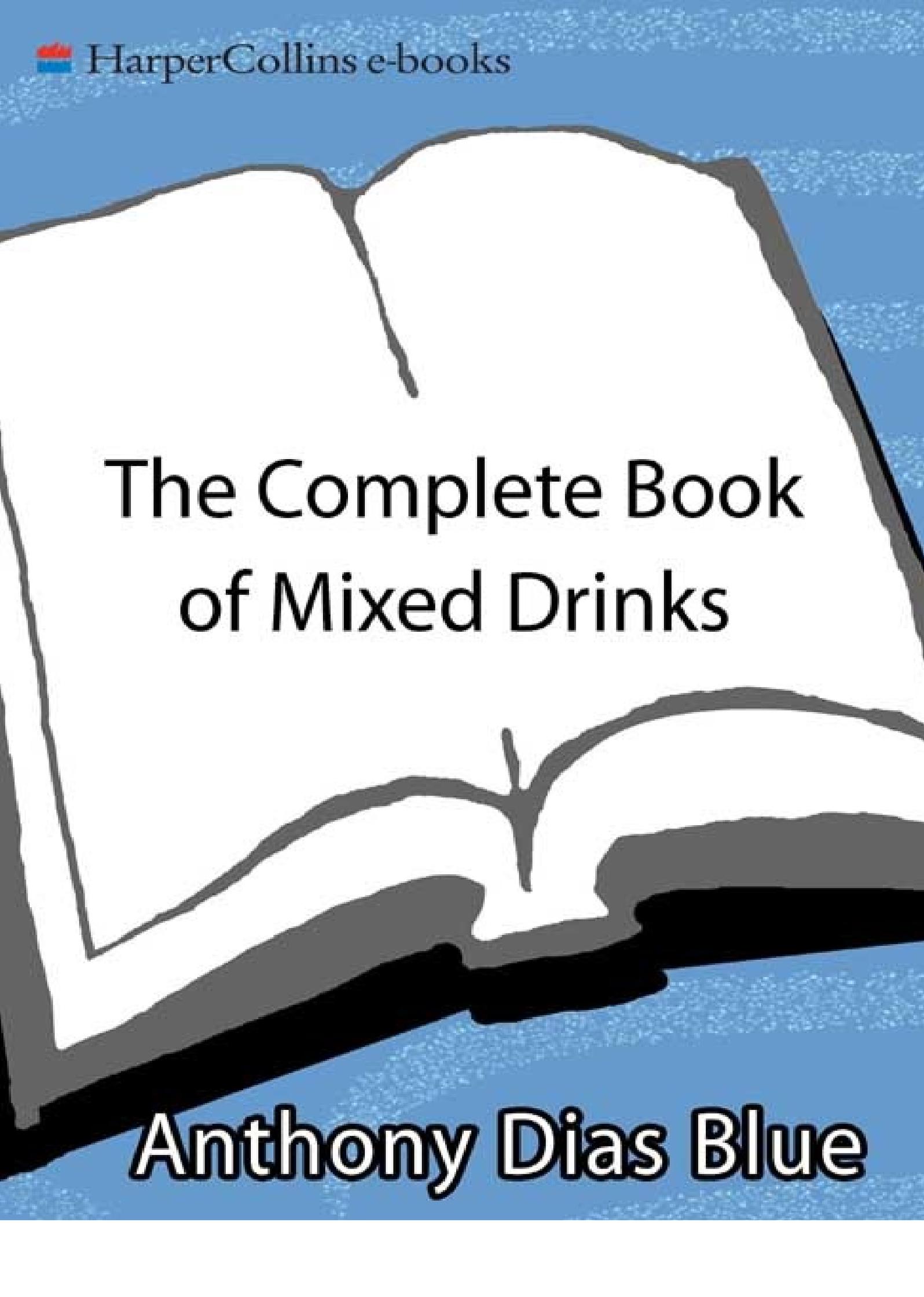


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The Complete Book of Mixed Drinks

Anthony Dias Blue

ANTHONY DIAS BLUE

**THE
COMPLETE
BOOK OF
MIXED
DRINKS**

*More Than 1,000 Alcoholic and
Nonalcoholic Cocktails*

REVISED EDITION

 HarperCollins e-books

In loving memory of my parents, Gertrud and Sidney Blue,

who taught me about the nuances of taste and

the pure pleasure of a well-mixed drink.

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Introduction

It is a golden age for cocktails in America. Everywhere you look there is a bar with one or more creative mixologists behind it—stirring, straining, blending, and shaking. Even your neighborhood sushi bar now offers a “full bar,” as the kimonoed hostess politely points out. At home, the modern American is not only laying in a fabulous wine cellar, but fully stocking the bar. Every host and hostess needs to be up to speed on the latest cocktail creations. Not since the early to mid-20th century has our nation been so enthralled with mixed drinks.

Those who were of drinking age in the ‘70s remember what it was like before this late mixology boom took hold. Cocktails, closely associated with the previous generation (the one that had among its members the likes of Willy Loman, Van Johnson, June Cleaver, and your father or grandfather), were considered passé, self-indulgent, and unhealthy. Bottled water was in; booze was out. Running was in; the three-martini lunch was out.

