

THE WALL STREET JOURNAL.

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OFF DUTY



Awry One

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Tommy
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Summer-ize Your Spirits

No offense to all the gin and tonics out there, but 'tis the season to find a cooling cocktail that does more than just the trick

BY KEVIN SINTUMUANG

MMM. REFRESHING.

Not the wildest of reactions, but it's the one you want when you take that first sip of a summer cocktail after baking at the beach, playing a round of 18 or, let's face it, coming out of an air-conditioned car that you drove from your air-conditioned office to your air-conditioned home. (One can really work up a sweat darting between all those AC'd cocoons.)

Despite what you might have experienced in the past with blenders and syrups and frozen fruit and umbrellas, the road to refreshing summer drinks doesn't need to be a

long and winding (and sticky) one. Consider the simple vodka soda. Gin and tonic. Rum and coke. Even the names are refreshing.

But just because something works, that's no excuse to fall into a routine. It's time you thought about expanding your summer drinking palate. This is a plentiful season for things that go perfectly in cocktails: fresh mint, citrus, berries—any fruit, really.

No matter your spirit of choice, be it vodka, tequila or rum, we've rounded up recipes from bars and restaurants across the country that take hot weather cocktails to another level. From drinks with muddled raspberries to simpler ones with just a slice of lime, all of these recipes make "Mmm. Refreshing" the two least boring words you could possibly utter.

Ruby Peach

Ramble

FOR THE RECIPES, TURN TO D6

Gordon's
Cup

The Tree
Line

Frisky Dingo

Make Mine a Double

Five spirits mixed three ways equals 15 chances to find your go-to cooler

VODKA

There's a reason why vodka is so popular: It plays nicely with everything. Just because it's clean-tasting doesn't mean there isn't a range of nuance. Purity vodka is full-bodied and mineral-y. Karlsson's Gold has notes of black pepper. Tito's, which is made in Texas and distilled from corn, has a slightly sweet quality.

RUM

The quintessential summer spirit—it's like the tropics, bottled. Rums are as varied as the locales they come from. Some can be sweet and molasses-like, while others strike an earthy note. It's always good to have a lightly aged rum on hand—Brugal Añejo works well in cocktails. If you want to expand your rum well a bit, try a flavorful white one like Banks 5 Island. True connoisseurs should have a bottle of rum agricole. Distilled from sugar-cane juice instead of molasses, it has a farm-fresh flavor. La Favorite makes an excellent one.



Ruby Peach

Can sweet drinks be deep and rich? This one is. The Grand Marnier and ruby Port give the cocktail multiple dimensions.

1 ounce vodka
1 ounce ruby Port
1 ounce peach juice
½ ounce Grand Marnier
¼ ounce lemon juice
Peach slice
Mint sprig

Shake liquid ingredients with ice and strain into a coupe. (If the peach juice isn't sweet enough, add a dash of simple syrup before shaking.) Garnish with peach and mint.
—From Philip Thompson of the Coterie Room, Seattle

Seve Ballesteros

Named after the world famous golfer, this is a spin on a what's known as a John Daly, which is lemonade, iced tea and vodka. The addition of Sherry adds a nutty complexity to the drink.

1½ ounces vodka
½ ounce dry Sherry (like fino or manzanilla)

Lemonade
Iced tea
Lemon wedge
Rosemary sprig
Pour liquid ingredients over ice into a Collins glass. Stir. Garnish with lemon and rosemary.
—From Zack Bezunortea of Boqueria, New York and Washington, D.C.

The Tree Line

Sometimes you just need something a little tart, minty and cooling, simple as that. The Tree Line is that drink.

2 ounces vodka
¾ ounces St-Germain
½ ounce lime juice
6 mint leaves

Shake liquid ingredients and 5 mint leaves with ice and double strain into a coupe. Garnish with remaining mint leaf.
—From Todd Maul of Clio, Boston

Adriatic Dreams

A fruity drink for people who don't like fruity drinks. Since most of the strawberry is strained away, you're just getting the essence of the fruit, not a candy-like cocktail.

1 strawberry
1½ ounces light rum
½ ounce Aperol
½ ounce agave nectar
½ ounce fresh lemon juice

2 dashes orange bitters
6 mint leaves
Muddle strawberry in the bottom of a mixing tin. Add remaining ingredients and shake with ice. Double strain over ice into a rocks glass.
—From Bryan Dayton of Oak at Fourteenth, Denver

Caribbees Daiquiri

The daiquiri—that is, the classic kind, not the one that comes out of a blender—might just be the best summer cocktail of all time. This version uses Velvet Falernum—an almond-, ginger- and clove-based sweetener—for even more of a tropical note.

