



FALL/WINTER 2021/2022

TU MADRE, BAR MENU F.O.H. TRAINING

Prepared by Ice & Alchemy Bar Consultations

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TU MADRE BAR PROGRAM OVERVIEW

We have a nearly-full bar program at Tu Madre. This means we can make several classic cocktail recipes, modifications, and upgrades that are not listed on the cocktail menu! While there are far too many of these recipes, modifications, and upgrades to list, here are some common requests you might get at Tu Madre that can be made behind the bar.

- “Skinny” cocktails: This refers to any cocktail that is low in sugar. We use a sugar-free simple syrup as an optional sweetener to create skinny cocktails that are still balanced and bright.
- Cadillac Margaritas: This refers to a simple splash of Grand Marnier on top of any margarita. We can easily make Cadillacs and they are an easy upsell offer to guests.
- “Can I get the drink with _____ tequila/mezcal?": All of our menu drinks can be made by hand, meaning we can modify any ingredient in the recipe on-the-fly. We also have a draft handle specifically for this option! We can add any spirit to our draft “virgin” (non-alcoholic) margarita mix to allow for any requested spirit to be made into a margarita.
- "Can you make the drink spicy?": YES! We can make any drink spicy.
- “What is Tequila/Mezcal?": Refer to the Spirits Primer 101 of this bar book. You are required to understand the contents of the Tequila 101 and Mezcal 101 both tequila and mezcal sections.

It is important to become familiar with the options available to you at your bar program. Never tell a guest “no” until you have asked your bartender/bar manager if it is possible to accommodate the guest’s request!

TU MADRE BAR PROGRAM OVERVIEW

FINAL POINTS

- While we have a batched, draft cocktail system, WE ARE NOT LIMITED TO OUR DRAFT COCKTAILS! The draft system helps expedite service in our small bar space.
- This bar program focuses on approachable, street-party style drinks with Mexican flavors and spirits.
- We are a combination of high-volume and craft, meaning we have fast service with well-balanced recipes and fresh ingredients.
- We carry a great selection of agave spirits for people to try. Get to know them!
- Accuracy and consistency are CRUCIAL to any bar program. From the preparation of ingredients to the final garnish on the drink, everything must be accurate and consistent.



EXPLAINING HOUSE COCKTAILS

CLASSIC MARGARITA

"Classic, bright and balanced with 100% agave blanco tequila."

PALATE TYPE: Novice

INGREDIENTS: Reposado Tequila, Orange Curacao, Lime, Agave

FUN FACT: The Margarita is the most popular cocktail in the United States

EASY UP-SELLS:

- Ask if they want to upgrade their tequila. You need to know three tequilas we have behind the bar that you enjoy and can recommend
- See if they want to make it a Cadillac Margarita by adding a splash of Grand Marnier to their margarita.

NOTE: Remember, this cocktail can be made from scratch to accommodate a guest's requests! (all of our cocktails can be made this way!)



EXPLAINING HOUSE COCKTAILS

NO REGRETS MARGARITA

"This unique margarita uses monk fruit, a natural zero-glycemic sweetener to effectively make this a sugar-free, balanced margarita."

PALATE TYPE: Novice, health-focused by being sugar-free

INGREDIENTS: Blanco Tequila, Lime, Monk Fruit, Orange Blossom Water

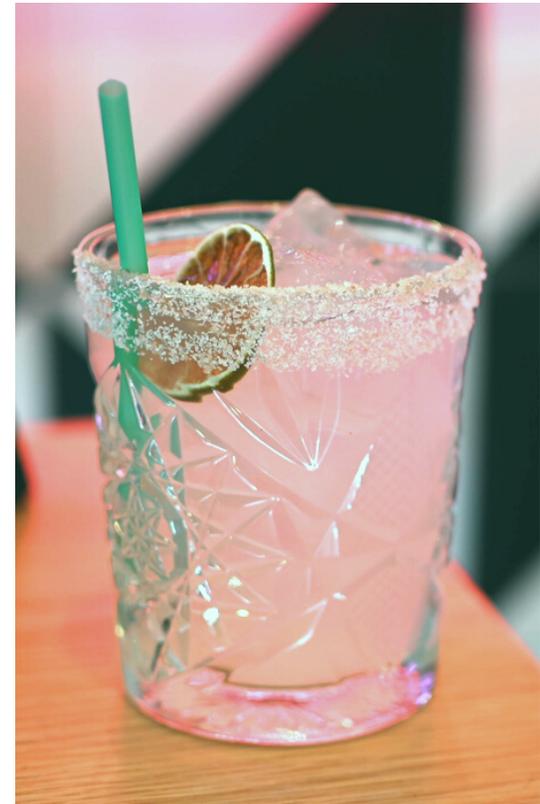
TASTING NOTES: Similar to the Classic Margarita. Brightened with orange blossom water rather than an orange liqueur.

