The Cocktail Chronicles

Classic Cocktails, Modern Twists & the Stories Behind Every Sip

by PD Trout

Introduction

Welcome to the Bar

Pull up a stool, pour your favorite spirit, and make yourself at home.

At **Highball & Chaser**, we believe great drinks are meant to bring people together—no stiff rules, fancy bar jargon, or intimidation required. Making a cocktail should simply be fun, rewarding, and deeply satisfying.

This book is your go-to companion for mixing wonderful drinks and discovering the fascinating stories behind them. Inside, you'll find:

- **The Backstories:** Where your favorite drinks actually came from and the colorful legends that made them famous.
- **The Recipes:** Simple, delicious classics and crowd-pleasing twists that taste amazing every time.
- **Easy Bar Basics:** The few essential tools and tricks you truly need to mix drinks like a pro.
- **Hosting Tips:** Stress-free secrets to prepping ahead so you can relax and enjoy your own party.

Whether you're unwinding after a long day or hosting a house full of friends, here's to good stories, great drinks, and the joy of sharing them.

Cheers,

The Highball & Chaser Family

CHAPTER 1

Bourbon



Ch. 1
Bourbon

A Quick History of Bourbon

Bourbon is a distinctly American whiskey with roots stretching back to the late 1700s. European settlers, particularly Scots-Irish immigrants, brought whiskey-making traditions to the American colonies. In Kentucky, abundant corn, limestone-rich water, and fertile farmland created ideal conditions for producing whiskey.

The name **“bourbon”** is often associated with Bourbon County, Kentucky, although the exact origin of the name remains debated. By the 1800s, Kentucky bourbon had become a thriving industry, and its reputation spread well beyond the state.

In 1964, the U.S. Congress officially recognized bourbon as a **distinctive product of the United States**. To be called bourbon, whiskey must be made from a grain mixture containing at least **51% corn**, aged in **new, charred oak containers**, distilled to no more than 160 proof, and entered into the barrel at no more than 125 proof.

Today, bourbon is enjoyed around the world, both neat and in classic cocktails such as the **Old Fashioned, Manhattan, Whiskey Sour, and Mint Julep**. What began as a frontier spirit has become one of America's most celebrated contributions to the world of whiskey.

Old Fashioned

The Origin

The Old Fashioned is one of America's oldest and most iconic cocktails. In the late 1800s, as bartenders began creating increasingly elaborate drinks, whiskey drinkers started asking for their cocktails made the "old-fashioned" way—with whiskey, sugar, bitters, and water. The simple combination eventually became known as the Old Fashioned.

Recipe

Ingredients

- 2 oz bourbon
- ½ oz simple syrup
- 2–3 dashes Angostura bitters
- 1 large ice cube
- Orange peel

Directions
Add bourbon, simple syrup, and bitters to a rocks glass. Add a large ice cube and stir gently for 20–30 seconds. Express an orange peel over the drink and place it in the glass.

Glass: Rocks
Garnish: Orange peel

Bartender's Tip: Use a good-quality bourbon and a large ice cube—the fewer ingredients, the more important the whiskey becomes.

Bourbon Sour

The Origin

The Whiskey Sour dates back to the 1800s and became a favorite among sailors and travelers who mixed spirits with citrus and sugar. Bourbon eventually became a popular choice, creating the smooth, slightly sweet version enjoyed today. Its balance of whiskey, fresh lemon, and sweetness makes it one of the great classic cocktails.

Recipe

Ingredients

- 2 oz bourbon
- ¾ oz fresh lemon juice
- ¾ oz simple syrup
- 1 egg white *(optional)*
- Angostura bitters, for garnish

Directions

Add bourbon, lemon juice, simple syrup, and egg white to a shaker. Shake without ice first, then add ice and shake again until chilled. Strain into a rocks glass over fresh ice. If skipping the egg white, simply shake all ingredients with ice and strain.

Glass: Rocks
Garnish: Lemon wheel and a few drops of bitters

Flavor: Smooth, tart, refreshing, and lightly sweet.

The Paper Plane

The **Paper Plane** is a modern classic created by Sam Ross—an equal-parts drink that balances the warmth of high-proof bourbon with bittersweet amaro, bright citrus, and Aperol.