The standard order at the bar in those troubled times was “Perrier with lime,” or for those living their lives in the fast lane, a glass of Chardonnay. “Light” was the watchword of the lean-and-mean set. Bars had become a great place to display droopy plants. Like bomb shelters, they no longer served any real purpose.

But just as the pendulum reached this extreme, the cocktail, long given up for dead, was struggling to its feet on college campuses. A new generation, unintimidated by the resurgence of Perrier-and-lime puritanism of the ‘70s and ‘80s, was discovering the joys of a well-mixed cocktail.

When this book was first written, it was just the beginning of the return to the mixed drink. The Long Island Iced Tea (a creation of the dance clubs of the Hamptons) had just vaulted to prominence. Shooters and all manner of bizarre concoctions were waiting to enliven your weekend.

Now, more than a decade later, cocktails are no longer a symbol of rebellion or counterculture behavior. They are an integral part of our 21st-century lifestyle—an accepted and expected aspect of our social transactions. As a result, some of the wilder and crazier drinks have disappeared. The trend is, at the same time, both traditional and modern. The return of the martini—the most classic of all drinks—is the best demonstration of this. Here we have the ultimate cocktail—invented nearly a century ago—spawning an explosion of creative spin-offs. First there was the substitution of vodka for gin; then came the invention of such now classic creations as the Cosmopolitan and the Apple Martini. To give proper respect to the martini phenomenon, I have added an entire chapter on martinis to this new edition.

The rebirth of the cocktail has provided inspiration to the spirits industry to introduce a stream of exciting new products. There are spectacular superpremium versions of standard spirits—single-malt scotch, small-batch bourbon, ultrapremium vodka, exceptional new gins, complex new rum, extraordinary aged tequila—as well as dazzling new products that create exciting mixed drink possibilities. Flavored vodkas, flavored gins, new schnapps, spiced rum

and dramatic new liqueurs have pushed the envelope for mixed drinks. More potent ingredients mean more new ideas and a greater possibility of new inventions.

The cocktail—and all the social interaction it brings with it—is back. Over the last half of the 20th century it has come full circle—from “in” to “out” to “in.” It has jumped generations and moved from two-fisted drinkers to the young, hip, and happening set. It is the best time ever for mixed drinks, and it is the best time ever for a comprehensive book on the subject.

The Complete Book of Mixed Drinks can be a road map to greater enjoyment and understanding of this phenomenon. For the proactive, it can be a guide to making some of the best new combinations at home, and for those who prefer to have their drinks mixed for them, it can help to demystify the drink menus in today’s trendy bars. And don’t overlook the introductions to each chapter. They will inform and amuse you, and turn you into a font of knowledge.

Santé! Salute! Cheers!
Anthony Diaz Blue,
March 2002

As with cooking, mixing drinks requires a full complement of good equipment. It's difficult making a beurre blanc sauce on a hot plate, and making a pineapple daiquiri is virtually impossible without a blender. The best ingredients and the right equipment are necessary to get the most use out of this book.

Throughout this book, I have tried to use generic ingredient names, not brand names. There are several reasons for this. First of all, this book, unlike numerous other drink books, is not beholden to any wine or liquor producer. Second, there are many good choices available within each category. I must point out, however, that cut-rate bargain brands are usually not a bargain. Quality ingredients are essential to drawing the most out of the recipes in this book.

About the Bar

BASIC EQUIPMENT

The following devices are part of the complete bar. Except for the blender, these are all simple and inexpensive tools.

BLENDER A powerful, heavy-duty blender is needed to grind the ice needed for frozen drinks. The basic kitchen blender may not be strong enough to do the job.

BOTTLE OPENER A standard lever type of bottle opener is essential, the simpler the better.

CAN OPENER A "church key," or standard kitchen opener, is ideal for opening juice cans.

CHAMPAGNE STOPPER A good champagne stopper will preserve the carbonation in champagne and sparkling wine for at least 24 hours. The best type has a spring mechanism and two metal pieces that hook under the lip of a typical champagne bottle.

CORKSCREW The classic wine opener is the waiter's corkscrew, a basic lever. There are many versions of this simple tool, and they vary widely in quality. My favorite corkscrew is the Screwpull, a remarkably well designed device full of space-age technology. If you have to open large numbers of bottles, the best corkscrew is the Leverpull by Screwpull. Many California wine folk use the Ah-So, the opener with the two prongs. This device can push the cork into the wine if you're not careful, but it doesn't puncture the cork, which is quite helpful to people who want to recork wine bottles for future use. My least favorite opener is the wing type, mainly because the corkscrew is usually too tightly wound. All the best corkscrews have an open spiral with a channel down the middle.

GLASS PITCHER A glass pitcher is always handy, and is a very attractive way to serve drinks for more than two guests. It is also useful for pouring water and juices.

ICE BUCKET The ice bucket is the most practical and attractive way to keep ice at your bar.

Use tongs to dispense the ice.

JIGGER A jigger provides ounce measurements and is absolutely essential. The best jigger is the double-headed, stainless steel variety that delineates 1 and 1½-ounce measurements.

MEASURING CUP A small Pyrex glass 1-cup measure is perfect for recipes that call for amounts greater than 2 ounces.