WHAT IS MONK FRUIT?: Monk fruit is a natural sugar substitute that is zero glycemic. It is a common sugar replacement in the health and wellness world.

WHY THIS IS A PERFECTLY BALANCED "SKINNY" MARG: Monk fruit and orange blossom water make the Margarita skinny; the combo gives it a unique sweetness without the calories.

EASY UP-SELLS:

- Ask if they want to upgrade their tequila. You need to know three tequilas we have behind the bar that you enjoy and can recommend



EXPLAINING HOUSE COCKTAILS

MEZCAL MARGARITA

"Refreshing and easy with a just enough smoke."

PALATE TYPE: Novice – Moderate

INGREDIENTS: Mezcal, Lime, Agave

TASTING NOTES: Refreshing and structured with mild – medium smoke.

WHAT IS MEZCAL?: Refer to the Spirit Primer 101 section

EASY UP-SELLS:

- Ask if they want to upgrade their mezcal. You need to know three mezcals we have behind the bar that you enjoy and can recommend
- See if they want to make it a Cadillac Margarita by adding a splash of Grand Marnier to their margarita.



EXPLAINING HOUSE COCKTAILS

LYCHEE-ROSE MARGARITA

"Fun, exotic and tropical take on a classic cocktail."

PALATE TYPE: Novice

INGREDIENTS: Blanco Tequila, Lime, Lychee, Rose Water

TASTING NOTES: Fruity and bright

EASY UP-SELLS:

- Ask if they want to upgrade their tequila. You need to know three tequilas we have behind the bar that you enjoy and can recommend
- See if they want to make it a Cadillac Margarita by adding a splash of Grand Marnier to their margarita.



EXPLAINING HOUSE COCKTAILS

SPICY STRAWBERRY MARGARITA (ON DRAFT)

"Fruity with habanero heat. Can be made with tequila or mezcal."

PALATE TYPE: Novice

INGREDIENTS: Blanco Tequila, Lime, Strawberry, Habanero

TASTING NOTES: Fruity and spicy (and smoky if they choose mezcal)

EASY UP-SELLS:

- Ask if they want to upgrade their tequila/mezcal. You need to know three tequilas we have behind the bar that you enjoy and can recommend.
- See if they want to make it a Cadillac Margarita by adding a splash of Grand Marnier to their margarita.



EXPLAINING HOUSE COCKTAILS

VIRGIN MARGARITA

"This is our non-alcoholic version of a classic margarita."

PALATE TYPE: Novice

INGREDIENTS: Lime, Agave, Orange Blossom Water

TASTING NOTES: Light and citrusy

EASY UP-SELLS:

- Ask if they want to add a flavor to their virgin margarita.



EXPLAINING HOUSE COCKTAILS

FLAVORED MARGARITAS

"All of our margaritas can have one of 4 flavors added to them: strawberry, mango, passion fruit, and Chamoy."

However, if a flavor is added to our No Regrets Margarita, it will add sugar and therefore not be a totally skinny margarita."

PALATE TYPE: Novice

INGREDIENTS: Lime, Agave, Orange Blossom Water

TASTING NOTES: Light and citrusy

EASY UP-SELLS:

- Ask if they want to upgrade their tequila/mezcal. You need to know three tequilas we have behind the bar that you enjoy and can recommend.
- See if they want to make it a Cadillac Margarita by adding a splash of Grand Marnier to their margarita.



EXPLAINING HOUSE COCKTAILS

LEMONGRASS PALOMA

"Crisp, bright, and extremely crushable drink with lemongrass and vibrant citrus."

PALATE TYPE: Novice - Intermediate

INGREDIENTS: Blanco Tequila, Lime, Lemongrass, Grapefruit Soda, Bitters

TASTING NOTES: Citrusy with bright grassy lemon and light baking spices

EASY UP-SELLS:

- Ask if they want to upgrade their tequila. You need to know three tequilas we have behind the bar that you enjoy and can recommend.