Ingredients

- **3/4 oz (22.5 ml)** Bourbon (preferably 90–100 proof, like Buffalo Trace or Wild Turkey 101)
- **3/4 oz (22.5 ml)** Aperol
- **3/4 oz (22.5 ml)** Amaro Nonino Quintessentia
- **3/4 oz (22.5 ml)** Fresh lemon juice

Instructions

1. Add all ingredients to a cocktail shaker filled with ice.
2. Shake hard for 10–12 seconds until well-chilled and aerated.
3. Fine-strain into a chilled coupe or Nick & Nora glass.
4. Garnish with a small lemon peel twist (or serve neat with no garnish).

Flavor Profile & Pro-Tips

- **Balance:** Amaro Nonino provides a herbal, alpine sweetness with hints of burnt orange that meshes seamlessly with bourbon's caramel notes, while Aperol brings vibrant color and gentle bitterness.
- **Bourbon Selection:** Higher-proof bourbon cuts through the liqueurs without getting lost. Avoid wheated bourbons with very soft profiles.
- **Nonino Alternative:** If Amaro Nonino is hard to find, Amaro Montenegro or Lucano works in a pinch, though Nonino gives the signature silky texture and grappa-based finish.

CHAPTER 2

Tequila

Ch. 2
Tequila

A Quick History of Tequila

Centuries ago, Aztec legend held that a lightning bolt struck the heart of a wild agave, caramelizing its nectar and gifting mankind **pulque**—a sacred, fermented drink reserved for priests and nobility.

When 16th-century Spanish settlers ran out of European brandy, they began roasting those spiky agave hearts (*piñas*) and running the fermented juices through rudimentary stills. This smoky "mezcal wine" found its true home in the red volcanic soil of **Tequila, Jalisco**, where the first commercial distilleries took root around 1600.

The spirit transformed through family dynasties: the Cuervos secured the first royal commercial license in 1795, and Don Cenobio Sauza later established **Blue Agave** as the gold standard for distillation. When U.S. Prohibition drove thirsty Americans south across the border, tequila exploded into international cocktail lore.

By 1974, Mexico secured an official **Appellation of Origin**, ensuring that true tequila remains tied to its native soil—still harvested by the blades of generational *jimadores* beneath the Jalisco sun.

Margarita

The Drink with Many Mothers

Few cocktails have a more disputed origin than the Margarita.

One story credits socialite Margarita Sames, who mixed tequila, lime, and Cointreau for guests at her Acapulco vacation home in 1948. Another claims it was invented years earlier by a bartender trying to recreate a drink for a customer allergic to all spirits except tequila.

Whatever the true story, the Margarita quickly became the signature cocktail of Mexico and one of the world's most beloved drinks.

Ingredients

- 2 oz tequila blanco
- 1 oz fresh lime juice
- ¾ oz Cointreau
- Salt for rim
- Lime wheel

Directions

1. Rim the glass with lime and salt.
2. Fill a shaker with ice.
3. Add tequila, lime juice, and Cointreau.
4. Shake vigorously.
5. Strain into the prepared glass over fresh ice.

Glass: Rocks or Margarita

The Paloma

The **Paloma** ("*dove*") originated in Jalisco, Mexico, in the 1950s alongside the arrival of grapefruit sodas like Squirt and Jarritos. Often linked to legendary bartender **Don Javier Delgado Corona** of *La Capilla* and named after the classic Mexican folk song "*La Paloma*", it emerged as Mexico's everyday national highball—a simple, refreshing blend of tequila, lime,

Ingredients

- **2 oz (60 ml)** Blanco or Reposado Tequila (100% blue agave)
- **1/2 oz (15 ml)** Fresh lime juice
- **1/2 oz (15 ml)** Fresh pink grapefruit juice
- **1/4 oz (7.5 ml)** Agave nectar (or simple syrup)
- **3–4 oz (90–120 ml)** Club soda or sparkling grapefruit soda (such as Fever-Tree, Jarritos, or Squirt)
- **Garnish:** Flaky sea salt (or Tajín) rim & fresh grapefruit wedge

Instructions

1. Run a lime wedge around half the rim of a highball or Collins glass and dip it into flaky sea salt.
2. Fill the glass with fresh ice.
3. In a shaker filled with ice, add the tequila, lime juice, grapefruit juice, and agave nectar. Shake briefly for 5–7 seconds to chill and combine.
4. Strain into the prepared glass over ice.
5. Top with club soda (or grapefruit soda) and give a gentle stir with a barspoon to integrate without knocking out the carbonation.
6. Garnish with a pink grapefruit wedge.

