

Mixology GUIDE



Savor the Flavor

While most people think of sweet, fruity cocktails, there's a world of savory drinks just waiting to be explored.

Think classic flavors like the dirty martini and bloody mary, then keep going to bacon, dark chocolate, salt and other bold, rich tastes. Savory cocktails can come from savory ingredients such as those mentioned above, or from savory alcohols, such as a smoky Scotch.

CHOOSING THE BOOZE

Pick deep flavors of Scotch or gin, or the neutral burn of vodka. Get off the beaten path with aquavit, a Scandinavian drink flavored with caraway or dill; moonshine; mezcal; and herbal schnapps. Also think of drier wines, such as sherry, and beer cocktails, which lend themselves nicely to salty drinks. Wander the aisles of your favorite local liquor store and don't be afraid to ask what liquor might best complement the flavors you want to use.

WASH IT

Hot on the cocktail scene is fat-washing, a technique that is perfect for adding a savory punch to your drink. Add a liquid such as bacon fat or melted butter to a spirit at

room temperature. Let it sit for a few hours, then chill it until the fat solidifies and can be removed. The alcohol retains the flavor of the fat. Basically, it's a savory, fat-based infusion for your liquor.

GO HERBAL

Another way to add savory to your cocktail is to add an herb or two. Rosemary is a classic, and with its eye-catching spears, is a great garnish. Mint also is popular, but don't be afraid to venture into other tastes such as basil, coriander, lavender, sage and thyme. Packets of fresh herbs are usually found in the fresh produce section of your grocery store. Herbs can be infused in your alcohol or muddled, depending on the herb you want to use.

EAT THE GARNISH

Edible garnishes are on trend and also play well with savory cocktails. Try the obvious crisp bacon, briny olive or pickle, but bear in mind that edible garnishes should play well with the drink they accent.



On the Rocks

Everyone who's passed elementary science can tell you ice is frozen water. But you may not think about what happens when that cube hits your drink. As it melts, ice releases its water back into your glass and can ruin what was a fine cocktail or a perfect Scotch.

ICE, ICE BABY

Behind the bar, every type of ice has a purpose. Cubes are for shaking — and a good, thorough shake should make your cubes equally rounded on the edges; spheres or big cubes for a finished drink; shaved ice or pebbles for more tropical sips, such as daiquiris. And pay attention to what you put in your tray. If your tap water has a funny taste, so will your handcrafted cocktail or your pricey aged bourbon. Make your ice from the water you'd drink, be it straight out of the tap, filtered or bottled.

ICE THAT'S NOT

For drinks typically served neat, you can purchase cubes or stones that will keep your drink chilled without all that extra water. Check your local grocer, liquor store or high-end kitchen store for a selection of ice made from metal, rock or other materials designed to keep your drink cold without being wet. While you're there, you can check out special ice trays for spears of ice, giant cubes for bowls of punches, small cubes for shaking and big cubes for sipping, and many other options for keeping your drink at just the right temp.

Some recipes also can allow for the use of frozen fruit to keep your drink cold. Consult your recipe. If it calls for a fruit such as strawberries or blue-



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berries, pop some in the freezer to use as makeshift cubes. Just bear in mind they won't keep your beverage as chilly as traditional cubes; think about refrigerat-

erating before pouring.

PLANTER'S PUNCH

3 ounces dark rum
3/4 ounce fresh lime juice

1 ounce simple syrup
1 bar spoon Grenadine
3 dashes Angostura bitters
Splash soda water
Mint, for garnish

1. Add all ingredients to a shaker with cubed ice and shake vigorously.
2. Strain into a Collins glass over crushed ice. Splash with soda water. Garnish with fresh mint sprig.

Classic Comebacks

Like much of boozy history, the origin of the cocktail is a bit muddled. Generally speaking, a cocktail is a beverage that contains an alcohol, a sweet flavor and a bitter or citrus flavor.

The use of the word cocktail referring to a beverage starts around the end of the 18th and beginning of the 19th centuries, and there are a few classic drinks that are almost as old.

OLD FASHIONED

Maybe the granddaddy of them all, the Old Fashioned is made from whiskey and sugar muddled with bitters and served over ice in a short, round tumbler, often called an Old Fashioned glass after the drink. The term Old Fashioned as referring to a whiskey drink is said to have been coined in a Louisville, Kentucky, gentlemen's club founded in 1881.