EASY SUBSTITUTION SUGGESTION:

- Classic Paloma: Tequila, Lime, Agave, Grapefruit Soda



EXPLAINING HOUSE COCKTAILS

PINEAPPLE SMOKED MULE

"Tropical and fruity with smoke and heat."

PALATE TYPE: Novice – Moderate

INGREDIENTS: Mezcal, Lime, Ginger, Pineapple, Licor 43, Topo Chico

TASTING NOTES: Refreshing and structured with mild – medium smoke.

WHAT IS MEZCAL?: Refer to the Spirit Primer 101 section

WHAT IS LICOR 43?: A Spanish Liqueur that has 43 ingredients, with the loudest flavors being orange and vanilla.

EASY UP-SELLS:

- Ask if they want to upgrade their mezcal. You need to know three mezcals we have behind the bar that you enjoy and can recommend

EASY SUBSTITUTION SUGGESTION:

- Regular tequila or mezcal mule



EXPLAINING HOUSE COCKTAILS

TU MADRE'S MEZCAL OLD FASHIONED

"Bracing and aromatic with hints of smoke, orange, and cardamom."

PALATE TYPE: Moderate - Advanced

INGREDIENTS: Mezcal, Reposado Tequila, Agave, Bitters

TASTING NOTES: Bracing with smoke, cardamom and baking spices

WHAT IS MEZCAL?: Refer to the Spirit Primer 101 section

EASY UP-SELLS:

- Ask if they want to upgrade their mezcal. You need to know three mezcals we have behind the bar that you enjoy and can recommend

EASY SUBSTITUTION SUGGESTION:

- Oaxacan Old Fashioned: a modern classic cocktail that is a more straight-forward mezcal Old Fashioned.



EXPLAINING HOUSE COCKTAILS

STRAWBERRY FROSÉ

"Fruity and aromatic with undertones of key lime. Frosés are so LA"

PALATE TYPE: Novice

INGREDIENTS: Rosé, Vodka, Lime, Strawberry, Key Lime Oil

TASTING NOTES: Fruity with a punch of bright tropical lime



EXPLAINING HOUSE COCKTAILS

HORCHATA TU MADRE

"Creamy almond and rice flavors with baking spices."

PALATE TYPE: Novice

INGREDIENTS: Rum, House Horchata, Bitters

TASTING NOTES: Funky Jamaican rum, creamy almond, cinnamon

EASY UP-SELLS:

- Ask if they want to upgrade their rum or substitute another call spirit. Tequila, mezcal, whiskey, and even gin work great in this drink!



EXPLAINING HOUSE COCKTAILS

BEACH BOY

"Tropical island vibes with bright mango and yuzu flavors backed by a blended rum and spice."

PALATE TYPE: Novice

INGREDIENTS: Rum, Mango, Yuzu, Carrot, Lime, Agave

TASTING NOTES: Funky Jamaican rum, tropical fruit, exotic citrus

WHAT IS YUZU?: An extremely fragrant and bright Asian citrus fruit that tastes like a tangy lemon. It is a rare citrus and expensive.

EASY UP-SELLS:

- Ask if they want to upgrade their rum or substitute another call spirit. Tequila, mezcal, and gin work great in this drink!



EXPLAINING HOUSE COCKTAILS

FROZEN MARGARITA

"Bright and balanced with 100% agave tequila. Just cold AF"

PALATE TYPE: Novice

INGREDIENTS: Tequila, Lime, Agave

TASTING NOTES: Classic and cold

NOTE: This slushy machine has been out of service for far too long but that is because global supply chains have been extremely slow due to Covid-19. We will get this resolved as soon as possible. (disregard this note if the machine has been replaced by the time you read this).



EXPLAINING HOUSE COCKTAILS

BLOODY MARY/MARIA

"Uses our house spicy Bloody Mary mix."

PALATE TYPE: Novice - Intermediate

INGREDIENTS: vodka or Tequila, House Bloody Mary Mix, Habanero

TASTING NOTES: Savory, bracing, medium spice level

WHAT'S IN THE HOUSE BLOODY MARY MIX (main ingredients)?: Tomato, celery salt, black pepper, tabasco

EASY UP-SELLS:

- Ask if they want to upgrade their spirit or substitute another call spirit. Mezcal, and gin work great in this drink!



