

COOL HUNTING

Six Summery Cocktails

by David Graver

It's easy when summer rolls around to default to the good old gin and tonic. That said, it's far from the only way to maximize the spirit's freshness. After surveying multiple venues in NYC, we found four gin drinks that truly reimagine the way it's consumed. But for anyone who's over gin as a go-to summertime spirit, we've also got a simple-to-make vodka cocktail that's entirely refreshing and one celebratory rum punch for the parties we are all bound to throw (or contribute to). Even the more complex recipes below are worth making at home—though if you're a New Yorker it's just as easy to pop over to the venues and take it easy in the hands of capable bar masters.



St. James Guardsman

There are plenty of venues within lower Manhattan's Conrad Hotel, but ATRIO's St. James Guardsman cocktail won us over with its use of both Grand Marnier and grapefruit juice atop gin. Topping it all off with prosecco lends to the buoyancy of the mixed drink and altogether it's bursting with flavor but never too much.

2 oz Bombay Sapphire gin

1 oz Grand Marnier

.5 oz elderflower cordial

2 oz grapefruit juice

Prosecco

Combine all ingredients. Stir. Top with prosecco.

Spring Tea

Featured at contemporary tiki haven Mother of Pearl, and created by Jane Danger, the Spring Tea maximizes rhubarb, matcha tea powder and Aperol to great affect. This is another complex recipe, developed by a mastermind, but for anyone with an educated palate that likes to have fun, the gin acts as a launch pad toward something truly special.

1.25 oz Aviation American Gin
.75 oz fresh squeezed lemon juice
.5 oz cane syrup
.5 oz Aperol
.75 oz rhubarb compote or purée
Matcha tea powder and apple blossoms, for garnish

Add gin, lemon and cane syrup into a shaking tin and whip shake. Set aside. In a Collins glass, add Aperol and rhubarb compote or purée, then fill glass with crushed ice. Pour reserved cocktail in tin into Collins glass, and dust liberally with matcha tea powder and apple blossoms. To make your own rhubarb compote, combine one pound rhubarb with one quart of sugar and one quart of water in a saucepan. Cook for 15-20 minutes on medium heat, and purée until smooth.



Le Gin

A play between a Bee's Knees and Gin Sour, the Le Gin from Manhattan's Le Turtle makes for a surprisingly refreshing drink. The gin base has been infused with black tea leaves for six to 10 hours and it's complemented by the muddled cardamom. The lemon, honey and frothy egg whites add levity and the end result—all the way down to the bitters—feel like an uncommon approach to summer spice.

8 pieces muddled cardamom
1.5 oz Earl Grey-infused Beefeater gin
.5 oz Cocchi Americano
1 oz lemon
.75 oz honey
.75 oz egg whites

Combine ingredients. Shake. Serve up in rocks glass and garnish with two dashes of Angostura bitters.

Señorita Spritz

From the current menu at Brooklyn's Llama Inn comes the Señorita Spritz. This is the most complicated recipe in the bunch—as it requires making both a muña syrup and strawberry shrub at home—but end result balances sweetness, spice and bubbles in an exceptionally delightful drink.

.25 oz. muña syrup*
.25 oz. strawberry shrub**
1 oz. Fino sherry
.75 oz. gin
.75 oz. St. Germain
2 oz. cava
splash of Perrier

In a glass, combine all ingredients over ice except for the Perrier. Stir to mix, and then top with Perrier.

To make a muña syrup place 2 tbsp. of dried muña in a quart container. Add hot water and steep for 10 minutes. Strain, then add 2 cups of sugar. Stir until dissolved.

To make your own strawberry shrub, cut 2 cups of strawberries and place in a pan with 1 cup of red wine vinegar, 1 cup of water, and 2 cups of sugar. Bring to simmer, stirring to dissolve the sugar. Let simmer for 20 minutes. Let cool. Strain out the strawberries—save these for other uses!



Copperface

The simplest, most direct cocktail on our list, the Copperface, employs only three ingredients but the end result makes for a fruit basket of fun—for lack of better words. With a base of Absolut Elyx, who imagined the mixed drink, Calvados (apple brandy) and apricot brandy go hand-in-hand for a highly palatable sipper that's not too sweet but definitely carries lots of booze.

2 oz Absolut Elyx vodka

.5 oz Calvados

.25 oz apricot brandy

Stir over cubed ice and strain into a chilled cocktail coupe.

The Real Jamaican Rum Punch

For a celebration requiring a bigger batch, Appleton Estate's The Real Jamaican Rum Punch is simple and sweet but incredibly fun (and effective). Grenadine brings cherry sweetness, cut by the lemon juice and water.

1 part lime (or lemon) juice

2 parts grenadine

3 parts Appleton Estate V/X Jamaica Rum

4 parts water

Mix ingredient together in a punch bowl or pitcher with ice.

Le Gin image by David Graver, Señoritz Spritz image courtesy of Eric Medsker, all other images courtesy of respective venues or brands.