

SIGNATURE COCKTAILS



PHAIDON

AMANDA SCHUSTER

YEAR	🕒
ORIGIN	📍
INVENTOR	👤
PREMISES	🏠
ALCOHOL TYPE	🍷
GLASSWARE	🍸

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BLUE BLAZER

🕒 1850S
📍 NEW YORK CITY, USA
👤 JERRY THOMAS

🏨 OCCIDENTAL HOTEL
🍷 WHISKY
🍵 HEATPROOF GLASS MUG

A Blue Blazer is a Scotch hot toddy that is prepared as the liquid is passed back and forth between two mugs while set aflame. Although its origin is up for debate, this pyrotechnic spectacle is closely linked to nineteenth-century New York City bartender Jerry Thomas—the most widely circulated illustration of him even depicts him gracefully making one in a long arc—who was the first to write down a recipe, which appeared in his 1862 book *How To Mix Drinks*.

And if Thomas isn't the originator (there is evidence he once took credit), he could at least be attributed with perfecting the quintessential Blue Blazer specs and technique from a version he either first witnessed during his time serving in the US Navy, or much later at the St. Nicholas Hotel while he was working nearby at the Occidental.

Drink historian David Wondrich notes that by the 1880s this style of flair bartending was already passé and, by the 1930s, so were the high-proof single malt Scotch whiskies that

Note: It is important to clear the prep area of anything flammable before proceeding, and, as an added precaution, have a damp towel and perhaps even a fire extinguisher at hand. Use flameproof mugs with ample handles.

Serves 2

- 4 oz (120 ml) high-proof (50% ABV or over) Scotch whisky
- 2 barspoons Demerara or raw sugar
- 3 oz (90 ml) boiling water, plus extra to heat mugs
- Garnish: 2 lemon twists

were inherently flammable. However, the late twentieth- and early twenty-first-century obsession with antiquated techniques, as well as the prevalence of cask strength whiskies, have, well, reignited appreciation for this sort of bar theater.

The original Blue Blazer recipe calls for Scotch, though as the cocktail and the technique of passing a flaming liquid between mugs have become synonymous, modern interpretations often swap out the Scotch for other whiskies and base spirits—rum, gin, tequila, mezcal, brandy, other liqueurs, etc. It's been noted, particularly by modern cocktail revivalist Dale DeGroff, that if not using a high-strength spirit, preheating it prior to setting the whole drink ablaze should do the trick.

Preheat two glass toddy mugs, or other non-ceramic, heatproof mugs, with boiling water, then discard before proceeding. Add the whisky, sugar, and 3 oz (90 ml) boiling water to one of the mugs, then carefully light the liquid within. Pass the flaming liquid between the mugs (Thomas was known for his ability to perform this task in a long, perfect, blazing arc, but it's more than acceptable at first to just get it between the mugs over a much shorter distance) at least four or five times. Divide the liquid evenly between the mugs and, if necessary, extinguish the liquid using the bottom of the opposite mug. Garnish each mug with a lemon twist.



ADONIS

🕒 1884/85
📍 NEW YORK CITY, USA
👤 JOSEPH F. MCKONE

🏠 HOFFMAN HOUSE
🍷 SHERRY
👤 NICK & NORA

The Adonis has the distinction of being the first popular low-ABV, sherry-based cocktail in recorded history. It's named for a wildly successful musical that first opened in Chicago in the early 1880s; the tribute was invented a couple of years later by Joseph F. McKone, head bartender at Madison Square's Hoffman House hotel in New York City, to celebrate the 500th Broadway performance of what was the *Hamilton* of its day.

This cocktail, so closely associated with theater, was invented in what was itself a showstopper of a bar, which, according to cocktail historian David Wondrich in *The Oxford Companion to Spirits & Cocktails*, included paintings by famous artists, such as J. M. W. Turner, and a nymph-tastic centerpiece by William-Adolphe Bouguereau, as well as an authentic Napoleonic tapestry. The grandiose bar would not survive the 1890s, but the cocktail lived on as a signature at the

Waldorf-Astoria hotel, which is sometimes incorrectly cited as its origin. The recipe appears in the 1935 *Old Waldorf-Astoria Bar Book*, as well as the 2016 update by then beverage manager Frank Caiafa.