EXPLAINING HOUSE COCKTAILS

MICHELADA

"The lighter Bloody Mary made with beer, our house spicy Bloody Mary mix, and a touch of Clamato."

PALATE TYPE: Novice - Intermediate

INGREDIENTS: House Bloody Mary Mix, Clamato, Negra Modelo

TASTING NOTES: Savory, bracing, light spice level

WHAT'S IN THE HOUSE BLOODY MARY MIX (main ingredients)?: Tomato, celery salt, black pepper, tabasco

WHAT IS CLAMATO: A classic tomato and clam broth drink with spices



EXPLAINING HOUSE COCKTAILS

MIMOSAS

"We serve a variety of mimosa flavors. We sell them individually or guests can buy a bottle with a flight of 2 different mixes of their choice."

PALATE TYPE: Novice

INGREDIENTS: Cava, Juice, Slushy, or Fresca

TASTING NOTES: Bubbly citrus or fruit

WHAT IS CAVA?: A dry Spanish sparkling wine

FLAVORS WE OFFER:

- Mango slush
- Orange juice
- Pineapple juice
- Hibiscus Rose Agua Fresca
- Pineapple - Strawberry - Yuzu Agua Fresca



EXPLAINING HOUSE COCKTAILS

BOOZY FRESCAS

"Any of our Agua Frescas can have alcohol added to them. Add a little boozy fun to a traditional refresher."

PALATE TYPE: Novice

INGREDIENTS: Varies based on the alcohol and fresca chosen

TASTING NOTES: Varies based on the alcohol and fresca chosen

WHAT IS AGUA FRESCA?: Light, non-alcoholic drinks that are infused with fruit(s), flower(s), and/or other ingredients. Perfect for hot days in Southern California.

EASY UP-SELLS:

- Suggest adding a call spirit to these frescas to make the Boozy Frescas. Any spirit other than whiskey will work well in these! Know the spirits we have behind the bar so you can make proper suggestions.



SPIRIT PRIMER 101

BASICS OF SPIRIT PRODUCTION

The first step in any spirit production is to choose a base material that is appropriate for the desired spirit type. This material may be grain, agave, grapes, rice, sugar, or any other fermentable material. Water may be added to this material, such as grains, to encourage the fermentation process. Yeast is added to begin the fermentation process, during which the yeast converts the sugars of the base material into alcohol until the rising alcohol content of the liquid kills off the yeast. All that is left is a rudimentary, low-proof beer or wine.

All spirits start from this rudimentary beer or wine. This beer or wine is placed in a still, which is a sort of large, metal container in which the liquid is transformed into a higher-proof spirit. To distill and concentrate the alcohol, heat is applied to the liquid in a still. Ethanol vapors travel up that still and are collected in their concentrated, liquid form to produce the spirit. Stills come in a variety of shapes, sizes, and materials, and each option has an effect on the flavor, aroma, and texture of the final spirit.

After distillation, spirits may be barrel-aged or not. After aging, most spirits are rectified, meaning water is added to the spirit to make it more approachable. Some spirits however, such as Pisco or cask-strength spirits, do not have water added to them as the spirit emerges from the still or barrel at its natural, higher proof.



VODKA

Vodka can be distilled from any fermentable material. Most common materials include potato and various grains. Vodka is distilled to a very high proof to remove any congeners from the final distillate. Congeners are what give spirits their flavor and character. The result of removing these congeners means that the vodka has virtually no flavor or aroma. Because of this, vodka is what is known as a “neutral” spirit. Today, some newer brands try to retain some flavor from the base material to give a unique character to their brand but these characteristics, due the legal production standards of vodka, are very subtle.

When most people want vodka, they want "SMOOTHNESS". Vodka marketing will tell you that smoothness is tied directly to quality and the amount of times the spirit is distilled; that the more times the vodka is distilled the better the final product. This is not always the case as there are many other factors during the production process that affect the final product.

In general, vodkas produced from potatoes will have more viscosity and body, while vodkas produced from grain will be sharper and lighter in body. Vodka can be made from any fermentable material, including milk.



GIN

Gin is almost identical to vodka in production – it begins as a neutral spirit. The only difference is that the neutral spirit is introduced to flavoring materials known as “botanicals”. These botanicals may include any combination barks, roots, herbs, spices, oils, and more. The combination and proportion of the botanicals are a big reason why each brand of gin is unique. By law, gin must include juniper berries as its principal botanical.