The Siesta

Created in 2006 by bartender Katie Stipe at New York's *Flatiron Lounge*, the **Siesta** is a modern classic that bridges the gap between an agave sour and an Italian aperitivo. The earthy bite of blanco tequila pairs with the bitter citrus of Campari and fresh grapefruit.

Ingredients

- **2 oz (60 ml)** Blanco Tequila (100% blue agave)
- **3/4 oz (22.5 ml)** Fresh lime juice
- **3/4 oz (22.5 ml)** Simple syrup (1:1)
- **1/2 oz (15 ml)** Fresh pink grapefruit juice
- **1/4 oz (7.5 ml)** Campari
- **Garnish:** Grapefruit peel or lime wheel

Instructions

1. Add all ingredients into a cocktail shaker filled with ice.
2. Shake vigorously for 10–12 seconds until well-chilled and aerated.
3.

CHAPTER 3

Vodka



Ch. 3
Vodka

A Quick History of Vodka

Vodka began in the freezing medieval winters of Poland and Russia, where grain mash was distilled into a medicinal "bread wine" used as an antiseptic and defense against the subzero cold. Locals affectionately called it **vodka**—Slavic for *"little water."*

Over time, Russian tsars turned distillation into an imperial monopoly that funded empires, while distillers pioneered charcoal filtration to strip away harsh impurities and achieve signature clarity.

The turning point came in 1917, when the Bolshevik Revolution outlawed private distilling. Prominent families like the Smirnoffs fled to the West with their recipes in hand. Rebranded in the United States as "white whiskey with no taste, no smell," vodka skyrocketed in the 1940s with the creation of the **Moscow Mule**—transforming a humble Slavic folk remedy into a global cocktail icon.

The French 76

Born during the mid-20th-century American vodka craze, the French 76 emerged as a modern spin on World War I's iconic gin-based French 75. Bartenders swapped the botanical bite of gin for smooth, neutral vodka, creating a lighter, more citrus-forward highball that let crisp Champagne take center stage.

Ingredients

- **1 1/2 oz (45 ml)** Vodka
- **3/4 oz (22.5 ml)** Fresh lemon juice
- **1/2 oz (15 ml)** Simple syrup (1:1 ratio)
- **2–3 oz (60–90 ml)** Dry sparkling wine (Champagne, Cava, or Prosecco), chilled
- **Garnish:** Lemon twist

Instructions

1. Add the vodka, fresh lemon juice, and simple syrup to a cocktail shaker filled with ice.
2. Shake vigorously for 8–10 seconds to chill.
3. Strain into a chilled Champagne flute or coupe glass.
4. Top slowly with chilled dry sparkling wine.
5. Express the oils from a lemon twist over the top and drop it into the glass.

The Espresso Martini

Created in the 1980s by legendary London bartender Dick Bradsell at Fred's Club, the **Espresso Martini** delivers a bold, caffeinated punch wrapped in a velvety, dense crema.

Ingredients

- **2 oz (60 ml)** Vodka (neutral wheat-based works best)
- **1 oz (30 ml)** Freshly brewed espresso (hot or warm)
- **1/2 oz (15 ml)** Coffee liqueur (such as Kahlúa or Mr Black)
- **1/4 oz (7.5 ml)** Simple syrup (demerara or standard 1:1)
- **Garnish:** 3 whole coffee beans

Instructions

1. Add the vodka, espresso, coffee liqueur, and simple syrup to a cocktail shaker filled with plenty of ice.
2. Shake hard for 12–15 seconds to create a thick, frothy head.
3. Rapidly double-strain into a chilled coupe or martini glass.
4. Garnish by floating 3 coffee beans on top of the foam in a triangle pattern.

The Gypsy Queen

A forgotten mid-century classic—often traced back to the Russian Tea Room in New York City—**The Gypsy Queen** proves vodka can shine in a rich, stirred, spirit-forward cocktail. It pairs clean vodka with the honeyed, herbal, and warming spice notes of Bénédictine.

Ingredients

- **2 oz (60 ml)** Vodka (rye or wheat-based)
- **3/4 oz (22.5 ml)** Bénédictine DOM
- **2 dashes** Angostura bitters
- **Garnish:** Expressed orange peel

Instructions

1. Add the vodka, Bénédictine, and Angostura bitters to a mixing glass filled with ice.
2. Stir smoothly for 25–30 seconds until thoroughly chilled and properly diluted.
3. Strain into a chilled Nick & Nora or coupe glass.
4. Express the essential oils from a strip of orange peel over the top and drop it into the glass.
5.