4 dashes Angostura bitters
1 teaspoon sugar
2 orange wheels
2 maraschino cherries
Splash club soda
2 ounces bourbon

1. Muddle the bitters, sugar, orange wheel, cherry and soda in an Old Fashioned glass.



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2. Remove the orange, add bourbon and fill with ice. Garnish with a fresh orange wheel and cherry.

FRENCH 75

The 75 is simplicity itself: champagne, sugar, lemon juice. It developed around World War I, with the first recorded mention of it appearing in 1922's Harry's ABC of Mixing Cocktails by Harry MacElhone. Said to have a kick like a French

75mm gun, it's a glamorous drink and appears in the movie Casablanca.

1/2 ounce lemon juice
1/2 ounce simple syrup
1 ounce gin
3 ounces Champagne
Lemon twist, for garnish

1. Add all the ingredients except the last two to a shaker and fill with ice.
2. Shake well and strain into a Champagne flute. Garnish with twist.

MARTINI

While the origins of the martini could go back to 1860s Italy and a brand of vermouth, or to a San Francisco hotel, Prohibition made the cocktail a classic. The popularity and availability of bathtub gin made the dry martini the cocktail in the United States. A martini is made with gin and dry vermouth and garnished with an olive or a lemon twist. Dirty martinis have olive brine

added to the mixture. Martinis can also be made with vodka, not gin, and shaken, not stirred. Right, Mr. Bond?

2 1/2 ounces gin
1/2 ounce dry vermouth
Dash orange bitters
Lemon twist, for garnish

1. Add all the ingredients to a mixing glass and fill with ice. Stir until very cold.
2. Strain into a chilled martini glass. Garnish with a lemon twist.



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What's in the Bottle: Gin

Like so many things that make us feel good, gin started out as a medicine derived from juniper berries. In the mid-17th century, distillations of spirit or wine with juniper and other botanicals were sold in pharmacies purporting to cure what ails you, including the kidneys, lumbago, gallstones and gout.

Gin is a shortened form of the old English genever, which is related to the Dutch jenever and French genièvre. All ultimately come from juniperus, the Latin word for juniper.

HOW IT'S MADE

Gin is made by adding juniper or other natural flavorings to a neutral spirit, keeping juniper

per the predominant flavor. Distilled gin is made by distilling alcohol with juniper and other botanicals, as long as juniper still rules the roost. London gin is distilled gin that's very dry with few added sweeteners. For all types of gin, juniper must be the predominant flavor, no matter what other botanicals are used.

Besides juniper, other popular botanicals and flavors include citrus, anise, cinnamon, saffron, coriander and nutmeg.

PHRASEOLOGY

Maybe because of its age, gin lends itself to quite a few popular phrases in the English language. The term Dutch courage is believed to have come from

English soldiers sipping genever for its calming effects before the defense of Antwerp in 1585. Gin has also lent itself to several negative terms, like gin mills or gin joints for disreputable bars, and gin soaked to refer to a drunk. But a gin palace is a luxurious bar or pleasure boat, and the game of gin is a faster version of the card game rummy.

NEGRONI

1 ounce campari
1 ounce gin
1 ounce sweet vermouth
Orange wheel, for garnish

- Add all ingredients to an Old Fashioned glass and fill with ice. Stir until cold, then garnish with orange.

What's in the Bottle: Vodka

Vodka forms the base of some of our best-known drinks, such as the screwdriver, the Moscow mule or the bloody mary.

Other than "Russia, maybe," most of us can't tell you where it comes from, however.

HOW IT'S MADE

The history of vodka is as fuzzy as your head after a night of drinking the cheap stuff. Many believe it is a descendant of Mediterranean aqua vitae (water of life) brought north by traders to colder climes like Russia and Poland. A universal truth, though, is that vodka is made from fermented cereal grains or potatoes rather than grapes, which are less apt to grow farther north. Since the late 19th century, vodka around the world has been mandated to be more or less 80 proof and carries a signature burn as it goes down.

Vodka is the national drink of Russia and is present on the table at many family meals, but particularly at special occasions. It is traditionally taken straight and chased by a salt herring, a pickle (mushroom or cucumber), or a piece of rye bread with butter. Becoming drunk from vodka is considered rude and a sign of poor character.

