G-n-Tini



Here is a cocktail that uses Tonic Syrup directly in the drink.



- 1 1/2 oz. Fords Gin
 - 1/2 oz. Dolin Sweet Vermouth
 - 1/2 oz. Tonic Syrup for Gin
 - Grapefruit peel for garnish
1. Stir the first three ingredients in a mixing glass with ice to chill
 2. Strain into a chilled coup
 3. Express the grapefruit peel over the drink and float the peel

Cheers!

Ciroc Fizz

Our daughter was gifted with a bottle of Ciroc Red Berry Vodka at a Christmas Party and asked me to use it to create a cocktail. I like champagne cocktails and 'tis the season. So this is a riff



on the French 75.



- 1/2 oz. Ciroc Red Berry Vodka
- 1/2 oz. St. Germain Elderflower Liqueur
- 1 oz. Fresh lemon juice
- 1 1/2 oz. Simple syrup
- Chilled prosecco or champagne

- Sprig of fresh thyme for garnish
1. Combine first four ingredients in a shaker with ice and shake to chill
 2. Strain into chilled champagne flute and top with the prosecco
 3. Smack the thyme sprig in your hands to release the oils then float it in the drink.

Cheers!

Bloody Mary Oyster Shooters

Oyster shooters are simply awesome. They are also unusual enough to impress your guests. While there are those who don't care for them, most people like oysters. Plus, you'll find a number of your friends haven't tried them – raw anyway. So, plunge in!

While fresh shucked oysters are the best, the necessity of shucking is frequently the barrier that prevents the busy host from serving them. Enter the fresh, pasteurized variety, (and exit the oyster aficionado). These are probably better for cooking, but work quite well in shooters. The containers come in a



variety of sizes, as will the oysters. You may want to cut particularly large oysters in half, and double up the small ones.

To build multiple shots, I suggest that you line up the glasses and make them assembly line fashion. Start with an oyster in each glass followed by the next ingredient, in the order listed.

- 1 oyster
 - 2 tsp. Zing Zang (or other Bloody Mary mix)
 - 1/8 tsp. Horseradish
 - 1/8 tsp. Worcestershire sauce
 - 4 drops hot sauce
 - 1/4 oz. Lemon juice
 - 1/4 oz. Chilled Cinco Vodka
1. Chill vodka in the refrigerator for several hours or “freeze” in the freezer for an hour. See note below.
 2. Line up shot glasses and place an oyster in each
 3. Add the remaining ingredients, in the order above, to each glass
 4. Serve immediately

Note: Vodka will not actually freeze, so the bottle won't break if you leave it in the freezer. Frozen vodka has a silky mouth feel.

Cheers!

Christmas Cocktails

Christmas is upon us. In other words, it's that time of year when we find ourselves faced with last minute entertaining "opportunities!"

You don't have to reinvent the cocktail to provide your guests with memorable Holiday themed libations. Simply use great existing recipes and give them festive names. The following examples are easy to make using common ingredients:



Christmas Punk from Imbibe Magazine

1. Conquistador Punch from Imbibe Magazine
2. Christmas Punk also from Imbibe Magazine
3. Snow Drift from Cinco Vodka
4. Midori Sour

Krampus Dare – aka Conquistador Punch

This is a punch, which means that you can make it as a single cocktail or in small to large batches. While definitely a tequila drink, it is balanced by the brightness of the citrus and mellowed by the sherry.



The recipe is:

- 3 parts Reposado Tequila
- 1 1/2 part Sherry
- 1 1/2 part Lime juice
- 1 1/2 part Orange Juice
- 1 part simple syrup

For 2 single drinks, think ounces for parts and shake all ingredients with ice and strain into chilled cocktail glasses. Garnish with an orange peel.

For a pitcher, combine ingredients with ice and stir to chill. Strain into a pitcher and refrigerate. Serve in chilled cocktail glasses and garnish with fat orange peels.

For a punch bowl, combine ingredients with ice cubes and stir to chill. When chilled, remove ice cubes and replace them with a large piece of ice. Add slices of limes and oranges and ladle into cups.

St. Nickolas Punch aka Christmas Punk



Left to Right St. Nicholas
Punch and Krampus Dare

This drink combines apple and ginger with the richness of port and the spice of the bitters.

- 2 oz. Applejack
 - 1 oz. Domaine de Canton
 - 3/4 oz. Port
 - 3 dashes Fees Brothers Whiskey Barrel Aged Bitters
 - Long Lemon peel for garnish
1. Combine all ingredients except the garnish in a mixing glass with ice.
 2. Strain into a chilled cocktail glass
 3. Garnish with the lemon peel



Snow Drift

This is a pretty drink reminiscent of eggnog with a hint of chocolate.

- 2 oz. Chilled Vodka
 - 3/4 oz. Cointreau
 - 1 oz. White Creme de Cacao
 - 2 oz. Heavy Cream
 - Grated white chocolate for garnish
1. Combine the ingredients except the garnish in a shaker without ice. Shake for 30 seconds.
 2. Add ice and shake until well chilled
 3. Strain into a chilled cocktail or martini glass and garnish with the chocolate

Christmas Kiss aka Midori Sour

Bright green always works for the Holidays. This sweet and sour drink is always a hit with the sweet drink crowd.



- 2 oz. Midori
 - 2 oz. Fresh lemon juice
 - 1 oz. simple syrup
 - Brandied cherry for garnish.
1. Combine all ingredients except the cherry in a shaker with ice. Shake until well chilled.
 2. Strain into a chilled martini glass and drop in the cherry.

Remember to use premium ingredients and fresh juices.

Cheers!