CHAPTER 4

Gin



Ch. 4
Gin

A Quick History of Gin

Gin began in the medieval apothecary shops of the Low Countries, where herbalists infused rough grain spirits with piney juniper berries to treat ailments and ward off disease.

In the 1600s, English soldiers fighting on Dutch battlefields noticed their allies taking steadying swigs of this juniper spirit—*genever*—before charging into the fray, christening the brazen bravado **"Dutch courage."**

Soldiers brought a taste for the spirit back across the English Channel, and when the Dutch-born William of Orange claimed the English throne in 1689, he opened the distilling floodgates. Tax breaks on domestic grain triggered London's notorious **"Gin Craze."** Thousands of illicit basement stills produced cheap, fiery spirits that flowed freely through alleyways and public houses until Parliament stepped in with strict licensing laws to restore order.

By the 1830s, the invention of the continuous column still transformed the rough, sweetened spirit into the crisp, botanical-forward **London Dry** style we

The Last Word

Concocted in the early 1920s at the Detroit Athletic Club during the height of Prohibition, **The Last Word** vanished for decades after World War II. It was famously rediscovered in 2004 by Seattle bartender Murray Stenson in a vintage 1951 bar manual, sparking a modern cocktail renaissance.

Ingredients

- **3/4 oz (22.5 ml)** London Dry Gin
- **3/4 oz (22.5 ml)** Green Chartreuse
- **3/4 oz (22.5 ml)** Maraschino Liqueur (such as Luxardo)
- **3/4 oz (22.5 ml)** Fresh lime juice
- **Garnish:** Luxardo maraschino cherry (or lime wheel)

Instructions

1. Add all four ingredients into a cocktail shaker filled with ice.
2. Shake hard for 10–12 seconds until thoroughly chilled and aerated.
3. Fine-strain into a chilled coupe or Nick & Nora glass.
4. Garnish with a cocktail cherry dropped into the bottom or pinned on a pick.

The Bee's Knees

Created during Prohibition in the 1920s, the **Bee's Knees** got its name from popular Jazz Age slang meaning "the best" or "outstanding." The recipe was originally designed by speakeasy bartenders to mask the harsh, medicinal bite of illicit "bathtub gin" by using strong, aromatic honey and tart lemon juice. When made today with quality craft gin, it transforms into an elegant, floral sour.

Ingredients

- **2 oz (60 ml)** Gin (London Dry or botanical-forward)
- **3/4 oz (22.5 ml)** Fresh lemon juice
- **3/4 oz (22.5 ml)** Honey syrup (3:1 ratio of honey to warm water)
- **Garnish:** Lemon twist

Instructions

1. **Prepare Honey Syrup:** Stir 3 parts raw honey with 1 part warm water until dissolved and let cool. (Diluting the honey prevents it from seizing up when it hits the ice).
2. Add the gin, fresh lemon juice, and honey syrup into a cocktail shaker filled with ice.
3. Shake hard for 10–12 seconds until thoroughly chilled and aerated.
4. Fine-strain into a chilled coupe or Nick & Nora glass.
5. Express the aromatic oils of a lemon peel twist over the top and set it on the rim or drop it in.

The Corpse Reviver No. 2

Popularized by legendary bartender Harry Craddock in the 1930 *Savoy Cocktail Book*, this drink belonged to a family of pre-Prohibition "hair of the dog" libations intended to wake the dead after a heavy night of drinking. Craddock famously noted: "*Four of these taken in swift succession will unrevive the corpse again*."

Ingredients

- **3/4 oz (22.5 ml)** London Dry Gin
- **3/4 oz (22.5 ml)** Lillet Blanc (or Cocchi Americano)
- **3/4 oz (22.5 ml)** Orange liqueur (such as Cointreau)
- **3/4 oz (22.5 ml)** Fresh lemon juice
- **1 dash (or rinse)** Absinthe (or Herbsaint/Pernod)
- **Garnish:** Stemmed cocktail cherry or lemon peel twist

Instructions

1. Rinse the inside of a chilled coupe or Nick & Nora glass with absinthe, swirl to coat, and discard the excess.
2. Add the gin, Lillet Blanc, orange liqueur, and fresh lemon juice to a cocktail shaker filled with ice.
3. Shake hard for 10–12 seconds until well-chilled.
4. Strain into the prepared absinthe-rinsed glass.
5. Garnish with a lemon peel twist or drop a cherry into the bottom.

