

1794s

This cocktail is in the Manhattan family, but much more elusive. It seems there are only two places sophisticated enough to serve it in San Francisco, not counting our kitchen – the top notch restaurant Range and the über-cool speakeasy style bar Bourbon & Branch. For a truly amazing cocktail experience, try it with vanilla and citrus infused bourbon instead of rye, as we did at Tracy and David's in their super-stylish Eichler house in Orange County.



ice

4 parts rye (or bourbon, or vanilla and citrus infused bourbon)

1 part sweet red vermouth (or more, to taste)

½ part Campari (or more, to taste)

an orange

1. Chill martini glasses by filling with ice.
2. Pour drinks into cocktail shaker, add ice and stir for quite a while with a long spoon.
3. Remove ice from glasses and pour in cocktail through strainer in shaker.
4. Peel lozenge-shaped strips of zest from the orange with a vegetable peeler, holding the fruit over the glasses as you do so as to catch any oils sprayed out. The zests should be thin, with as little white pith included as possible.
5. With one hand hold a piece of zest over a glass, skin-side down, and hold a lighted match beneath it with your other hand. Quickly and sharply squeeze/fold the zest (holding it on either long side, rather than at the tips) so that the oils are sprayed over the cocktail and burnt by the flame on their way down. Before dropping the zest into the cocktail, rub its skin-side round the rim of the glass.
6. Repeat with remaining glasses.

Cocktail facts:

- Why a cocktail is called a cocktail is a question that has a number of different answers, which are each ridiculous, yet strangely plausible in that it would be nice to believe one of them:
- Either, a barmaid in New York called Betsy, who thought outside the traditional garnish box, started serving mixed alcoholic drinks adorned with cock's tail stirrers taken from her feathery bar décor.

- Or, savvy tavern keepers would combine the inferior dregs of their various barrels of rum, brandy, whisky, gin etc in a spare barrel and sell them as 'cock tailings' – ie the tail ends below the stop-cocks – for a reduced price.
- Or perhaps, the 'cocktail' is an appropriately multi-coloured metonym for the rooster, whose call was associated with a stiff morning drink of mixed substances by those who did not own yard arms to restrict their drinking habits.
- Or maybe, the term is derived from 'coquetier', a French egg-cup which was used to serve mixed drinks in New Orleans in the early 19th century.
- Or, it could be that it was named after a mixed breed of the horse – the 'cock-tail' – as it too was a mixture.
- In any case, the first written record we have of the cocktail is from 1803: *"Drank a glass of cocktail — excellent for the head ... Call'd at the Doct's. found Burnham — he looked very wise — drank another glass of cocktail."*
- The 1794 was invented some time later, and is named after the Whiskey Rebellion which came to a peak in Pennsylvania in that year. Poor, pioneer farmers aggressively protested a whiskey tax which they felt unfairly penalised them. They were accustomed to converting their excess grain to whiskey, which was easier to store, transport, sell and barter with. Among many other incidents, one group of these 'Whiskey Boys' disguised themselves as women, assaulted a tax collector, cut off his hair, coated him with tar and feathers, and stole his horse. The federal government, to demonstrate their power, invoked Martial Law and sent nearly 13,000 to catch the whiskey boys. Some were arrested and few lost their lives but most protestors were never found.

Sources:

Cuisine and culture, Linda Civitello, 2008

www.wikipedia.org