MEASURING SPOONS A standard kitchen set will work perfectly.

MIXING GLASS The best of these have a pouring spout, but any tall, 16-ounce glass will work.

MIXING SPOON Preferable is a long stainless steel spoon with a thin twisted handle that can be used for mixing, stirring, and sometimes, muddling.

MUDDLER This term refers to squeezing the juice from herbs or fruit and blending it with other ingredients. A mortar and pestle is usually used for muddling, but you can also use the mixing spoon.

PARING KNIFE A paring knife is needed for cutting fruit wedges and twists. It will also help you make your garnishes pretty fancy.

SHAKER There are two popular types of shakers: the Boston and the standard. The Boston shaker has two pieces, a glass receptacle and a stainless steel container of comparable but slightly larger size. When shook, the glass is capped by the metal top and the liquid is transferred back and forth from one receptacle to the other. The standard shaker has three pieces: a stainless steel strainer, a lid, and a receptacle. The top often has a small capped spout. Shakers are used to combine ingredients that need more homogenizing than stirring can provide. Carbonated beverages are never put in a shaker—they lose their bubbles.

STRAINER The Hawthorn strainer is usually used. It has a spring that holds it in the top of a standard mixing glass or shaker.

Also invaluable are such assorted accessories as cocktail napkins, straws, coasters, and toothpicks.

Direction Definitions

BLEND Blending requires a powerful electric blender in order to puree the ice and other ingredients to a smooth consistency. Do not blend for more than 5 minutes.

CRUSHED ICE Also called “cracked” ice, these are ice cubes that have been pulverized with a mallet or other heavy object.

MIX Mixing thoroughly combines ingredients and is usually done in a mixing glass. The purpose is to chill the alcohols quickly without diluting them. Mix with a glass stirring rod or bar spoon and several ice cubes.

MUDDLE Muddling requires the use of a mortar and pestle to grind fresh herbs or fruit with sugar.

SHAKE First combine the ingredients and crushed ice in a shaker. Then shake the canister vigorously to quickly chill the mixture without diluting it.

STRAIN A Hawthorn strainer will fit over either a mixing glass or shaker. The purpose is to separate ice and other solids from the mixture before serving.

Drink Terminology

APERITIF A drink traditionally served before a meal to whet the appetite. It is usually flavored bitters or vermouth.

CHASER A mixer, beer, or nonalcoholic drink that is swallowed soon after a straight shot of whiskey, bourbon, tequila, or other spirit.

COBBLER A tall drink usually served in a tall collins glass filled with crushed ice and garnished with fresh fruit and mint sprigs.

COLLINS A tall drink of ice, sugar, citrus juice, and a spirit, topped off with club soda or ice water. The famous Tom Collins is made with gin.

COOLER The basic formula includes a wine or spirit, a carbonated beverage, and a citrus rind for garnish. The citrus garnish is usually one continuous spiral that hooks over the rim of the glass.

CRUSTA A drink served in a wineglass or a short glass, with the optional sugar-coated rim. The inside of the glass is lined with a strip of citrus rind.

DAISY The daisy is an oversized cocktail, usually with more alcohol than a normal cocktail. It is often sweetened with a fruit syrup and served over crushed ice. The margarita is an example of a daisy.

EGGNOG A traditional Christmas holiday punch that is served cold in tall glasses or in punch cups. It is a creamy concoction with grated nutmeg on top.

FIX A small cobbler, sour-type drink made with sugar, lemon juice, alcohol, and crushed ice. It can also be made with pineapple syrup.

FIZZ A drink traditionally served in the late morning. It is always topped off with club soda or sparkling wine.

FLOAT To “float” a liqueur or other spirit, pour it gently into the glass over the back of a spoon and do not mix.

FLIP Originally, flips were served hot by plunging a red-hot flip iron into the drink. Now they are served as a cold, creamy drink made with eggs, sugar, alcohol, and citrus juice.

GROG The grog originated as a mixture of rum and water issued to sailors of the Royal Navy.

Navy. Now it is any rum-based drink made with fruit and sugar.

JULEP A julep consists of bourbon, sugar, and mint leaves. It originated in Kentucky, and usually made with Kentucky bourbon.

MIST Any drink in which the spirit is poured into a glass over crushed ice.

NEAT A spirit served straight, without mixers or ice.

ON THE ROCKS Poured over ice cubes.

PUFF An afternoon drink of equal parts spirit and milk, topped off with club soda and served over ice.

PUNCH A drink mixture prepared in large quantities. It can include any combination of spirits, sweeteners, juices, wine, flavorings, and fruit garnishes.

SHOOTER A straight shot of any spirit.

SLING A tall drink made with lemon juice, sugar, and spirits and topped off with club soda.

SMASH A short julep, served in an old-fashioned glass.

SOUR Usually served in a sour or old-fashioned glass, a sour is made with lime or lemon juice, sugar, and spirits.

SWIZZLE The swizzle originated in the Caribbean, where long twigs were twirled in a pitcher or glass until the container was frosty. Today a glass rod is usually used.

TODDY The toddy was originally a hot drink. It was a mixture of sweetener, spirit, spice and hot water. Now it may be served cold, and is distinguished from a sling by using plain water instead of club soda.

