

imbi



ELEMENTS

STRANGE FRUIT

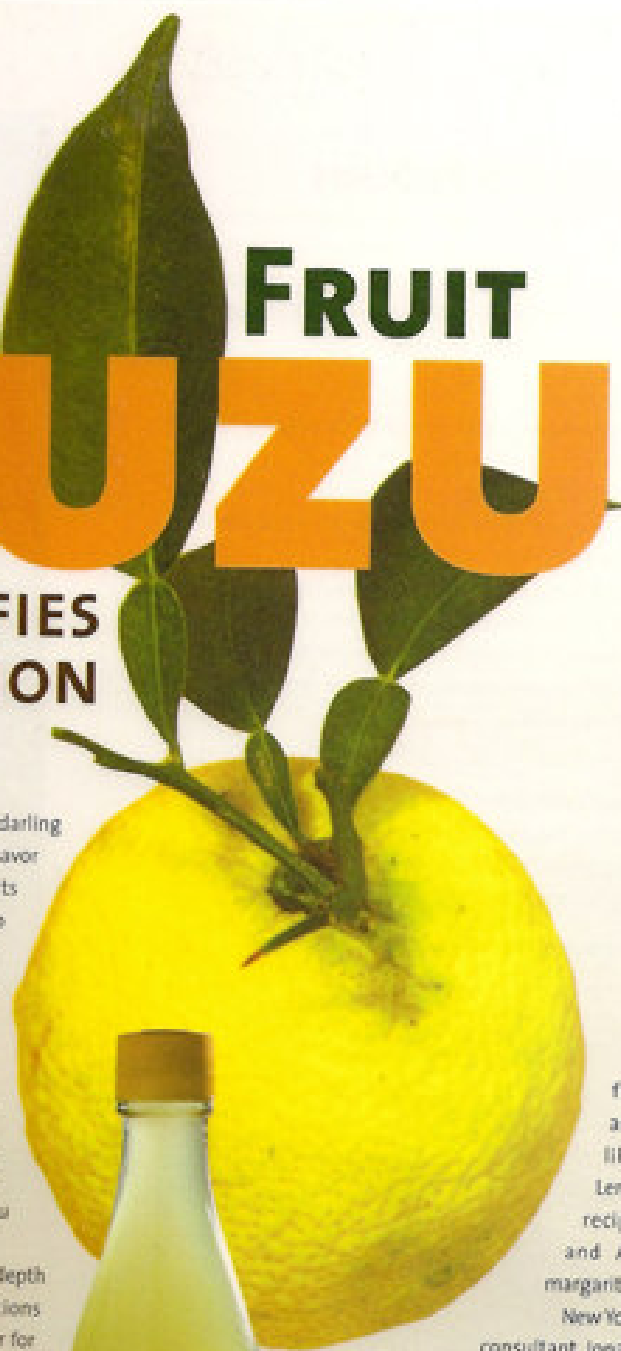
YUZU

DEFIES DESCRIPTION

YUZU, the Japanese fruit that's becoming the darling of ambitious cocktailers, has a distinctly Asian flavor that's difficult to pin down. Chefs and mixologists love the tart citrus fruit—which looks similar to a tangerine—for its exotic complexity but, when pressed, their flavor descriptions are as elusive as the fruit itself. "Sweeter than a lemon but more tart than an orange," one might say, or, "like a cross between a Meyer lemon and a tangerine," or, "as tart as a lime but with lemon-like flavor," or even, "sort of like a mandarin orange or a blood orange, with a little bit of grapefruit in there too." In other words, if you don't already know what yuzu tastes like, you'll just have to see for yourself.

"Yuzu adds an extra level of sophistication or depth [to drinks]," says Micah Tell, who oversees operations at Ponzu in San Francisco, where customers clamor for cocktails like the Sultana (yuzu juice and fresh mint, shaken with Stolichnoff vanilla vodka and served up). "By itself, yuzu's very tart—you wouldn't want to drink it [straight]. But it goes perfect with vodka. We mix it with ginger juice a lot."

A common ingredient in Japanese cooking, central to popular dishes like the omnipresent ponzu sauce, yuzu is prized mainly for its potent zest. Chefs like James Beard winner Hiro Sone of the Napa Valley restaurant Terra have been painstakingly grating



fragrance yuzu adds to drinks like the Yuzu Lemon Drop (see recipe, at right) and Ame's house margarita.

New York City cocktail consultant Jonathan Pogash, who tends bar at Flatiron Lounge and Bookmarks Lounge at the Library Hotel, likes to pair yuzu with sake. "Yuzu adds a nice Asian flare to cocktails," he says. "It's very tangy." One Japanese distiller is even using it to make dessert wine. Ponzu serves Kiuchi Brewery's yuzu wine by the glass, and Sone adds a splash of the sake-like wine to his lemon drop.

