

Drinks go from fruity to floral



By Dan Dunn
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Every once in a great while there's a sea change in the adult beverage industry in the U.S., usually brought on by the introduction of a revolutionary product from afar. In 1970, Sidney Frank began importing a German liqueur called Jägermeister, and soon the word "shot" was no longer merely associated with a painful prick in the behind.

When the Swedish brand Absolut launched its now-legendary bottle-centric ad campaign in 1980, the premium vodka category was born. Michelob introduced the low-carb brew Ultra six years ago, and suddenly it was OK for women and vain men to drink beer.

Another major libational shift is in the offing thanks to a highly versatile and tasty spirit from the foothills of the Alps. Visit any high-end watering hole in Manhattan these days and you're likely to find cocktails on the menu made with St. Ger-



St. Germain is the first elderflower liqueur.

Where to buy

You will find St. Germain on the cocktail menus at Employees Only, Death & Company, Bobo and the Flatiron Lounge. It retails for \$34 and is available at Gotham Wine, Astor Wine & Spirits, Manor House Cellar Wines And Spirits, Union Square Wines, USQ Wines and Morrells.

main, the world's first and only commercially available elderflower liqueur.

For years, mixologists have been making cocktails with non-alcoholic elderflower-infused syrups, but they were inconsistent, rarely made with fresh ingredients, and had a very limited shelf life. St. Germain changed all that when it launched last year. It is, quite frankly, the hottest cocktail ingredient going, and with good reason according to the experts.

"St. Germain is a product we have been needing in the United States for some time," said New York's own Dale DeGroff, president of the Museum of the American Cocktail and the author of the upcoming book, "Craft of the Cocktail." DeGroff used the floral and fruity liqueur as a central ingredient in a cocktail he created for none other than Oprah Winfrey. And if it's good enough for the big O, it's good enough for us common folk.

Bar-master Jonathan Pogash teaches mixology at the Astor Center and cites St. Germain as his students' favorite ingredient.

"I'm amazed at how delicious it is when mixed with almost anything," Pogash said. "Liquid Chef" Junior Merino designed the cocktail menu at Rayuela on the Lower East Side, and has anointed St. Germain "a bona fide star behind the bar."

Dan Dunn is the author of the book "Nobody Likes a Quitter (and other reasons to avoid rehab)."

Dale DeGroff's legendary martini

- 1 ½ ounces vodka
- ½ ounce Cointreau
- ½ ounce St. Germain
- ¾ ounce fresh lemon juice
- ½ ounce white cranberry juice
- 1 lemon peel

1. Prepare a martini glass by frosting the rim with a mixture of 4 parts granulated sugar

and one part ginger powder.

2. Place the piece of ginger, the Cointreau, and the St. Germain in the bottom of a bar glass and muddle well together.

3. Assemble all the remaining ingredients and shake well with ice. Strain into the prepared glass and place the lemon peel on the edge of the glass.

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