2 ounces rum (preferably El Dorado 3 Year)
1½ ounces Velvet Falernum
¾ ounce lime juice
¼ ounce simple syrup
Shake ingredients with ice for 10 seconds. Double strain into a coupe glass.
—From Paul McGee of RPM Italian, Chicago

Ti Punch

A classic drink served at the San Francisco rum temple Bar Agricole, the Ti Punch lets the beautiful tropical earthiness of rum agricole shine through.

1 quarter-size lime disk with a bit of flesh
1 bar spoon Martinique sugar-cane syrup
1½ ounces rum agricole

Muddle lime disk with cane syrup. Top with rum. Add a large ice cube. Stir until cold and serve.
—From Thad Vogler of Bar Agricole, San Francisco

WHISKEY

Whiskey may not be the first spirit to spring to mind when you hear “summer drink,” but it’s a year-round classic. After all, it plays a major role in the most American of summer cocktails, the mint julep, as well as the Presbyterian and the whiskey smash. When you really want your whiskey flavor to stand out, go with rye—Rittenhouse has become a standard. For a light and smooth bourbon, try Four Roses Yellow Label. Need more of a kick? Grab some Old Grand-Dad 100.

GIN

Does it make a nice pair with tonic? For sure. But with so many botanical notes to play off of, the juniper-heavy spirit is also ideal for building cocktails that use the season’s fruits and vegetables. A summer bar should always be stocked with a flavorful London Dry-style gin. Beefeater is a can’t-miss choice. For something more artisanal, go with Greylock Gin from Berkshire Mountain Distillers. It has hints of pine and bitter orange peel. The citrus notes of Leopold’s American Small Batch Gin make for great poolside gin drinks.



The Hasselhoff

A cheeky take on the Jack and Coke that forgoes Coca-Cola for Killepitsch, a bitter liqueur from Germany, and tonic. Amazingly, the two together tastes a lot like Coke.

1 ounce Jack Daniels whiskey

1 ounce Killepitsch

½ ounce lime juice

2-3 ounces tonic

Pour first three ingredients into a Collins glass with ice and stir. Top with tonic.

—From Justin Pike of the Tasting Kitchen, Los Angeles

Awry One

If you’ve ever desired the bitterness of a negroni and the whiskey-ness of a Manhattan in easy-drinking summer form, this is the cocktail for you. A new drink that tastes like it’s been around for a century.

1½ ounces rye whiskey

½ ounce Luxardo Bitter (or Campari)

½ ounce lemon juice

¼ ounce simple syrup

2 dashes orange bitters

Mint sprig

Shake liquid ingredients with ice and double strain into a coupe. Garnish with mint.

—From Greg Best of Holeman & Finch, Atlanta

Henry Miller

This drink may appear overly sweet—it has strawberries, after all—but it has the heart of a Manhattan (bourbon, sweet vermouth and bitters) so it’s not the saccharine concoction you might expect.

3 strawberries

2 ounces bourbon

¾ ounce sweet vermouth (preferably Carpano Antica)

¾ ounce simple syrup

¾ ounce fresh lemon juice

3-4 dashes Angostura bitters

1 ounce soda

Muddle 2 strawberries in shaker. Add remaining ingredients (except soda) and shake with ice. Strain into a Collins glass over ice. Top with soda. Garnish with remaining strawberry.

—From the Darby, New York

The Green Garter

A refreshing vegetal cocktail that has two perfect combinations: heat and soothing coolness as well as sweet and sour.

8-10 cilantro leaves

2 small serrano chilies

2 slices cucumber

2 ounces gin

¼ ounce simple syrup

½ ounce lime juice

1½-2 ounces soda

Long cucumber slice

Add cilantro, chilies and cucumber to shaker and muddle. Add gin, simple syrup and lime juice and shake with ice. Double strain over ice into a rocks glass. Top with soda. Garnish with cucumber.

—From Jeffrey Hansen of Lula Cafe, Chicago

Gordon’s Cup

Think of this modern classic as a gin caipirinha. It has the right balance of sweet and tart while the fresh cucumber keeps things cool and balanced.

3-4 slices English cucumber (¼-inch thick), snapped in half with your fingers

5-6 lime wedges

¾ ounce simple syrup (or superfine sugar, to taste)

2 ounces gin

Put cucumber, lime wedges and simple syrup in shaker and gently muddle. (Try not to tear apart limes or cucumber.) Add gin and ice. Shake 3 to 4 times and dump ingredients (do not strain) into a chilled rocks glass. Garnish with a pinch of salt and/or freshly ground pepper (optional). Serve with a straw.