Think of Adonis as the older and more *zaftig* of the two most famous sherry-and-vermouth aperitifs of its day—the other being the Bamboo, invented a couple of years later, made with vermouth blanc. While they both call for a drier style of sherry, the use of sweet vermouth in the Adonis adds more body and heft, as well as spice notes. As a popular go-to, low-ABV cocktail option, as with the Bamboo, modern recipes for the Adonis often call for a higher ratio of sherry to vermouth than the original recipe. Aside from its popularity in modern cocktail bars, it has enjoyed new life in wine bars, served alongside tapas and cheese boards.

- 1½ oz (45 ml) dry sherry (use Manzanilla, Fino, Palo Cortado, or dry Oloroso)
- 1½ oz (45 ml) sweet vermouth
- 2 dashes orange bitters

- Garnish: orange peel

Stir all ingredients in a mixing glass with ice until well chilled. Strain into a Nick & Nora glass. Express the orange peel, skin side down, into the glass, then garnish with the peel twist.



RAMOS GIN FIZZ

🕒 1888

📍 NEW ORLEANS, USA

👤 HENRY CHARLES RAMOS

🏠 IMPERIAL CABINET SALOON

🍷 GIN

🍹 HIGHBALL

One of the top signature cocktails associated with the city of New Orleans, Louisiana is undoubtedly the Ramos Gin Fizz. People love to sip this aromatic, pillowy delight as much as busy bartenders hate having to make it.

The cocktail is named for Henry Charles Ramos, head bartender of Pat Moran's Imperial Cabinet Saloon from 1887 until Prohibition. Although he may not be the creator of the ingredients part of the recipe, what he *can* take credit for, according to *The Oxford Companion to Spirits & Cocktails*, is the precise and rather strenuous technique of preparing what is essentially a combination of two other popular cocktails of that era—the Silver Fizz (aka New Orleans Fizz) and the Cream Lemonade—shaking the daylights out of it for several minutes (Ramos reportedly shook for 12 minutes), then adding club soda.

- ½ oz (15 ml) fresh lemon juice
- ½ oz (15 ml) fresh lime juice
- ⅓ oz (10 g) powdered (icing) sugar
- 1½ oz (45 ml) dry or Old Tom-style gin (the latter would have been used in the early 1900s)
- ½ oz (15 ml) egg white
- 3 or 4 drops orange blossom water
- 1 oz (30 ml) heavy (double) cream
- 1 oz (30 ml) soda water, chilled

The result should form a billowy cloud of egg white foam over a creamy, fizzy sour with a subtle florescence from the orange blossom water.

These days, certain bartenders around town, such as Chris McMillian at Revel, pride themselves on shaking Ramos Gin Fizzes from scratch (he even uses a timer). Other venues, such as Court of Two Sisters, use a special dedicated soda jerk gadget (think boozy egg cream) to prep theirs. A Tales of the Cocktail convention event in the mid-2010s even showcased groups of bartenders taking turns shaking them relay style, a popular method back in the early 1900s when some bars hired “shaker boys” for the task.

Below is a tried-and-true recipe for making a Ramos Gin Fizz. A yummy treat is the reward for a vigorous upper body workout.

Add all ingredients except the cream and soda water to a shaker filled with ice pellets and shake for a good 15 seconds. Add the cream and shake again for at least 30 seconds, longer for a bigger head of foam. Strain into a chilled highball glass over the soda water and watch the froth work its magic.