TONIC A tall drink with ice, spirit, and tonic water.

Measurements

STANDARD MEASUREMENTS

1 quart	=	32 ounces	=	2 pints	=	4 cups
1 pint	=	16 ounces	=	2 cups		
1 cup	=	8 ounces	=	½ pint		
1 jigger	=	1½ ounces				
1 wineglass	=	6 ounces				
1 teaspoon	=	½ ounce				
1 dash	=	¼ teaspoon				
1 tablespoon	=	3 teaspoons				
1 tablespoon	=	½ ounce				
4 tablespoons	=	¼ cup	=	2 ounces		
8 tablespoons	=	½ cup	=	4 ounces		
16 cups	=	4 quarts	=	1 fluid gallon		

SPIRIT BOTTLE MEASURES

METRIC (BOTTLE SIZE)	FLUID (OUNCES)	BOTTLES (PER CASE)
50 ml.	1.7	120
200 ml.	6.8	48
500 ml.	16.9	24
750 ml.	25.4	12
1 liter	33.8	12
1.5 liters	50.8	6

Calorie Chart

calories/ounce

ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES

Ale	18
Beer (imported)	16
Beer (U.S.)	14
Bourbon	86
Brandy	72
Canadian whiskey	86
Gin	75
Irish whiskey	84
Liqueurs	75 to 175
Port	40
Rum	97
Rye whiskey	92
Scotch whisky	78
Sherry	37
Tequila	95
Vermouth (dry)	28
Vermouth (sweet)	42
Vodka	87
Wine (dry)	25
Wine (sweet)	50

MIXERS

Club soda	0
Cola	17
Cream (heavy)	106
Diet soda	0
Ginger ale	9
Tonic water	9
Lemon juice	8
Lime juice	8
Orange juice	14
Pineapple juice	17

Bar-Supply Checklist

SPIRITS

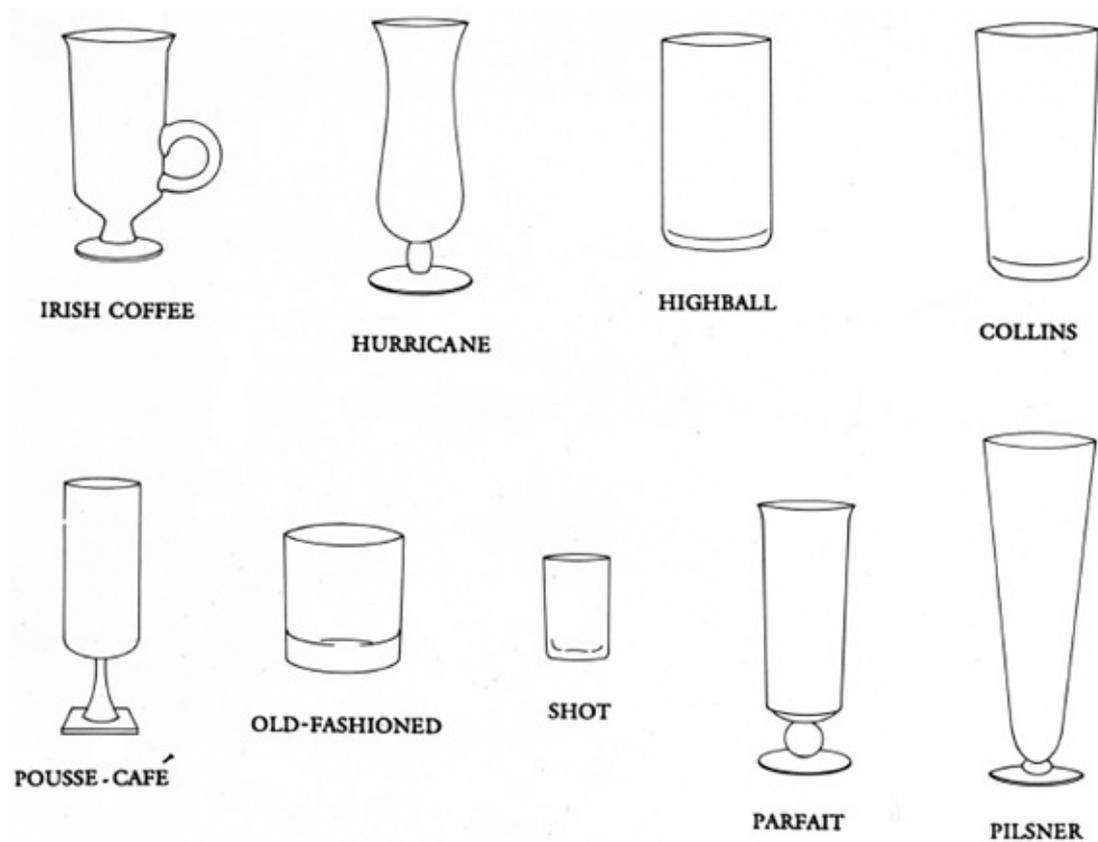
Amaretto
Baileys Irish Cream
Beer
Blended whiskey
Bourbon
Coffee liqueur
Dry red wine
Dry sparkling wine
Dry vermouth
Dry white wine
Gin
Grand Marnier
Irish whiskey
Rum
Scotch whisky
Sweet vermouth
Tequila

MIXERS

Club soda
Cola
Cream of coconut
Ginger ale
Grenadine syrup
Lemon juice
Orange juice
Pineapple juice
Rose's lime juice
7 UP
Simple sugar syrup
(see recipe p.33)
Sweet 'n' sour
Tabasco sauce
Tonic water
Worcestershire sauce

GARNISHES

Black olives
Cherries
Cocktail onions
Fresh limes
Grated nutmeg
Green olives
Lemon spirals
Lemon twists
Orange wedges
Salt
Sugar



Glassware

ALL-PURPOSE BALLOON GLASS A popular 10-to 14-ounce stemmed glass with a large bowl. It is often used when a recipe calls for a large wineglass.