Yuzu is a wintertime fruit, available fresh at Asian groceries and some farmers markets.

YUZU LEMON DROP

Created by Hiro Sone

1 oz. citrus vodka
1 oz. yuzu juice
Splash of Cointreau
Splash of Kiuchi Brewery
yuzu wine
Splash of simple syrup
ice
Sugar and yuzu juice for rim
Tools: shaker, strainer
Glass: cocktail

Rim the cocktail glass with yuzu juice and sugar. Shake the ingredients with ice, then strain into the glass.

ASIAN STAR

Created by Jonathan Pogach

1.5 oz. Wokka Saki vodka
1/2 oz. yuzu juice
1 tsp. sugar
3 small slices fresh ginger
1/2 oz. simple syrup
Moët & Chandon White
Star champagne
ice
Tools: muddler, shaker, strainer
Glass: highball
Garnish: skewered fresh lychee

Muddle the yuzu juice, simple syrup, sugar and ginger in a mixing glass. Add the ice and the Wokka Saki. Shake and strain into an ice-filled highball glass. Top off with the champagne. Garnish.

YUZU COSMO

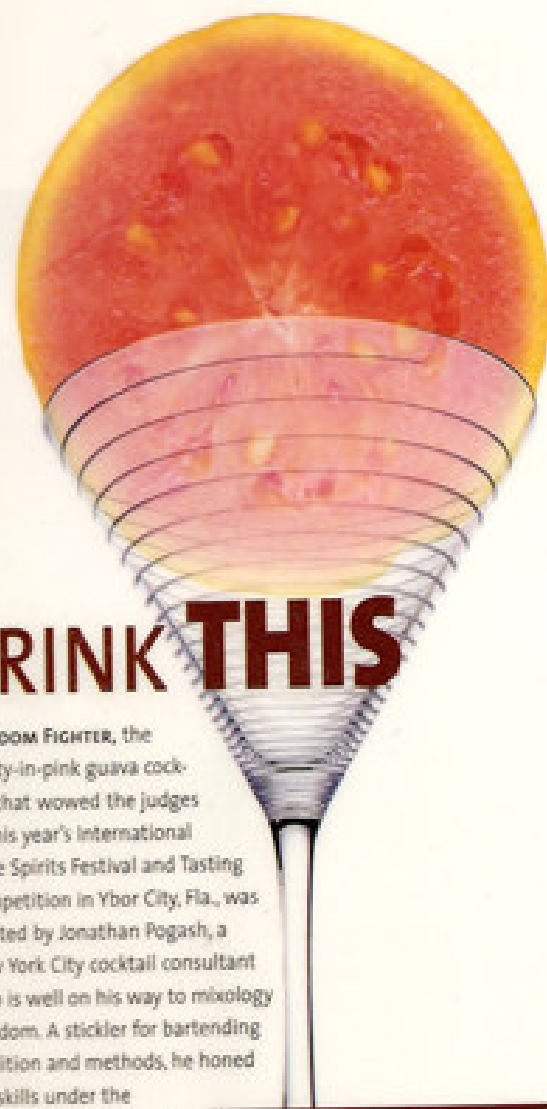
Created by Jonathan Pogach

1.5 oz. Belvedere Citrus vodka
1/2 oz. Grand Marnier
1/2 oz. yuzu juice
1/2 oz. simple syrup
Splash of cranberry juice
ice
Tools: Boston shaker (a two-piece shaker without a built-in strainer), strainer
Glass: cocktail
Garnish: lime wedge

Shake ingredients in a Boston shaker and strain into a chilled cocktail glass. Garnish.



IMMEDIATE



DRINK THIS

FREEDOM FIGHTER, the pretty-in-pink guava cocktail that wowed the judges at this year's International Cane Spirits Festival and Tasting Competition in Ybor City, Fla., was created by Jonathan Pogash, a New York City cocktail consultant who is well on his way to mixology stardom. A stickler for bartending tradition and methods, he honed his skills under the wings of renowned cocktailian brothers Stefan and Albert Trummer and master mixologist Gary Regan. He pours cocktails at Julie Reiner's celebrated Flatiron Lounge and builds drinks at Bookmarks Lounge at the Library Hotel and World Bar at the Trump World Tower.

Freedom Fighter

2 oz. 10 Cane Rum
1 oz. Mira guava nectar
1 Tbsp. honey syrup (equal parts liquefied honey and hot water, stirred together)
1 Tbsp. fresh lime juice
Ice
Tools: pan for making honey syrup; shaker; strainer
Glass: cocktail, chilled
Garnish: sugar cane stick and a dried star anise

Shake all ingredients in a