CHAPTER 5

Rum

Ch. 5
Rum

A Quick History of Rum

Rum began in the 17th-century Caribbean when enslaved workers discovered that **molasses**—a sticky byproduct of sugarcane refining—naturally fermented in the tropical heat. Distilling this waste produced a fiery liquor dubbed "**kill-devil.**"

The spirit soon conquered the high seas. The British Royal Navy adopted it as a daily ration, mixing it with lime and sugar to prevent scurvy and create **grog**. Rum quickly became a powerful economic engine, fueling the Triangular Trade and colonial American unrest.

Over time, distillers refined the rough spirit into crisp light rums, grassy French *rhum agricoles*, and rich aged varieties—eventually powering the mid-century tiki renaissance and cementing rum as the definitive spirit of the tropics.

The Classic Daiquiri

In 1898, during the Spanish-American War, an American mining engineer named Jennings Cox was stationed in the small southeastern Cuban village of Daiquirí. When he ran out of imported gin to entertain guests, he turned to the abundant local ingredients at hand: crisp Cuban white rum, freshly plucked limes, and cane sugar, shaking them over cracked ice. The drink quickly spread to Havana's famed El Floridita bar—where Constantino Ribalaigua Vert perfected the technique and served it to Ernest Hemingway—becoming one of the purest, most revered cocktails in history.

Ingredients

- **2 oz (60 ml)** Light / White Rum (such as Havana Club 3 Year, Probitas, or Plantation 3 Stars)
- **3/4 oz (22.5 ml)** Fresh lime juice
- **3/4 oz (22.5 ml)** Simple syrup (1:1 ratio) or rich simple syrup (2:1, reduced to 1/2 oz)
- **Garnish:** Thin lime wheel

Instructions

1. Add the white rum, fresh lime juice, and simple syrup to a cocktail shaker filled with ice.
2. Shake vigorously for 10–12 seconds until frosty and aerated.
3. Fine-strain through a mesh strainer into a chilled coupe or Nick & Nora glass.
4. Float a thin lime wheel on top or notch it on the rim.

The Jungle Bird

Created in 1973 at the Aviary Bar inside the Kuala Lumpur Hilton in Malaysia, the **Jungle Bird** was designed by beverage manager Jeffrey Ong as a welcome drink for hotel guests. Named after the exotic birds visible in the hotel's open-air pool area, it made history by introducing the bitter Italian aperitivo Campari to the tropical tiki canon, proving rum drinks can be deep, complex, and bittersweet.

Ingredients

- **1 1/2 oz (45 ml)** Dark or Blackstrap Rum (such as Gosling's Black Seal, Hamilton Pot Still Black, or Appleton Estate)
- **3/4 oz (22.5 ml)** Campari
- **1 1/2 oz (45 ml)** Fresh pineapple juice
- **1/2 oz (15 ml)** Fresh lime juice
- **1/2 oz (15 ml)** Demerara syrup (1:1 or 2:1 ratio)
- **Garnish:** Pineapple wedge, pineapple fronds, or a lime wheel

Instructions

1. Add the rum, Campari, pineapple juice, lime juice, and demerara syrup to a cocktail shaker filled with ice.
2. Shake vigorously for 12–15 seconds to create a silky, frothy foam from the pineapple juice.
3. Strain into a double rocks glass or Collins glass filled with fresh crushed or cubed ice.
4. Garnish with a pineapple wedge and two sticking pineapple fronds to resemble bird feathers.

The 1944 Mai Tai

Created in 1944 by Victor "Trader Vic" Bergeron at his Oakland, California restaurant, the Mai Tai was designed to showcase the complex funk of a 17-year-old aged Jamaican rum. When Bergeron served his new concoction to visiting Tahitian friends Carrie and Eastham Guild, Carrie took a sip and exclaimed, "*Maita'i roa a'e!*" (Tahitian for "*Out of this world, the best!*")—giving the drink its name.

