

A COCKTAIL SAMPLER

Presenting Our Favorite Libations

By Tamar Love Grande

Published by Swank Martini Company, 2004

Beer, wine and alcoholic punches might be lovely beverages, but there is just something about the timelessly hip sophistication of a cocktail that gets me every time.

The merest whiff of fine liquor sends me straight into a cool, dimly lit room, at the center of which is a polished oak bar railed in spit-shined brass. In the background, an acoustic trio plays evocative jazz, and low laughter complements the sweet rhubarb of polite, clandestine conversation. The bartender, stepping up to take my order, cocks his head, his lip twitched into a wry smile: "What'll it be, ma'am?"

In this milieu, nothing will do but to order a cocktail, a pleasing concoction of smooth liquor enhanced by sweet liqueur and, perhaps, a treat.

The Roaring Twenties

Cocktails first became popular during the Prohibition, when the production, sale and consumption of any form of alcoholic beverage was illegal. Not to be swayed by a silly little law, people took to brewing homemade spirits in their bathtubs, basements and distilleries.

The products of these dubious experiments, while potent, were unpleasant tasting...some were downright undrinkable! But by adding a few liqueur, juices and sweeteners, the low-grade spirits became palatable, and the popularity of the cocktail soared.

As time went by and laws changed, cocktails became fashionable across the United States and throughout Europe. In current culture, cocktails are extremely popular with novice drinkers and connoisseurs alike and remain a staple at fine drinking establishments.

Presentation is Everything

While a drink is a drink is a drink, you won't enjoy the experience of sipping a cocktail unless care is taken with its presentation. Eschew the highball glasses and tumblers and opt for a icy martini glass. The cool, streamlined goblet will keep your drink frosty, while the long stem prevents your warm hands from adding heat where it isn't wanted.

Twirl the stem between your thumb and forefinger as you take a sip. Feel the chilled liquid slip over your tongue and down your throat, into your stomach, where it explodes with delicious heat. Now that's a cocktail.

The Well-Stocked Bar

Before you stock your bar with fine liquor, be sure you have the tools you'll need to create a truly sublime cocktail:

- Aluminum cocktail shaker
- Strainer
- Jigger
- Paring and serrated knives



True cocktail connoisseurs will also want to stock up on sexy swizzle sticks, cocktail napkins and a wide variety of mixes, fresh fruit and liqueurs.

A Few of Our Favorite Drinks

While The Martini is indubitably the classic American cocktail, a few elegant winners have become popular in recent years:

Cosmopolitan

A new classic, the Cosmopolitan is the drink of choice for sophisticates everywhere. A flawless blend of liquor, liqueur and fresh fruit juices, Cosmopolitans are even sassier when served in Swank's streamlined Swerve' [Stem Glass](#).



2 oz. Vodka
2 oz. Cranberry Juice
1 oz. Lime Juice
¾ oz. Cointreau
Lime Twist

Mix vodka, Cointreau and fruit juices in a cocktail shaker over ice. Strain into a chilled Swerve' [Clear Stem Glass](#) and dress with a twist of lime.

Side Car

This old favorite tastes as fresh as it did in the heyday of Swing music. Swank's [Swinger](#), which gives a jaunty twist to the classic martini glass, is the Side Car's ideal vessel.



1 oz. Brandy
1/2 oz. Triple Sec
Dash of Sour Mix
1 T Sugar

Shake brandy, Triple Sec and sour mix over ice and strain into a chilled, sugar-frosted [Swinger](#).

Lemon Drop

The cobalt blue stem of Swank's [Swerve' Blue Stem Glass](#) is the perfect complement to the buttery yellow color of the Lemon Drop, a delightfully sour twist on the classic Side Car.



1½ oz. Citron Vodka
¾ oz. Lemon Juice
1 tsp. Sugar + 1 T Sugar, divided
Lemon Wedges

In a cocktail shaker over cracked ice, pour citron vodka, lemon juice and 1 tsp. sugar. Sugar-frost a chilled Swank [Swerve' Blue Stem Glass](#) by first rubbing the rim with a lemon wedge and then setting the juiced rim onto a plate of sugar. Strain the cocktail into the prepared glass, and garnish with a thin lemon wheel.

Appletini

This saucy drink is a favorite with the ladies, who love the sweet and sour blend of apple and vodka. What better presentation than Swank's flirty [Omega Treat?](#)



2 oz. Vodka
1 oz. Apple Pucker
1 dash Pineapple Juice
1 dash Sour Mix
Maraschino Cherry

Combine vodka, Apple Pucker, pineapple juice and sour mix in a shaker with ice, shake well and pour into a chilled [Omega Treat](#). Garnish with a cherry.

Chocolate Martini

Swank's extra-large [Tank](#) glass is the perfect goblet for serving up this rich, chocolate concoction. The Hershey's Kiss will tempt tasters to drain the Tank in seconds.



1 oz. Vanilla Vodka
1 oz. White Crème de Cacao
Sweetened Cocoa Powder
Hershey's Kiss

Shake vodka and crème de cacao over ice. Frost the rim of a chilled [Swank Tank](#) with sweetened cocoa powder (hot chocolate mix will also work). Place a Hershey's kiss point-up in the bottom of the glass. Pour cocktail into glass slowly, being careful not to disrupt the cocoa powder, which can cloud the drink. Serve with a smile.