

A Cook's Canvas

Food + Photography

Friday Cocktail Hour with Aviation Gin

Posted on [March 8, 2014](#)



Those who know me know that I enjoy a cocktail every now and then, regardless of the weather or season. Whether I'm mixing up margaritas with friends and family or just stirring up martinis at home with my husband while watching movies, cocktails aren't just for parties or special occasions. In the depths of a Midwestern deep-freeze, if you are suffering the winter blues like I am, a classic French cocktail might be just the thing to add a twist of sunshine to an otherwise gloomy winter day.

I should note that I've never enjoyed Gin; we've tried to make friends numerous times but somehow I can never manage to acquire a taste for it. I would always take a few sips then slide my glass to my husband to finish the rest. There was some flavor that overwhelmed whatever it was mixed with, a flavor I don't much care for. Recently I tried an American style Gin, one that is not dominated by juniper but does not lack flavor. Aviation Gin, produced in Oregon, has notes of lavender, cardamom, and sarsaparilla, which tastes familiar as Gin but with a whole new freshness! After tasting a few Aviation cocktails last fall, and experimenting with a few classic cocktail recipes at home, I've realized that I *do* like Gin. Very much in fact.

The French 75





A favorite of Ernest Hemingway, the French 75 was created in 1915 at the New York bar in Paris—later known as Harry’s New York Bar—by Scottish barman Harry MacElhone. The combination was said to have such a kick that it felt like being shelled with the powerful French 75mm field gun, also called a “75 Cocktail”, or “Soixante Quinze” in French. The French 75 was popularized in America at the Stork Club in New York; I find this cocktail very elegantly potent.

Though Champagne is traditionally used, you can substitute just about any good sparkling wine for this cocktail. And who doesn’t love Champagne?! In Europe, Champagne is not only used to celebrate, you will often see people enjoying a glass at bistros as an aperitif before breakfast. The bubbles not only loosen you up but also cleanse the palate and awaken the taste buds. This would be a great morning cocktail, with its citrus-sweet taste.

There are variations to this cocktail including the use of cognac in lieu of gin; some pouring it over ice in a Collins glass while others prefer it from champagne flute. I prefer mine non-diluted in period-correct glassware. Either way, this simple, beautiful, refreshing cocktail is perfect any time of day, and is its own special occasion served in a glass.



French 75

recipe courtesy of Aviation Gin

1 oz. Aviation Gin
1 oz. freshly pressed lemon juice
3/4 oz. simple syrup
3 oz. Brut Champagne
Cherries (fresh or dried)

In a pint glass or shaker, add the gin, lemon juice, and simple syrup. Shake vigorously. Add Champagne and strain into a chilled cocktail glass (I used antique 1920's French Champagne glasses) and garnish with a lemon twist and a cherry.

Note: You can buy simple syrup, but it's very easy to make your own. Put equal parts sugar and water into a small pot, bring to a boil, and stir until the sugar is dissolved. Let it cool and come to room temperature before using in cocktails.





Muddled Blackberry Gimlet



If you are struggling with this blisteringly cold winter and wish spring would hurry up and get here already, this may be the cocktail for you! Begin this ruby-colored cocktail by muddling blackberries, then mix in some ice cold Gin and a squeeze of lime juice. Blackberries have a nice, tart-sweet balance and add a jam-like flavor to cocktails.



Muddled Blackberry Gimlet
recipe courtesy of Aviation Gin

- 7 blackberries – muddled
- 2 oz. Aviation Gin
- 3/4 oz. freshly pressed lime juice
- 3/4 oz. simple syrup

In a pint glass or shaker, muddle the blackberries. Add the gin, lime juice, and simple syrup. Fill with ice and shake vigorously. Strain into a chilled cocktail glass. Garnish with blackberries and lime wedge.





References

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/French_75_\(cocktail\)](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/French_75_(cocktail))