5 CORE FAMILIES OF GIN

Genever is often considered the granddaddy of gins as it has the oldest origins of the styles listed above. This Dutch gin is characterized by its malty flavor because its base material is malted grains.

Old Tom came after Genever. It is a lightly sweetened style of gin that was the preferred style until London Dry became popular. This was the style of gin most often used in gin cocktails in the 1800's and early 1900's before the London Dry style became preferred. Old Tom gin is somewhat softer and more viscous than London Dry and the supporting botanicals share the spotlight to a greater extent than they do with London Dry.



GIN CONTINUED...

London Dry is the style with which most people associate the flavor of gin. As the name suggests, this style is dry, crisp and leans heavily on juniper berries to derive its “piney” flavor. Contrary to what the name suggests this gin is NOT required by law to be produced in London. This style was pioneered in part by Charles Tanqueray.

Plymouth gin is similar in style to London Dry gin but it can only be made in Plymouth, England and there is only one brand currently making this style. It has more citrus and an earthier flavor profile than London Dry.

New World or "Western" style gins are relatively new to the scene and represent a new way of embracing gin's flavor profile. In this style, distillers are challenging the classical ideas of what makes gin, “gin”. Although juniper must still legally be the most present botanical in the spirit, the supporting botanicals play a much larger role in the flavor profile. Gins in this style can be highly floral, citrusy, or vegetal in flavor, creating a much different experience both on the nose and on the palette.



RUM AND RHUM

R(h)um is a spirit with relatively undefined production standards and as a result has a broad spectrum of expressions. At its core, rum is a spirit derived from sugar cane. Other than that rule, distilleries are presented with a wide range of creative options to differentiate their own brands from other rums. It can be aged/unaged, sugar-free/sugar-added, light/heavy, etc.

There are two major styles of rum: Rum made from molasses (Rum Industriel), the byproduct of sugar production; and Rhum Agricole, made from fresh sugarcane juice.

Rum industriel is made from molasses and often retains a lingering molasses-like flavor. Bacardi is a very popular example of rum industriel. The character of the original sugar cane, after being processed into molasses, is not as prevalent in rum industriel as it is in Rhum Agricole. Rum industriel is the most common form of rum around the world.

Rhum Agricole is made from fermenting fresh sugar cane juice and retains the flavor of the sugarcane grass making it more vegetal and earthy. It is native to the French Caribbean Islands, although Cachaça, a Brazilian rum, is also made from sugar cane juice. Rhum agricole is grassy and earthy with a bit of funkiness that gives it distinguishes it from the molasses-like flavors of rum industriel.



AGAVE SPIRITS: TEQUILA

There are over 200+ different varieties of agave. The agave plant is a member of the succulent family although it is often incorrectly referred to as a type of cactus. Even though there are 200+ varieties of agave, only the Blue Weber agave can be used to make tequila by law. It takes 6-8 years for the Blue Weber to reach full maturity making this spirits extremely susceptible to inclement weather conditions and shortages. Tequila is split into two basic types:

MIXTO TEQUILA

Mixto tequila is produced from at least 51% agave that is then blended with another, usually cheap, spirit such as vodka or rum. Mixto tequilas may also contain caramel coloring or other additives. This style is an inferior form of tequila and is produced for ultra-mass consumption.

100% AGAVE TEQUILA

100% de agave tequila is produced entirely of Blue Weber Agave and is considered to be superior to mixto tequilas. It must be made from authorized manufacturers in designated regions. There are five regions in which tequila may be produced including Jalisco which is responsible for over 80% of tequila production.

Aging classifications for tequila include Blanco/Plata/Platinum/Silver/Diamond/etc (0-60 days), Reposado (60 days to 1 year), Anejo (1 to 3 years), and Extra Anejo (older than 3 years). Diamante is relatively new and is often an extra anejo or blending of ages that has been filtered through activated charcoal.



AGAVE SPIRITS: MEZCAL

Mezcal is arguably the most complex spirit on the planet and it has gained much popularity over the last decade. Mezcal can be made from ANY varietal of agave plant, including Blue Weber (like Tequila). Not all of the 200+ agave varietals are good for making spirits, so Mezcal is currently made from 50+ of the total species of agave. Mezcal is produced in eight regions of Mexico with Oaxaca (“wah-ha-ka”) being the largest producer. The agave plant is traditionally roasted in pits dug into earth or stone and this roasting imparts distinct mezcal’s smoky flavor. Most mezcals are unaged, but if they are aged they follow tequila’s aging classifications.