MARY PICKFORD

🕒 1922
📍 HAVANA, CUBA
👤 FRED KAUFMAN

🏠 SEVILLA-BILTMORE HOTEL
🍷 RUM
🍸 COUPE

Though not technically a cocktail writer, the British journalist and playwright Basil Woon was so infatuated by the confluence of personalities in 1920s Cuban cocktail culture, that it inspired him to write *When It's Cocktail Time in Cuba*. Rather than being a straightforward cocktail book, it chronicles his observations of the buzzy scene in its heyday.

One of the figures he centered on was Fred Kaufman, a charismatic, well-traveled bartender from Liverpool, England who worked with German-American bartender Eddie Woelke (known for his take on El Presidente, among other classics) at the Sevilla-Biltmore Hotel in Havana, Cuba.

Woon denotes that the majority of Kaufman's creations tended to center around rum and pineapple. The most famous of these was named for the Canadian-American silent screen starlet Mary Pickford, a lead in some of the highest grossing movies of the 1910s,

and in the 1920s one of the few women who directed and produced her own movies. While Pickford did make movies in Cuba in the mid-1910s, Woon's account that Pickford vacationed there in the 1920s—beguiling the likes of Kaufman while flanked by friend Charlie Chaplin and her husband, Douglas Fairbanks, who would have been among scores of Prohibition-era, cocktail-seeking jet-setters—was debunked in the 2010s. According to filmmaker and Pickford-ologist Cari Beauchamp, Pickford was too vain about the effect of the island's high humidity levels on her famous curls to choose it as a vacation destination.

The Mary Pickford endures as one of the most popular classic Cuban cocktails of all time, found on menus around the world. While Kaufman's 1928 original is simply rum, pineapple juice, and grenadine, the modern variation adds some maraschino liqueur for texture.

- 2 oz (60 ml) white or gold rum (preferably real Havana Club from Cuba)
- 1½ oz (45 ml) pineapple juice (fresh, if possible)
- 5 to 6 dashes maraschino liqueur
- ½ oz (15 ml) grenadine

- Garnish: cocktail cherry, if desired

Shake all ingredients with ice until well-chilled and frothy. Strain into a coupe or cocktail glass. Garnish with a cherry, if using.



SEAPEA FIZZ

🕒 1930S
📍 PARIS, FRANCE
👤 FRANK MEIER

🏨 RITZ HOTEL
🍷 ABSINTHE
🍸 COUPE

Frank Meier was the celebrated, “cracker jack” head barkeep at the Ritz in Paris, France. Born in Austria, he had worked in the hotel hospitality business in both Paris and London from a young age, and was tapped to open the Ritz bar in 1920, serving there through World War II. The Seapea Fizz — which originally calls for sweetened Anis “Pernod fils”, lemon, and soda water — is one of the most famous cocktails featured in his stylish 1936 book *The Artistry of Mixing Drinks*, although the recipe has been tweaked over the years.

There is an entire section of *Artistry* devoted to the fizz genre of cocktails, including a drink called the “New Orleans Fizz” that closely resembles the Ramos Gin Fizz, and a raspberry liqueur and sloe gin “Ruby Fizz”. The notation for this drink is “Seapea ‘C.P.’ — Special for Mr. Cole Porter, famous composer of lyrics

and music”. Does that mean Porter drank this tailor-made cocktail at the Ritz bar in Meier’s presence? It’s highly possible.

The original recipe, which lacks much sweetener and could use a binding agent of some sort, might not have people singing “You’re the Top”, but keep in mind that anis liqueur was *de rigueur* in 1920s and ’30s France and Meier would have used a soda siphon for dramatic effect when serving. Modern variations of the Seapea Fizz use absinthe instead of Pernod and additional simple syrup. Also, the drink was just begging for an egg white (perhaps it was even accidentally left out? Anything goes...). Therefore, contemporary recipes call for it, which not only makes the cocktail taste better, but truly lends it the aesthetic quality of sea foam.

- ¾ oz (22 ml) absinthe
- ¾ oz (22 ml) simple syrup
- ¾ oz (22 ml) lemon juice
- 1 egg white
- Soda water, chilled, to top

Add all ingredients except soda water to a cocktail shaker and shake without ice for at least 20 seconds. Add ice and shake for an additional 15–20 seconds. Strain into a coupe glass and top with soda water.