COCKTAIL GLASS A stemmed glass with sloping sides and a wide mouth that will hold from 4 to 6 ounces.

COLLINS GLASS Similar to the highball glass, but able to hold from 10 to 14 ounces.

CORDIAL GLASS A small-stemmed glass, often with extremely sloped sides used for serving highly potent cordials and liqueurs.

DELMONICO GLASS Another name for the sour glass.

DOUBLE OLD-FASHIONED GLASS A larger old-fashioned glass. The double will hold from 14 to 18 ounces.



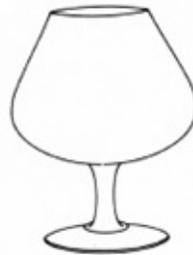
COCKTAIL



CHAMPAGNE



CORDIAL



BRANDY



BEER



TULIP



WHISKEY



SHERRY



RED WINE



PILSNER

FLUTE A tall, graceful stemmed glass used for champagne and sparkling wine.

HIGHBALL GLASS An 8-to 10-ounce glass with straight sides. Highballs, fizzes, egg-nogs, and swizzles are often served in it.

HURRICANE GLASS A tall glass shaped like a hurricane lamp with a pinched-in center. Usually used for tropical drinks.

IRISH COFFEE GLASS A short-stemmed glass that widens at the top and often has a handle.

OLD-FASHIONED GLASS A short, straight-sided glass that will hold from 8 to 10 ounces.

PARFAIT GLASS A tall glass with a pinched center. Similar to a hurricane glass but smaller. Often used for drinks containing fruit or ice cream, it holds 7½ ounces.

PILSNER GLASS A tall, slope-sided beer glass that can hold from 10 to 12 ounces.

PONY GLASS A pony glass is a stemmed glass that will hold up to 2 ounces. Liqueurs and brandies are often served in it.

POUSSE-CAFÉ GLASS A slim glass with a narrow mouth and, often, a square-footed stem used specifically for the layered liqueur drink *pousse café*, but also used for a variety of other liqueur-based cocktails.

SHERRY GLASS A petite wine glass suitable for small amounts of fortified wine such as sherry or port.

SHOT GLASS A shot glass can come in all shapes and sizes, but it never holds more than

ounces.

SNIFTER A short-stemmed glass with a large bowl used to serve brandy, cognac, and liqueurs. The larger the bowl the better, as it is easier to sniff the spirit's aroma.

SOUR GLASS A stemmed, short, flute-style glass that is used to serve all types of sours. holds from 5 to 6 ounces.

TULIP CHAMPAGNE GLASS A tall-stemmed glass that widens at the top to make a tulip shape. is used to serve champagne and sparkling wine.

Mixology Tips

- Try to chill all ingredients before using.
- Don't overfill shakers and mixers. Mix drinks in half portions to avoid this.*
- Never use the same ice more than once.
- Always shake vigorously.
- If you live in an area where the water is too hard or is unpleasant-tasting, make it with bottled water.
- Be organized. Assemble all ingredients before beginning to mix a drink.
- Don't make cocktails in advance; serve them as soon as they are prepared.
- Use quality ingredients as well as fresh fruit and herbs.

*Unless otherwise stated, the recipes appearing here yield 8-ounce servings.

The incredible success of vodka in the American market has its roots, surprisingly enough, in the Russian Revolution. Before 1917 this clear, fiery spirit was essentially a regional drink, confined to Russia and Poland. It was known as *zhizennia voda* (“water of life”) when it first appeared in medieval times, but the Russians eventually shortened the name to “vodka,” a diminutive of the word for water. The new name meant, literally, “dear little water.”

Water is the most important ingredient in vodka and perhaps the only way to lend this incredibly pure spirit a bit of character. The Russians claim that “living water” from the rivers and lakes is what makes their vodkas stand apart from those produced elsewhere. The quest for pure water has taken the Finns to underground streams, inspired the Americans to invent more elaborate water softeners and filtration systems, and even led the Canadians to melt chunks of icebergs, the theory being that the older the water, the purer it will be.

For a hundred years before the Russian Revolution, the Smirnoff family had been Russia's leading distillers. They became extremely wealthy and developed a close relationship with the czar and the rest of the royal household, but the violent upheaval of 1917 changed all that. Only one of Peter Smirnoff's three sons—Vladimir—managed to escape the onslaught. After fleeing through Turkey and Poland, he eventually settled in Paris.

Vladimir Smirnoff had been stripped of his fortune, but he still had the ability to make great vodka. With the help of other Russian émigrés, he started a small distillery.