Key Takeaways:

- Similar to tequila but made from ANY of the agave varietals including the Blue Weber Agave
- The agave is traditionally roasted in earth pits before distillation, giving Mezcal its smoky aroma and flavor
- Can be made in 8 different regions of Mexico, but most famously Oaxaca (southern Mexico)

How is the flavor of mezcal different than tequila?

- Most obvious is the smoky aroma and flavor
- Because mezcal can be made from different agave varietals, some mezcals may be fruity, or floral, or earthy or have other characteristics unique to the agave varietal used in production. (think of how different grapes produce different flavors of wine!)
- Mezcal is rarely aged. If it is aged, they follow the same rules as tequila’s age classifications



WHISKEY/WHISKY OVERVIEW

There are five major families of whisk(e)y:

- Scotch,
- Irish
- American
- Canadian
- Japanese

Note on spelling: Whisky = Scotch, Japanese, and Canadian; Whiskey = American and Irish. While there are several expressions of each family of whisk(e)y, for the purpose of Spirits Primer 101 we will focus on the major styles that you will encounter behind the bar and the major characteristics that set them apart.

Whisk(e)y is a spirit derived from a single grain or blend of grains, similar to vodka. Unlike vodka, it is distilled to a lower proof, which means it retains some of the flavor from those grains during distillation. This is the base of a whisk(e)y's flavor before it enters the barrel.



SCOTCH WHISKY

Scotch's base flavor is derived from malted barley. Malted barley is a key characteristic of old-world whisk(e)ys. Peat is another flavor profile often present in many Scotches, particularly from the Islay region. Peat is the decomposing plant material found inside of the bogs of Scotland. It is cut from the earth and burned to infuse the barley with a smoky characteristic.

The two most common types of Scotch are Single Malt and Blended. Single malts are made from 100% malted barley at a single distillery and are generally considered to be higher quality over blended scotches. Although all Scotches must be aged a minimum of 3 years, most single malts range between the ages of 10 - 21 years and some are aged even longer. The age of the Scotch does not directly correlate to its quality.

For the purpose of understanding blended Scotches, it is important to first know what makes a single grain Scotch. A Single grain Scotch is made at a SINGLE DISTILLERY and NOT from a single type of grain. It is made from a blend of grains, one of which must be malted barley.

Blended Scotch is a blend of one or more single malt Scotches with one or more single grain Scotches. Blended Scotches account for roughly 90% of all Scotch production.



IRISH WHISKY

Irish whiskey must come from Ireland and is either made as blended whiskies or single malt. Most Irish whiskies are blended, meaning the final product must be a blend of at least two other Irish whiskeys. In addition to using malted barley, Irish whiskey also incorporates unmalted barley which gives Irish whiskey its distinct “leathery” flavor profile.

While most Irish whiskies are not peated, some brands do incorporate peat for a “smoky” characteristic similar to scotches. Irish whiskies must be aged for a minimum of 3 years, although many are matured in barrels for up to 7-8 years and beyond. Ireland used to be home to several thousand small distilleries. At the time of this writing, there are just over 30. Several of those distilleries are so new that they haven’t even finished maturing their whiskies and therefore are not yet for sale.



AMERICAN WHISKEY OVERVIEW

There are several styles and sub-styles of American whiskey. This 101 training will focus on the three common types of American whiskey you will find behind the bar: Bourbon, Tennessee, and Rye.

Before we get to those three main types of American whiskey, let's look at two common terms to know when discussing American whiskeys:

BOTTLED IN BOND

This refers to a law, passed in 1897, that standardized the production of whiskey and ensured a whiskey's authenticity. Until this point, many producers of whiskey were adding ingredients to stretch their batch and further sales. To be bottled in bond, a whiskey had to be made by one distillery in a single distilling season, locked in a warehouse for four years under government supervision, and bottled at exactly 100 proof. Today, this is a somewhat antiquated practice but is nonetheless used by some brands.

STRAIGHT WHISKEY

"Straight" means that a whiskey has been barrel aged for at least two years in new charred oak barrels.