BLUE HAWAII

🕒 1957
📍 WAIKIKI (HAWAII), USA
👤 HARRY YEE

🏠 HAWAIIAN VILLAGE
🍹 BLUE CURAÇAO
🌪️ HURRICANE

Blue Hawaii is a potent tropical cocktail consisting of white rum, vodka, fresh pineapple juice, sweet-and-sour mix, and blue curaçao liqueur, which lends a striking, deep blue-green hue to the presentation. It is understandably often confused with the Blue Hawaiian cocktail, which is a variation using coconut cream, but this drink is the original blueprint, as it were.

Harry K. Yee, head bartender of the Hawaiian Village hotel in Waikiki, came up with the recipe for the Blue Hawaii in 1957, when the Netherlands-based Bols liqueur company commissioned a signature drink showcasing the US debut of the product—a spirit infused with the peel of dried Caribbean oranges that has then been dyed blue—presumably as a marketing gimmick since it adds no additional flavor. What could have been a mere ripple in the cocktail ocean turned into a tidal wave, riding the success of the 1956 Elvis Presley

movie of the same name, and the exotic appeal of a blue drink at the height of the tiki era. In Yee’s thirty years at the job, this is the cocktail he is best known for.

While Bols’ original blue curaçao liqueur still exists, several spirits companies in the modern era have come up with their own recipes using natural ingredients, such as butterfly pea powder to cast the blue hue. Blue Hawaii, and its many variations, are still a fixture on the tropical drinks scene, particularly now that most venues are back to making fresh sweet-and-sour mix from squeezed citrus, instead of the powdered or concentrated variety that was more widespread in the late 1960s through to the 1990s.

Depending on who’s making it, the recipe is either shaken or blended. The original was shaken, but a blended Blue Hawaii, to paraphrase the Elvis title track, is still heavenly.

- ¾ oz (22 ml) white rum
- ¾ oz (22 ml) unflavored vodka
- ½ oz (15 ml) blue curaçao liqueur
- 3 oz (90 ml) fresh pineapple juice
- 1 oz (30 ml) Sweet-and-Sour Mix (or use a prepared mix made with fresh citrus)
- Garnish: pineapple wedge and cocktail umbrella

Shake all ingredients with ice until well chilled. Strain into a tall glass over fresh ice. Garnish with a pineapple wedge and cocktail umbrella.

Alternatively, blend all ingredients with ice until smooth. Pour into a tall glass and garnish.

For the Sweet-and-Sour Mix

- 1 cup (200 g) granulated sugar
- 16 oz (480 ml) water
- 4 oz (120 ml) fresh lemon juice
- 4 oz (120 ml) fresh lime juice

Dissolve the sugar in the water in a saucepan over low heat, about 10 to 15 minutes, stirring occasionally. Pour into a jar and let cool. Add the citrus liquids and shake together. Keeps for about a week in the refrigerator and can also be frozen (freeze in cubes for individual cocktails).



SIGNATURE COCKTAILS showcases 200 drinks, each created for a particular person, venue, or country, and all of which have rightfully earned their place in the rich history of cocktail culture. From classics such as Harry's Bar's iconic Bellini, to the up-to-the-minute Twin Cities from New York's ultra-hip Dead Rabbit bar; from daring inventions such as Mexico's Grasshopper Gibson, to Argentina's stylish Clarito; and from the newly created PHAIDON 100 to the instantly recognizable Tequila Sunrise—each cocktail is accompanied by an original text detailing its creation and evolution with stunning photography capturing the essence of each one, and a recipe explaining how to recreate it at home. Curated by drinks writer and cocktail connoisseur Amanda Schuster, and featuring a foreword by the Connaught's master mixologist Agostino Perrone, these are the ultimate must-try cocktails from all corners of the globe.

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