Ingredients

- **2 oz (60 ml)** Aged Rum (ideally a 50/50 blend: 1 oz aged Jamaican rum + 1 oz Martinique Rhum Agricole or rich aged demerara rum)
- **3/4 oz (22.5 ml)** Fresh lime juice
- **1/2 oz (15 ml)** Orange Curaçao (such as Pierre Ferrand)
- **1/4 oz (7.5 ml)** Orgeat (almond syrup)
- **1/4 oz (7.5 ml)** Rich simple syrup (2:1 demerara or cane sugar)
- **Garnish:** Fresh mint bouquet and a spent lime half (to represent a palm island)

Instructions

1. Add the rum blend, fresh lime juice, orange curaçao, orgeat, and sugar syrup to a cocktail shaker with crushed ice (or a few ice cubes).
2. Shake vigorously for 8–10 seconds.
3. Pour the entire contents (unstrained) into a double old-fashioned glass, adding more crushed ice to fill.
4. Garnish by floating the spent lime shell cut-side down on top and nestling a fresh sprig of smacked mint beside it.

CHAPTER 6

Mocktails



Ch. 6
Mocktails

A Quick History of the Mocktail

Long before the term was coined, non-alcoholic mixed drinks thrived during the 19th-century American Temperance movement. Bartenders and soda fountains concocted "temperance beverages"—layering fruit syrups, vinegars, and carbonated waters into drinks like **shrubs** and the fizzy ginger-lemon **Horse's Neck**.

The modern identity took shape in the 1930s at the iconic **Brown Derby** restaurant in Hollywood. Legend says bartenders mixed ginger ale, grenadine, and a maraschino cherry for child star Shirley Temple so she could toast alongside adult celebrities. Soon joined by the citrusy **Roy Rogers**, the sweet novelty beverage became a restaurant fixture. By the 1980s, the portmanteau "**mock cocktail**" officially shortened to "**mocktail.**"

For decades, mocktails remained sugary afterthoughts of syrupy sodas and fruit punch. But in the 2010s, the category underwent a craft revolution. Fueled by the modern wellness movement and distilled non-alcoholic botanical spirits, bartenders began crafting zero-proof drinks with the same culinary rigor, bitterness, and botanical

The Phony Negroni (Zero-Proof Bitter Spritz)

Born out of the craft non-alcoholic renaissance in Brooklyn cocktail bars during the late 2010s, this recipe was engineered to solve the hardest challenge in zero-proof mixology: replicating the astringent bite, viscous weight, and complex bitterness of Campari and sweet vermouth without using alcohol. By brewing a concentrated reduction of hibiscus, bitter orange peel, and warm baking spices, bartenders found a way to deliver a sophisticated, slow-sipping aperitivo that never relies on sugary soda.

Ingredients

- **1 1/2 oz (45 ml)** Strongly brewed, chilled hibiscus tea (steeped with 1 crushed star anise and a pinch of gentian root or dried orange peel)
- **1 oz (30 ml)** Sanbitter or Stappi Red Bitter (Italian non-alcoholic bitter soda) *or* 1 oz non-alcoholic Italian red aperitif (like Lyre's Italian Orange or Ghia)
- **3/4 oz (22.5 ml)** Spiced simple syrup (1:1 demerara sugar and water simmered with cinnamon, clove, and cardamom)
- **1/2 oz (15 ml)** Fresh pink grapefruit juice (adds cloudy body and natural citrus bitterness)
- **2 oz (60 ml)** Club soda or sparkling tonic water
- **Garnish:** Expressed orange swath and a fresh rosemary sprig

Instructions

1. Add the chilled brewed hibiscus tea, non-alcoholic bitter, spiced syrup, and grapefruit juice to a rocks glass.
2. Add a single large clear ice cube.
3. Stir smoothly for 15–20 seconds to chill and blend the botanicals.
4. Top with the sparkling water or tonic.
5. Express an orange peel over the glass to coat the surface in fresh citrus oils, tuck it beside the ice, and gently clap a rosemary sprig between your palms before resting it on top.

The Roasted Pineapple & Cardamom Shrub

Derived from colonial-era drinking vinegars, this modern zero-proof cocktail relies on caramelized roasted fruit, warm spice, and tart vinegar to create the body, complexity, and lingering bite usually provided by alcohol.

Ingredients

- **1 1/2 oz (45 ml)** Pineapple shrub (roasted pineapple macerated in sugar, mixed equal parts with apple cider vinegar)
- **3/4 oz (22.5 ml)** Fresh lime juice
- **1/2 oz (15 ml)** Agave nectar or simple syrup
- **3 oz (90 ml)** Chilled club soda
- **1 pinch** Sea salt
- **Garnish:** Charred pineapple wedge and a fresh sage leaf

Instructions

1. Add the pineapple shrub, lime juice, agave nectar, and pinch of salt to an ice-filled shaker.
2. Shake for 6–8 seconds until cold.
3. Strain into a tall glass packed with crushed ice.
4. Top with club soda and stir gently once.
5. Garnish with a charred pineapple wedge and a smacked sage leaf.