FILTERING AND FLAVORING

A hallmark of vodka production is the use of filtration, either in the still during distillation or afterward, to remove

excess flavors and substances. Many vodkas will refer to the number of times it's filtered on the label. In traditional vodka-making countries, however, many distillers prefer a precise, methodical distillation to filtering. Either process should result in a clean, fiery drink.

Vodka also can be flavored by infusion. In Russia, pertsovka, vodka flavored with honey and pepper, is a popular drink, while in Poland, a honeyed vodka called krupnik is popular. Vodka's neutral palate — except the white-hot burn of ethyl alcohol — easily takes the flavor of herbs, spices and fruits. Today's shelves groan with endless bottles of flavors, including raspberry, vanilla, chocolate, grapefruit and even bacon.

BLOODY MARY

1 1/2 parts quality vodka
4 parts tomato juice
1/4 part Worcestershire sauce
1/4 part lemon juice
Hot sauce, to taste
Black or red pepper, to taste
Salt, to taste
Garnishes: Traditional celery, or go big with bacon, pickled okra, olives, and more.

Stir all ingredients together in a highball glass. Add ice. Go to town on garnishes. The best bloodies are a portable, vodka-and-tomato drenched breakfast.


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What's in the Bottle: Rum

As the sugar craze swept Europe in the 18th century, Caribbean planters found themselves with a lot of byproducts on their hands. Specifically, molasses, the thick, dark brown syrup that results from the sugar refining process. Slaves on those Caribbean plantations found they could ferment the molasses into a drink, and rum was born.

HOW IT'S MADE

Today's rum starts with that same fermented molasses, but it's now distilled and filtered before being aged in oak barrels and blended. There are various grades of rum: light rums used in cocktails; golden or dark rums that can be consumed neat, on the rocks, or in cooking; and premium rums, meant to be drank neat or over ice. Rums are usually 80 proof, but some can run higher, such as the potent Bacardi 151. Spiced rums are flavored with cinnamon, anise and other spices.

YOU'RE IN THE NAVY NOW

Rum has a long and colorful history with various naval forces, particularly Britain's Royal Navy. In 1655, the British captured the island of Jamaica and its verdant sugar fields. With so much stock on hand, the British sailor's daily ration of booze switched from French brandy to rum varying from 95 proof to 114 proof. It was originally given neat or mixed with lime juice, but it began being watered around 1740 into the mixture known as grog. The Royal Navy continued to give its sailors a daily rum ration, or tot, until 1970.

DARK 'N' STORMY

2 ounces dark rum
5 ounces ginger beer
Splash of lime juice
Lime wedge, for garnish

1. Pour the rum over ice in a highball glass. Add the ginger beer and lime juice. Garnish with the lime wedge.

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Veg Out

Eating your vegetables is never so easy as it is with a hearty side of vodka.

Vegetables, like fruit, can be a great cocktail companion. Think beyond the sad celery stick, grab a basket and get to your local grocer to make a trendy new drink.

LOCAL + SEASONAL = FRESH

The number one rule when dealing with any produce is to think seasonally and locally.

Grab your local grocer and ask them to show you what is in season and what was grown around your area. The closer the farmer, the fresher the produce. When you get your haul home, remember to give them all a good wash before storing them. Think about the flavors that pair well in the kitchen before making your vegetable cock-

tail. In this case, it helps to think of your drink as more of a dish.

GET SHRUBBY

A shrub is a cocktail that includes a vinegared syrup with spirits, water or carbonated water. The syrup is made often infused with juice, herbs and spices and can also be called shrub or drinking vinegar. We'll call it the latter for clarity's sake. Popular during America's colonial era, shrubs are seeing a comeback, espe-

cially when paired with fresh vegetable juice. The word shrub comes from the Arabic word shurb, meaning to drink.

To make your drinking vinegar, take any regular vinegar and infuse with fruit, vegetables or herbs for anywhere from 1-30 days. Shake the mixture often. You can also choose to heat the vinegar before pouring it over the botanicals, but be careful not to let it boil. Add sugar to the vinegar to create a syrup, and viola, you're done.

A GROUP OF GREEN GODDESSES

4.5 parts fresh cucumber
2 parts fresh lime
0.15 parts fresh basil
1.5 parts simple syrup
10 parts crushed ice
Basil leaves, for garnish
Salt and pepper, for rimming glasses

1. Blend all ingredients together. Pour through a sieve into an airtight bottle and chill in fridge.
2. Rim glasses with salt and pepper. Pour cucumber juice over ice, add a measure of gin and garnish with basil leaf.