Vodka certainly didn't take the world by storm, but it sold steadily in modest quantities in various markets. Soon after Prohibition ended in the United States in 1933, a Smirnoff distillery was established in Connecticut. But until the end of World War II, sales languished at about 6,000 cases per year.

After the war, vodka began to take hold among Hollywood trendsetters. Before too long people began to realize how adaptable vodka was as a base for mixed drinks. When the movement toward “light” products began in earnest, vodka was in the forefront of the movement.

America had been a whiskey-drinking nation from the beginning, but, in the late 1940s, “brown goods” began to fade drastically. White spirits were moving aggressively into the picture, with vodka the prime mover.

The turning point came at the beginning of the 1950s with the booming popularity of such concoctions as the Moscow Mule, the Screwdriver, the Vodka Martini, and, most beloved of all, the Bloody Mary.

Today, vodka sits perched atop the spirits world, with no challenger in sight. U.S. sales in the 1980s have reached beyond the 40-million-case mark, and show no sign of abating. Seven brands, headed by Smirnoff, account for nearly 50 percent of American vodka sales, but there are an additional 300 brands jostling for position in this lucrative market.

An important submarket that has developed over the past ten years or so is the “premium” vodka business. Marked by glorious packaging efforts and rather high prices, these vodkas show no sign of losing popularity. Perhaps we can attribute this surge of interest in luxury

brands to the indulgent '90s which have left us all with a taste for rich desserts, four-dollar cups of coffee, well-aged beef, and, presumably, premium spirits.

Many of these premium vodka imports are distinctively flavored and are less likely to be used in mixed drinks. They are popular with people who drink them straight or on the rocks and treat them with the same respect one might lavish on fine brandy or single-malt Scotch whisky. Incidentally, these excellent products are even smoother and more appealing when they are served directly from the freezer.

Here are a few intriguing vodkas, listed by country of origin:

RUSSIA

Vodka has been produced for over a thousand years in Russia, where it is most certainly the unofficial national drink. Once believed to contain its own "spirit," vodka was often passed around at religious ceremonies in gallon-sized "cups." Early Russian vodkas were made from rye, then later from potatoes. Though current production relies once again primarily on rye, there are exceptions. Stolichnaya, Russia's premier vodka, is made from wheat and the soft and pure glacial waters of Lake Ladoga, an icy body of water north of Leningrad, close to the Finnish border. Before bottling, the vodka is filtered through both quartz and activated charcoal. The result of this process is a vodka that has a rich but elegant "nose," a slight thick texture, and clean, soft, gentle flavors.

"Stoli" comes in both 80 and 100 proof. Flavored versions include Limonnaya, Ohran Persik (peach), Razberi, Strasberi, and Vanil. Stolichnaya Gold is a recently introduced luxury bottling. The flavored versions are lovely on the rocks and add a burst of flavor to the panoply of new candy-colored martini drinks.

Stolichnaya Okhotnichya ("hunter's vodka") is a 90-proof spirit flavored with spices and herbs. This vodka has been infused with ginger, tormentil, ash-wood roots, cloves, pepper, juniper, coffee beans, anise, white port, sugar, and orange peel, among other things. This liqueurlike drink is spicy and herbal, with a strong licorice flavor undertone. It is particularly attractive on the rocks as an after-dinner drink.

Stolichnaya Pertsovka, dark amber in color, has been infused with red, white, and black peppers. A 70-proof spirit, it is aged for some months in wood. The result is a spicy, rich, hot vodka that is excellent on the rocks or as an ingredient in a fiery Bloody Mary.

Introduced into the U.S. market in 1989, Tarkhuna is a Russian spirit that has been flavored with tarkhuna grass, a fragrant herb that grows wild in the Soviet Georgian countryside. It is light green in color, gentle and herbal, with a flavor that is quite reminiscent of tarragon.

Ikon vodka, first produced outside of Moscow in 1862 by Vassil Vassilivitch Alexandrov, is quadruple-distilled and filtered through Russian birch.

Classic Jewel of Russia vodka comes in a gorgeous, colorless glass bottle marked with a red wax seal. Distilled from hard-winter wheat and rye, this smooth vodka is ideal in mixed drinks.

The Ultra Jewel of Russia vodka merits its hand-painted, limited-edition bottle by going through yet another filtration process. The smooth texture of Ultra is delectable in a vodka

martini or on the rocks. Two flavored vodkas from Jewel of Russia, the Berry Infusion and the Bilberry Infusion, provide the rich flavor of handpicked wild cranberries and Russian bilberries. Both infusions make tasty aperitifs and can be used to add a nice spark of flavor to a Cosmopolitan or other mixed drink.

POLAND

The Polish are insistent that their country, and not Mother Russia, was the birthplace of vodka. There is evidence to corroborate the claims of both nations. In any case, there is a long history of vodka production in Poland.

Wodka Wyborowa, a vodka made from rye, has been an important part of the Polish lifestyle since 1489. A soft and elegant spirit with a lush, smooth texture, this fine vodka comes in both 80 and 100 proof. It is delicious on the rocks or in a snifter.