BOURBON, TENNESSEE, AND RYE WHISKIES

BOURBON

Bourbon must be made of at least 51% corn and aged in new charred oak barrels. After aging, most bourbon is diluted with water to achieve the desired proof before bottling. Bourbon is strictly a product of United States of America, though it does not have to be made in Bourbon County, Kentucky (which is actually a dry county). Instead, bourbon can be made anywhere in the United States of America.

TENNESSEE

Tennessee whiskey is made in an almost identical fashion to bourbon. The only difference is that Tennessee whiskey undergoes a charcoal filtering process known as the Lincoln County Process. The spirit is filtered through sugar maple charcoal which softens some of the "harshness", leaving the whiskey with a certain smoothness associated with Tennessee whiskeys.

RYE

Rye whiskey is made from at least 51% rye. Rye grew abundantly in the North-Eastern region of the young USA and, by its very nature, is a spicier grain that imparts a lot of that spice into the spirit, giving the final product a solid structure. Before the turn of the 18th century, rye was the predominant style of whiskey consumed in America. However, due to an imposed whiskey tax, whiskey makers moved south to what would later become Kentucky, Tennessee and Indiana. Here, the climate allowed corn to grow very well, leading to the creation of bourbon and Tennessee whiskeys.



CANADIAN AND JAPANESE WHISKIES

CANADIAN

Canadian whisky was extremely popular during prohibition when Americans wanted to get their hands on any alcohol they could. Today, Canadian whisky has taken a back seat with the resurgence of high quality spirits produced in America. The legal definition of what makes a Canadian whisky is relatively loose (it can be called a “rye” yet contain no rye.) and the flavor profile is usually much lighter than that of American whiskey. This drinkability has led to the popularity of some brands such as Crown Royal.

JAPANESE

Japanese whisky is relatively new to the spotlight but has quickly become one of the most sought after expressions of the spirit. Suntory is the first distiller of Japanese whisky and began production in 1923. Japanese whisky is often modeled after the production methods and style of scotch but over time has developed its own style and flavor profiles. Their clear intention of differentiating themselves as a distinct whisky style shines through in the clarity of flavor and aroma of the whiskies they produce. Japanese oak used to make the aging barrels tends to create very nuanced aromatics that are unique to Japan.



BRANDY OVERVIEW

Brandy refers to any spirit that is distilled from fruit and it is divided into two categories: Grape Brandy and Fruit Brandy. Grape brandies include Cognac, Armagnac, Pisco, Grappa, Marc and more. Fruit brandies are those made from fruits other than grape including Applejack, Calvados, pear eau de vie, Kirsch (cherry brandy), Slivovitz (plum brandy) and more. For the purposes of this 101 education, we will only introduce three common types of brandy: fruit brandy, Cognac, and Armagnac.

FRUIT BRANDY (Can be made anywhere in the world)

Fruit brandy is a spirit made from any fruit other than grapes. Any fruit can be used and brands are testing new fruits to add to their lineups. Common styles of brandy behind bars include:

- Applejack: apple brandy and America's first legally produced spirit
- Kirsch: cherry brandy
- Eau de vie de poire: pear brandy
- Slovoitz: plum brandy



BRANDY CONTINUED...

COGNAC (France)

Cognac is the most well-known brandy. By legal definition, it can only be produced in the town of Cognac in the southwest region of France. It is distilled three times and aged in French oak barrels.

AGING CLASSIFICATIONS FOR COGNAC:

- VS (Very Special)/*** (three star): Minimum 2 years of aging
- VSOP (Very Superior Old Pale)/Reserve: Minimum 4 years aging
- Napoleon: Minimum 6 years of aging
- XO (Extra Old): Minimum of 6 years of aging (but marketed as “higher quality” than Napoleon)
- Vieille Réserve: Minimum of 6 years of aging (but usually much older and “higher quality” than XO)
- Hors d’Age: Min. of 6 yrs of aging (but usually much older and marketed as “higher quality” than Réserve)

ARMAGNAC (France)

Armagnac is a grape brandy that can only be produced in the region of Armagnac. It is more robust in flavor and considered a more “rustic” style of brandy in comparison to Cognac. That said, French people drink far more Armagnac than Cognac, preferring its heavier flavors to Cognac’s refinement. It is distilled twice and aged in French oak barrels. Armagnacs have different aging classifications than Cognacs.



FORTIFIED/AROMATIZED WINES

Note: Aromatized wines will oxidize even though they have been fortified. Proper storage requires that they be sealed and refrigerated in between uses. If stored properly, a bottle of aromatized wine should last one month without any noticeable decline in quality.

