

THE CHEAT'S GUIDE TO GOOD COCKTAILS

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And, of course, to all the human guinea-pigs who have been greeted: "Here, you must try one of these – it's my latest creation....."

THE AUTHOR

ANTHONY ZAUSMER was born on the Wirral in 1953 and responded to the call of the Bar while studying for a degree in Sociology at the Polytechnic of Central London. He was introduced to making cocktails by John Bolton, formerly General Manager of the "Dog and Fox", Wimbledon Village.

Zausmer founded Nelly's Trump Catering Consultants in 1982 and perfected his cocktail-making during contracts at "Odiles Restaurant", Caterham, "Atmosphere", in Birkenhead, and the "Ritz Cabaret Club", also in Birkenhead.

INTRODUCTION

Welcome to the Cheat's Guide to Good Cocktails.

Everyone knows what a cheat is, but what is a good cocktail?

The origin of the word "Cocktail" to describe a mixed drink is extremely hazy, with conflicting theories abounding – most as fanciful as the drinks themselves. The French, however, seem to have much to answer for.

According to one piece of folk-lore, an inn-keeper in America is said to have decorated drinks during the War of Independence with the tail feathers of a chicken stolen from the British. So delighted were the French customers that they proposed a toast, "Vive le cocktail!" Back home in France, mixed wine cups were traditionally known in Bordeaux as "Coquetels".

An expatriate Frenchman in New Orleans is the source of yet another fairy-tale; this one involves an enterprising fellow who is reputed to have served drinks in double-ended egg-cups known as "Coquetiers" – pronounced "cocktails" by the native Americans. Quite why anyone should drink from an egg-cup has never been explained.

From across the Rio Grande comes a Mexican myth which would have us believe that when a local chief's daughter, the exotically-named X-octli, served drinks to appreciative American sailors, in her honour they called them "cocktails" – the nearest pronunciation they could reach of her name. And the Mexicans called us "Gringos"!

Probably the first discernible reference to cocktails as potent mixtures occurs in the 1871 ballad 'An American Cocktail' which tells of the bored rich boozers on the legendary Mississippi steamers filling buckets with every liquor on board and drinking the resulting concoctions. I've never worked on the Mississippi, but I've sure served a few of these!

Certainly cocktails, as we know them, achieved prominence in the U.S.A. during Prohibition of the Roaring Twenties when '*bath-tub*' spirits were mixed with sweetening ingredients to mask the rough liquor in order to produce palatable drinks. And there you have the rather colourful history of the cocktail!

In contemporary times the advent of the electric blender, the modern ice machine, the cheapness of foreign travel and the greater availability of exotic spirits and liqueurs have undoubtedly all contributed to the recent growth of cocktails as the sophisticated fun drinks of the Eighties.

The explosion of interest in cocktails has, unfortunately spawned many poor imitations, which prompted the decision to let you into the secrets of the lazy way of creating masterpieces every time; wherever possible I have tried to preserve the traditional methods of cocktail-making and have only taken short-cuts when I genuinely believe the results have been justified by the means.

To use the Guide is as easy as falling off a log; after you have read the sections on Equipment, Glass-ware, Garnish and Methods you will be ready to produce delicious cocktails, the professional way.

Drinks are grouped alphabetically under humorous chapter headings for entertaining reading; in the comprehensive index, however, you will find the cocktails cross-referenced by name, ingredients and flavour: just look up your favourite flavour of tippie and you will be signposted to every possible permutation.

I hope you will gain as much enjoyment from making and drinking the cocktails as I had in compiling and writing the book.

Anthony Zausmer
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BAR EQUIPMENT

I make my living from advising commercial clients how to design and stock a working cocktail bar and how to achieve maximum profitability from the sale of cocktails, so equipment requirements will obviously vary according to the application. Nevertheless, whether you are making cocktails as a business, or posing at home in front of your friends, certain items are essential.

BAR SPOON: Oval bowl of standard size, which is essential for the recipes here. At the end of the handle is a flag plate used for crushing sugar cubes or mint – as in Mint Julep (75).

BLENDER: Used for liquidising. Commercial or domestic appliances may be used. Blades on a domestic model may wear out although the new breed e.g. Magi-mix are more durable and therefore ideal.

CLOTHS: Proper glass-cloths are a worthwhile investment as tea-towels frequently leave a deposit of lint on the glasses.

FUNNEL: Essential for decanting expensive liquor!

ICE BUCKET: Metal is unsuitable as ice melts too quickly. Should be easy to keep clean as impurities in ice can taint the drinks.

ICE SCOOP: Size is particularly important to comply with the measurements given.

KNIFE AND CHOPPING BOARD: Small stainless steel kitchen knife and commercially available bread-board or similar are ideal, although should be used only for cutting fruit. Dirty utensils can ruin a drink.

MEASURES: For the purposes of this book, only 1/6 Gill thimble-style is required, although in the commercial bar a 1/3 Gill will be essential for dispensing Vermouths. Measures must be rinsed immediately after use.

MIXING GLASS: A plain glass jug with a lip for pouring. The base of your cocktail shaker can be used as a substitute, although the purists will say that, being of metal, is not as suitable as a custom-made mixing glass. It is important to obtain a jug which will accept your strainer.

POURERS: Usually made of stainless steel, although plastic ones are also available, neither type is cheap but they make life easier in controlling the flow of liquid into the measure.

SHAKER: These are available in 2 types. The standard shaker comes in 3 pieces including a base cone, a strainer and a cap. The Boston Shaker comes in 2 interlocking cones – is much quicker to use and holds far more.

STIRRERS: Readily available plastic ones are ideal for the professional bar or for use at home and may be re-used after scrupulous washing.

STRAINER: There are several types available. Most common is the Hawthorne, which has a coiled spring around its outer edge to provide a tight fit inside the cocktail shaker or mixing glass.

STRAWS: For long drinks, flexi-straws are the only suitable type. Where sip straws are called for, although custom-made ones are available, ordinary drinking straws may be cut in half.

WAITER'S FRIEND CORKSCREW/BOTTLE OPENER: Although any type of corkscrew may be used, the recommended type have the advantage of fitting snugly into one's pocket – so they don't get mislaid – and have all the facilities one will need, on one tool.