Although most vodkas today are made from grain, there are still some that follow the ancient practice of using potatoes as a base. Luksusowa is an attractive and very smooth spirit that is triple-distilled from potatoes. It presents no problems for most people who are allergic to grain.

Another famous Polish vodka, Zubrowka, was outlawed in the U.S. in 1978. The blade of bison grass contained in this vodka was found to contain coumarin, an anticoagulant drug that had not been approved, in this form, by the FDA. It returned to U.S. markets in 1999 under the name Zubrowka Bison Grass vodka, and each bottle is still graced by a real blade of bison grass. Legend has it that the grass is an aphrodisiac, which may account for the surge in Poland's bison population.

Recent entries in the "luxury vodka" category include the elegantly bottled Belvedere, distilled from rye, and Chopin, crafted from organically grown Polish Stobrawa potatoes. Both vodkas are produced in the region of Masovia.

FINLAND

Finland's vodka tradition dates back to the 16th century, when Finnish soldiers, returning from wars in other parts of Europe, brought home with them the technology of distillation.

At the end of the last century, several small distilleries were constructed. One of these, in Rajamaki, is where Finlandia is manufactured today.

Made from high-quality Finnish grain, Finlandia is produced in 80- and 100-proof versions and is crisp, fresh, and very clean. It has a smooth texture and comes in a handsome modern bottle designed by Finnish sculptor Tapio Wirkala. Finlandia, always an excellent mixer as well as being quite attractive on its own, has introduced lime- and cranberry-flavored vodka.

SWEDEN

Sweden has produced vodka for centuries, but Absolut is a product that was created in the

mid-1970s with the American consumer in mind. This nicely packaged, clean-flavored vodka had been the fastest-growing imported vodka on the market for a number of years; then a first-rate advertising campaign featuring artwork by over 350 luminaries, including Andy Warhol, Keith Haring, and Edward Ruscha, helped it become the best-selling of *all* vodka imports. Absolut is lovely in mixed drinks and also quite delicious on the rocks.

Absolut is made in 80 and 100 proof. A completely clear, flavored version, Absolut Peppara, which is infused with jalapeño pepper and paprika, is available, as are Absolut Citron, a lively lemon-flavored product; Absolut Kurrant, which owes its tart-sweet flavor to the black currant, a distant cousin of the grape; and Absolut Mandarin, a sweet vodka flavored with mandarin orange and other citrus fruits.

DENMARK

The award-winning Fris takes its name from the Danish word for frost. Made from grain and distilled six times before being put through a three-step filtration process, Fris is remarkably clean vodka. Fris Lime is a refreshing addition to cocktails. Denaka is an 80-proof smooth vodka from Denmark that has a creamy, soft texture, a flavor featuring tones of vanilla and caramel, and a soft, lush finish. Danzka is a traditionally made vodka packaged in a unique aluminum canteen. It is also available in three flavored versions: citron, grapefruit, and currant.

HOLLAND

Ketel One is distilled in a “copper pot still” to produce a smooth flavor. Handmade in small batches by the Nolet family from a 300-year-old recipe, the vodka was imported to the U.S. in 1992 and has grown steadily in popularity. The recently introduced Ketel One Citroen imparts a lemon-orange zing to your favorite cocktails.

Vincent arrived in the U.S. in 1999. Named for the artist Vincent van Gogh, this vodka boasts slim and elegant bottles that feature his paintings, including the famed *Starry Night*. In response to the “Apple Martini” craze, Vincent Wild Appel was released in the summer of 2001.

ENGLAND

James Burrough, the maker of Beefeater London Dry Gin since 1820, also distills a lovely vodka that is just as painstakingly produced as the company’s gin. Made from choice English corn and barley and filtered through charcoal made from Sussex oak trees, Burrough’s English Vodka is a spicy and distinctively rich product that is excellent when served on the rocks or “neat.”

Tanqueray Sterling has been double-distilled and filtered over granite. Packaged in a frosted bottle with the same shape as the famous Tanqueray gin bottle, the vodka is soft and lush, velvety, complex, and quite elegant.

A bit of a novelty is Blavod, a black vodka which derives its inky coloring from the herb catechu. While the Blavod tastes no different from other vodkas, it certainly makes a design statement.

FRANCE

Another powerful entry in the ultrapremium vodka sweepstakes is Grey Goose, a distillate made using mineral water from the Gente Springs of Cognac. Purified with champagne limestone, the vodka is packaged in an elegant frosted bottle scattered with flying geese. Grey Goose Vodka L'Orange is delicious over ice or mixed into a French Cosmopolitan.

ITALY

Mezzaluna is made from semolina grain, the same grain used to make pasta. This gives the vodka a unique and slightly nutty flavor. It's triple-distilled and quadruple-filtered, which makes Mezzaluna as clean and clear as most other vodkas, but the distinctive flavor of semolina sets it apart.

CANADA

Pearl Vodka, introduced in 1999, is made from Canadian winter wheat and Rocky Mountain water. Distilled five times in micro-batches, the vodka is packaged in a distinctive clear bottle with a pearl-topped cork stopper. It has won numerous awards, including "Best of Category" at the 2000 World Spirits Competition.