The Smoked Rosemary & Grapefruit Paloma

Originating in the vibrant bar scenes of Mexico City and Guadalajara, this zero-proof riff on the classic Paloma uses torch-charred fresh rosemary and rich, agave-driven acidity to replace the earthy, smoky depth typically provided by mezcal.

Ingredients

- **2 oz (60 ml)** Fresh pink grapefruit juice
- **3/4 oz (22.5 ml)** Fresh lime juice
- **3/4 oz (22.5 ml)** Agave nectar (diluted 1:1 with warm water for easy mixing)
- **3 oz (90 ml)** Chilled sparkling water or grapefruit soda
- **1 pinch** Flaky sea salt
- **Garnish:** Charred rosemary sprig and a sea salt or Tajín rim

Instructions

1. Run a lime wedge along half the rim of a highball glass and dip it into sea salt or Tajín.
2. Fill the glass with fresh ice.
3. In a shaker filled with ice, add the grapefruit juice, lime juice, diluted agave, and a pinch of salt. Shake vigorously for 8–10 seconds.
4. Strain into the prepared glass and top with sparkling water.
5. Use a culinary torch or lighter to singe the tip of a fresh rosemary sprig until smoking, then immediately set it in the drink as a fragrant garnish.

Thank You

Cheers & Thank You!

Thank you so much for bringing our bar set into your home and flipping through the pages of this book.

Great hospitality is all about connection, celebration, and the joy of sharing a well-made drink. Whether you are shaking up your very first cocktail, experimenting with complex spirits and zero-proof elixirs, or simply unwinding with friends after a long week, we are honored to have a place on your bar top.

Mixology is as much about the craft as it is about making each recipe your own. Never hesitate to adjust the ratios, try new garnishes, and pour with confidence.

Here's to great gatherings, elevated cocktails, and creating unforgettable memories —one toast at a time.

With gratitude and best wishes,

The Highball & Chaser Family

How to host a enjoyable cocktail party!

Host, Don't Tend Bar

- **The "First Pour" Strategy:** Personally greet guests at the door and hand them their first drink (or direct them to a welcome punch). After the first round, transition to a semi-self-serve setup so you can actually socialize rather than spend the night behind the shaker.
- **Pre-Batch Signature Drinks:** Batch 1–2 cocktails in glass bottles or pitchers stored in the fridge. For shaken styles like Daiquiris or Margaritas, batch the juice, spirits, and syrups together so all you (or a guest) have to do is pour into a shaker tin with ice and give it a quick 10-second shake.

Build an Intuitive Self-Serve Bar Station

- **The "Left-to-Right" Flow:** Set up the bar surface sequentially:
    1. Glassware on the left
    2. Ice bucket and tongs
    3. Pre-batched bottles, base spirits, and mixers in the center
    4. Jiggers, bar tools, and garnish trays on the right
    5. Cocktail napkins and trash/recycling bin at the end
- **Small Framed Menu:** Set out a concise 4x6 or 5x7 framed card detailing the signature drinks, their flavor notes, and simple pouring ratios (e.g., *"Pour 3 oz over ice, top with club soda, garnish with a lime wheel"*).

Ice, Glassware & Practical Math

- **Ice Quantity:** Buy **1.5 to 2 lbs of ice per person**. Store the bulk in a cooler tucked nearby with a scoop, keeping just an insulated countertop ice bucket on the bar to save space.
- **Glass Count:** Plan for **2 to 3 glasses per guest**. People constantly set drinks down and misplace them. Have dry-erase glass markers, wine charms, or colored garnish picks nearby to help guests track their drinks.
- **Glassware Versatility:** Stick to two workhorse shapes—a classic **coupe** (for cocktails served "up" and sparkling wine) and a **double rocks/old fashioned glass** (for neat pours, spirit-forward drinks, and highballs).

Atmosphere & Flow Logistics

- **Separate the Stations:** Keep the cocktail bar, the food/appetizers, and the water station in separate areas of the room to prevent conversational traffic jams.
- **Dedicated Hydration Station:** Set out a large drink dispenser filled with ice water, cucumber ribbons, or lemon wheels so guests can easily pace themselves without crowding the bar.