—From Sasha Petraske of Milk & Honey, New York

Ramble

Served in a Collins glass, as shown, with lightly crushed ice, the drink is puckeringly delicious. Serve it in a rocks glass with a mound of more gravel-like ice (throw some cubes in a blender) and it’s like a raspberry snow cone for grown ups.

3-4 muddled raspberries

2 ounces gin

¾ ounce simple syrup

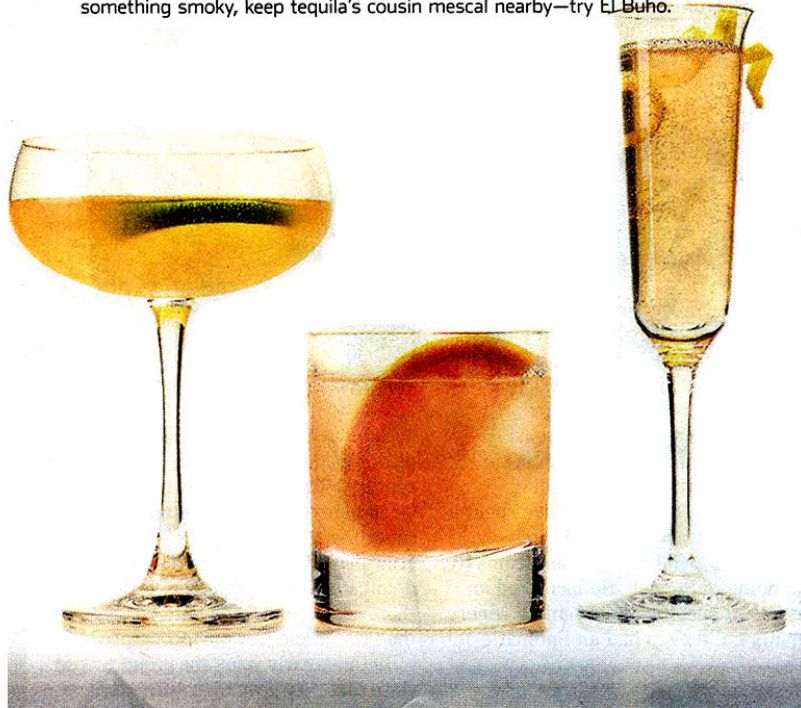
¾ ounce lemon juice

In a mixing glass, muddle raspberries. Add the rest of the ingredients and shake thoroughly, without ice. Pour the contents into a tall Collins glass filled with crushed ice.

—From Sam Ross of Comme Ça, Los Angeles and Las Vegas

TEQUILA

Tequila belongs many places besides the frozen margarita. Just be sure to stick with stuff that's made from 100% agave. Cheaper mixto tequila, which supplements the agave with other sugars (if it doesn't say "100% agave," it's a mixto), is more likely to cause spring break flashbacks. Blanco tequila's liveliness couldn't be more appropriate during the hot months, but if you're a fan of oakiness, a reposado also works. Siete Leguas and Tequila Ocho make excellent bottlings of both. For something smoky, keep tequila's cousin mescal nearby—try EL Buho.



East Coast Tommy Margarita

This take on Tommy's Margarita—which is a margarita that replaces triple sec with the more subtle agave nectar—simply adds a touch of Angostura bitters to the mix. It seems like a minor modification, but a little bitters goes a long way.

- 2 ounces tequila
- 1 ounce lime juice
- 1/2-3/4 ounce agave nectar syrup (equal parts agave nectar and water)
- 1 dash Angostura bitters

Shake ingredients with ice and strain into a coupe. Garnish with lime (optional).
—From Jackson Cannon of the Hawthorne, Boston

Frisky Dingo

A pleasantly sweet, tart and slightly bitter cooler that's a little too easy to gulp down.

- 1 1/2 ounces tequila
- 1 ounce grapefruit juice
- 1/2 ounce Aperol
- 1/2 ounce honey syrup (equal parts honey and water)
- 1/2 ounce lime juice

Grapefruit slice
Shake liquid ingredients with ice and strain into a rocks glass over ice. Garnish with grapefruit.
—From Philip Thompson of the Coterie Room, Seattle

Mendoza

A take on the classic French 75. Like its predecessor, it's named after a weapon: The Mendoza is a light machine gun designed in Mexico. Good grenadine is key: To make your own, bring pomegranate juice to a boil, add an equal part of sugar, simmer for 15 minutes and chill.

- 1 ounce mescal
- 3/4 ounce grenadine
- 3/4 ounce passion fruit purée

Cava Lemon twist
Shake mescal, grenadine and passion fruit with ice. Strain into a flute. Top with Cava. Garnish with lemon.
—From Josh Wortman of Añejo, New York