JAPAN

The Suntory Company was started in 1899 by Shinjiro Torii, and its first product was Akadama sweet wine. Today this giant corporation produces wine, beer, whiskey, soft drinks, soup, and pharmaceuticals, among other things.

Suntory makes a crisp and very clean vodka that is packaged in a beautiful, squared-off bottle decorated with Japanese calligraphy and a handsome drawing of trees. The 80-proof version is elegant and smooth, with a dry, refreshing finish, the 100-proof variety is fiery and intense, but still retains a fresh, clean quality. These vodkas are excellent in mixed drinks and charming on the rocks.

UNITED STATES

Skyy Vodka, a San Francisco-based spirit, is delicious and beautifully presented in a cobalt blue bottle. Skyy Citrus makes an excellent addition to Cosmopolitans and is also quite tasty served very cold and straight up.

Rain, distilled in Kentucky from organic grain and limestone water, hit the shelves in a raindrop-shaped bottle with a blue glass stopper.

Blue Ice is a superpremium vodka made from Idaho potatoes. It is distilled and bottled in Rigby, Idaho, by Silver Creek Distillery, the only manufacturer of potato vodka in North America. The vodka is delicious alone or mixed into a cocktail.

Charbay vodkas, distilled by Domaine Charbay winery in Ukiah, California, are deliciously flavored vodkas made from the freshest fruits. The Charbay Meyer Lemon adds extra sweetness to a traditional Lemon Drop, while the Charbay Ruby Red Grapefruit simply sings in a Sea Breeze. Enjoy these vodkas, along with the Charbay Key Lime and Charbay Blood Orange, on their own, with a splash of tonic, or mixed into one of the drinks below.

Classics

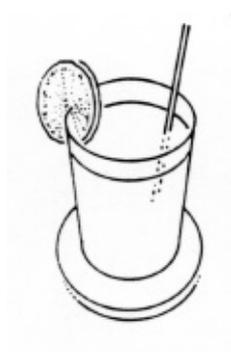
Black Russian

1½ ounces vodka

¾ounce coffee liqueur

1 scoop crushed ice

Combine all ingredients in a shaker or blender. Mix well and pour into a chilled old-fashioned glass.



Bloody Mary

2 ounces vodka

4 to 6 ounces tomato juice

1 teaspoon lemon juice

¼ teaspoon Worcestershire sauce

Several dashes of Tabasco

Pinch of white pepper

Several pinches of celery salt, or to taste

½ teaspoon chopped dill (fresh or dried)

In a shaker or blender, mix all ingredients with ice. Strain the mixture into a chilled Collins glass. Add additional ice cubes if necessary.

Bombay Mary

1½ ounces vodka

4 ounces tomato juice

1½ teaspoon curry powder, or to taste

Pinch of ground coriander

Pinch of celery seed or celery salt

Dash of soy sauce, or to taste

Dash of Worcestershire sauce

Dash of Tabasco

Dash of lemon juice

1 scoop crushed ice

Stir together all ingredients in a 14-ounce double old-fashioned glass.

Cajun Martini

1½ to 3 ounces vodka

1 thin garlic slice

Several slices of pickled jalapeño pepper

Several pickled cocktail onions

Dash of dry vermouth

Let the vodka steep for about an hour, with garlic, pepper, and onions, in a sealed container in the refrigerator or freezer. Combine the steeped vodka and vermouth in a mixing glass with ice. Strain into a chilled cocktail glass. Garnish with the pepper slice or onions, blotting to remove vinegar taste.

Harvey Wallbanger

1½ ounces vodka

4 ounces orange juice

½ ounce Galliano

Pour the vodka and orange juice into a chilled collins glass with several ice cubes. Stir well. Top off the glass with a Galliano float.

Kamikaze

1½ ounces vodka

Splash of lime juice

Splash of triple sec

Lime wedge

Mix the vodka, lime juice, and triple sec in a shaker with crushed ice. Strain the mixture into a martini glass and garnish with the lime wedge.

Moscow Mule

2 to 3 ounces vodka

1 teaspoon lime juice

Ginger beer

Lime slice or wedge

Pour the vodka and lime juice into a chilled highball glass with several ice cubes. Stir. Top off with the ginger beer and garnish with the lime.

Salty Dog I

Pinch of salt

Pinch of granulated sugar

Lime wedge

2 ounces vodka

Grapefruit juice

On a sheet of wax paper, mix together the salt and sugar. With the lime wedge, moisten the rim of an old-fashioned glass. Press the rim of the glass onto the wax paper until it is evenly coated. Fill the glass with several ice cubes, the vodka, and the grapefruit juice. Stir well and serve.

Screwdriver

2 ounces vodka

5 ounces orange juice

Combine vodka and orange juice, along with one scoop of ice, in a collins glass. Mix well.

Sea Breeze I

2 ounces vodka

3 ounces grapefruit juice

3 ounces cranberry juice

1 scoop crushed ice

Mix all ingredients in a shaker. Pour the mixture into a chilled highball glass.

Vodka Gimlet I

2 ounces vodka

½ ounce Rose's lime juice

Combine all ingredients in a mixing glass with several ice cubes. Stir and strain into a chilled cocktail glass.

Vodka Gimlet II

1½ ounces vodka

1 ounce fresh lime juice

½ ounce sugar syrup

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