Aromatized wines are wines that are fortified wines that are flavored with aromatic botanicals. These include a wide range of products, many of which overlap into other categories and sub-categories. For our intents and purposes, we will focus on the following:

- Vermouth: Aromatized, fortified wines flavored with wormwood and other approved natural herbs, fruit, spices, or flavorings. Almost all vermouths use a white wine base. Sweet vermouths are commonly a dark color due to either their botanicals, caramel coloring or both. Blanc vermouths are a sweet vermouth that has not been colored.
- Quinquina: Aromatized, fortified wine flavored with cinchona bark, the ingredient that gives tonic water its flavor.
- Americano: Aromatized, fortified wine that uses wormwood and/or gentian in its recipe to provide bitterness



LIQUEURS

Liqueurs are vast in flavor profiles, proof, and viscosities but at their core they are essentially all the same: a spirit that has been sweetened and flavored. Usually, a high-proof neutral grain spirit is selected because it's a blank canvas for the rest of the flavors. The proof of liqueurs typically range anywhere between 15% - 40% ABV, but some, like Chartreuse, can exceed 50% ABV. There are countless liqueurs on the market, but some common types of liqueurs you might see at bars include:

ORANGE

- Cointreau
- Grand Marnier

FLORAL

- St. Germain
- Crème de Violette

FRUITY

- Peach
- Apple
- Berry
- Banana



BITTERS AND AROMATIC BITTERS

As you'll see, bitters comes in two forms: as an amaro and as an aromatic bitter and they were often used as medicine before we had pharmaceuticals because the ingredients in the bitters had medicinal properties. An aromatic bitter is essentially a an amaro that has been concentrated in flavor and used in smaller doses (drops and dashes).

AMARO (Amari = plural)

Amari (plural for Amaro) are bittered, sweetened spirits. They are often served before a meal as aperitifs or after a meal as digestifs to aid in digestion. Traditionally they are consumed neat or semi-diluted, and currently are being used more and more in cocktails for their complexity. Common botanicals used in Amari include angelica, aniseed, caraway, cardamom, cinnamon, coriander, cumin, dill, fennel, ginger, and more.

Because each amaro is so specific, it is best to learn about them on a case-by-case basis. Taste, take notes, and ask questions! Common bottles you may recognize include:

- Aperol
- Campari
- Amaretto
- Fernet Branca



BITTERS AND AROMATIC BITTERS CONTINUED...

AROMATIC BITTERS

Aromatic Bitters (commonly just called "bitters"), are essentially spirits infused with highly concentrated botanicals. They are intended to be used as flavoring agents via dashes and drops. Bitters, similar to many other spirits, were initially intended for medical use to aid in everything from digestion to malaria. Fifteen years ago there were only a few quality bitters to be found. Today, the market for bitter is booming ranging from traditional styles to exotic flavors. The classic Holy Trinity of bitters are:

Angostura Bitters

A product of Trinidad and Tobago that is characterized by its heavy cinnamon and clove flavors. This is by far the most consumed bitters.

Orange Bitters

These are making a resurgence now that the cocktail world is back in full swing. The two most common brands include Fee Brother and Regan's #6.

Peychaud Bitters:

Antoine Peychaud owned and operated an apothecary in New Orleans where he sold a variety of bitter, medicinal elixirs. His bitters made their way into his health tonics for his customer and over time became one of the original aromatic bitters used in cocktails.



SPIRIT PRIMER 101

SPIRIT PRIMER 101 WRAP-UP

We hope this brief Spirit Primer 101 section was a good introduction to, or review of, the bottles you may have behind your bar. Use this as a foundation of knowledge when discussing spirits with guests or coworkers. In time, you'll find the spirits that interest you personally. Below are a few recommended books to expand your knowledge on the topics covered in the Spirit Primer 101 section:

- [Amaro](#)
- [Beginner's Guide to Whiskey](#)
- [Bitters](#)
- [Divided Spirits: Tequila, Mezcal, and the Politics of Production](#)
- [The World Atlas of Whisky](#)

Below are some reads tailored to your bar program:

- [Divided Spirits: Tequila, Mezcal, and the Politics of Production](#)
- [Mezcal](#)
- [Understanding Mezcal](#)
- [Mezcal Un Espirituoso Artesanal de Clase Mundial \(Spanish\)](#)

