

Cheers

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Taste the Difference



● Scott Beattie of Cyrus (above) prepares a Charentes Sidécar. The Southern Manhattan involves Southern Comfort (top right); the Pampolitan (opposite page) introduces Pama Pomegranate Liqueur into the Cosmo.

specialty Manhattan featuring Tuaca Liqueur, sweet vermouth and Jack Daniel's Tennessee Whiskey. On the other side of the U.S., the staff at Manhattan's Stone Rose Lounge is equally passionate about its Midnight Manhattan, devised with Grand Marnier, Woodford Reserve Bourbon, white cranberry juice and a splash of sour mix.

Perched atop the New York's Library Hotel is one of the city's genuinely special destination venues: Bookmark's Rooftop Lounge and Terrace. The impeccably appointed lounge lives and breathes in rarified fresh air, a condition that seems to set the tone for the entire experience. It's there that master mixologist Jonathan Pogash plies his craft. Among his creative repertoire is the Tennessee Williams, an elegant variation of the Manhattan made with Southern Comfort, dry vermouth, orange bitters and a splash of pineapple juice.

The Savoy Cucina, meanwhile, promotes a reprise of the Bees Knees, only this version of the cocktail is concocted with Italian limoncello liqueur, Jim Beam's Knob Creek Bourbon and a few drops of honey. It eloquently illustrates the fact that bourbon loves the flavor of lemon, and vice versa.

Among time-tested variations of the cocktail still in the mainstream is the New Orleans Manhattan, prepared by first coating the inside of the mixing glass with Frangelico. Any excess is discarded before adding the sweet vermouth and premium bourbon. The recipe for the venerable Waldorf Manhattan calls for a splash of Pernod, bitters, sweet vermouth and French white liqueur. Manhattan



tail glass and topped with a thin layer of cherry foam and thin segments of citrus.

The crowning touch on the cocktail is the cherry foam. It is made with real cherry juice, gelatin and Luxardo Maraschino, which are heated together in a saucepan. The contents are chilled down and Thai coconut milk is whisked into the compound. It is then transferred to a whipped cream canister, charged with CO2 and refrigerated. It should be ready for the public in about 30 minutes.

MAXED-OUT MOJITOS

No cocktail is safe from liqueur-happy mixologists and we are all the better for it. The Mojito has captured the collec-

You Say Liqueur, I Say Cordial...

While the term liqueur is often thought to refer to imports and cordials to refer to American products, the terms are actually interchangeable. Liqueurs are spirits that contain at least 2.5 percent sugar by weight, but many exceed 35 percent. Produced by mixing various spirits—ranging from brandy to gin—with natural flavoring ingredients or extracts of items such as fruit, berries, seeds, roots and herbs, as well as bark, peels and juices, liqueurs deliver big on flavor.

The combination of natural ingredients and sweetness make liqueurs perfect digestives, but their use has certainly expanded from the after-dinner delight. Today, liqueurs are crucial components in unique cocktails.

Meanwhile, the Watermelon Mojito is one of the star attractions at The Carnegie Club in Manhattan's CitySpire Center. Made with Ketel One Vodka and Marie Brizard Watermelon Liqueur, the drink is as attractive as it is refreshing. Nearby at the ultra-swank Campbell Apartment in Grand Central Terminal, the specialty is the Robber Baron Mojito, a lively concoction crafted with Midori Liqueur, Grey Goose Vodka, muddled limes and spearmint.

In Houston, Rickshaw's Pomegranate Mojito is a superb example of inspired mixology. The recipe begins with muddling fresh mango, mint leaves, fresh lime juice and simple syrup. Add in equal parts of PAMA and 10 Cane Rum from Trinidad, and then finish the cocktail with a splash of club soda and a pomegranate wedge garnish.

Another unconventional Mojito masterpiece hails from Backstreet Cafe, a

classy American bistro in Houston. The Prickly Pear Mexican Mojito is an altogether luscious drink made with Coin-treau, the 100 percent agave El Tesoro Silver Tequila, lime juice and fresh prickly pear juice.

Incorporating liqueurs can also add visual appeal. Located 25 minutes west of downtown Chicago, Courtright's is a four-star restaurant situated on two acres of woodland preserve. In addition to the singularly breathtaking setting guests can enjoy the Chateau Mojito. Devised by resident mixologist Mario Recio, the cocktail is an attention grabbing combination of blue curacao, Bacardi Limon, sour mix, muddled lime and sugar.

The days when liqueurs were popularly served as postprandial digestives have largely come and gone. But their significance behind the bar has never been more greatly felt than today. Thanks to distillers' stretching their own imaginations and tapping exotic fruit, berries, unique herbs or flowers and other intriguing natural ingredients and flavors to serve as the basis for new liqueurs, it is a category that has reinvented itself, thus enabling mixologists to constantly reinvent the cocktail. ●

Robert Plotkin is a judge at the San Francisco World Spirits Competition and the author of numerous books including the 5th edition of The Bartenders Companion: The Original Guide to American Cocktails and Drinks. He can be reached at BarMedia, 1-800-421-7179, or e-mail him at robert@barmedia.com.



Nattahnam

A favorite at Indigo in Honolulu, Hawaii, this drink was created by Jason Castle and Tim Skelton.

Cocktail glass, chilled
3 oz. Jack Daniels
½ oz. Tuaca Liqueur
½ oz. sweet vermouth

Pour ingredients into iced mixing glass. Shake and strain into chilled cocktail glass. Garnish with cherry.

Kaffir Key Lime Martini

This specialty of Rosemary's Restaurant, Las Vegas, was crafted by Michael Shetler and Bernice Matola.

1 ½ oz. KeKe Beach
Key Lime Liqueur
1 ¼ oz. Stolli Vanil Vodka
¾ oz. Hangar One Kaffir Lime Vodka
½ oz. Cuarenta y Tres Liqueur
¼ oz. freshly squeezed lime juice
½ oz. heavy cream

Pour ingredients into an iced mixing glass. Shake and strain. Rim glass with crushed graham cracker crust and garnish with lime wheel.

Tennessee Williams

Created by Jonathan Pogash at Bookmark's Rooftop Lounge, New York City.

1 ½ oz. Southern Comfort
½ oz. Dry Vermouth
2-3 dashes orange bitters
1 oz. pineapple juice
Top with club soda

Build in an iced highball glass; garnish with large, leafy mint sprig.

Pomegranate Mojito

Created by Melvin Espinal, this is a specialty of Houston's Rickshaw Far East Bistro & Bambu Lounge.

12 mint leaves
2 oz. fresh lime juice
2 oz. simple syrup
3 pieces fresh mango
¾ oz. PAMA Liqueur
¾ oz. 10 Cane Rum
¼ oz. club soda

Build in chilled house specialty glass. Muddle contents and add in ice. Garnish with pomegranate wedge.