

**exploration**

the world through your eyes

**LATIN AMERICA**

FOUR INCREDIBLY NECESSARY LATIN AMERICAN COCKTAILS

31ST MAY 2014 | JESSIE BLACK

This entry is part 9 of 23 in the series [World Kitchen](#)

Of all of the wonderful things that Latin American countries have given to the world (off the top of my head I'm going for potatoes, chocolate, Shakira and reggaeton – possibly in a different order) their cocktails are certainly up there.

Here is a quick run down of some of the key drinks in Latin America, and how to make them for yourselves:

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1. The Margarita

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One of the most common cocktails in the world, there is some debate as to the origin of the margarita. It comes from Mexico (or possibly Texas) and is thought to have appeared in the 1930's or 40's but it's popularity was cemented when it was included as Esquire magazine's cocktail of the month in December 1953. Thank you Wikipedia. The key ingredient is tequila, and it should set you up nicely for a night of hazy memories...

- 7 parts tequila
- 4 parts Cointreau
- 3 parts lime juice

Serve in a margarita glass with a salted rim, ice and a slice of lime.

2. The Piña Colada

If you like getting caught in the rain then this is the one for you. The official drink of Puerto Rico, the 'strained pineapple', is sure to brighten up your evening/day/morning/ I'm not judging. There's a lot of fruit juice in there so it could easily be your breakfast drink.

- 1 part white rum
- 1 part coconut milk
- 3 parts pineapple juice

Serve with a slice of pineapple and a maraschino cherry. Mini umbrella optional.

Pina colada and mojito (vxla via Flickr)

3. The mojito

Let's pop to Cuba for the most refreshing of all cocktails. The mojito as we know it is not technically a mojito. The original recipe doesn't contain mint leaves, rather 'yerba buena', but whichever you choose (mint is certainly a lot easier to come by...) you'll be in good company as it was purportedly the favourite drink of Ernest Hemingway.

- 4 parts white rum
- 3 parts lime juice
- 6 leaves of mint
- 2 tsps sugar
- soda water



Muddle them in a mortar and pestle, then add the alcohol and to whiff so

da water. Make it pretty with lime and mint. If rum isn't your thing then gin mojitos are rather lovely – also mix it up with sparkling apple juice instead of soda, or a little ginger for a slight kick.

4. The Caipirinha

Well hello Brazil! A personal favourite of mine, the Caipirinha is made with cachaça, sugar and lime. Understandably the lack of mixer (save ice) makes it pretty strong, so take lots of photos to jog your memory and be prepared to make some awful decisions. Cachaça is a sugarcane rum, and is now relatively easy to come by in Europe, but if you can't find it then substitute vodka and call it a Caipiroska. Interestingly the Caipirinha may have originated as a remedy for the common cold, so if you ever need an excuse...

- 5cl cachaça
- Half a lime
- 2 tsps brown sugar

Cut the lime into wedges, and muddle with the sugar. Add crushed ice and finish with the cachaça. Sip slowly to allow the ice to melt a little and dilute it. Or don't, and just lose all your inhibitions as quickly as possible.



Caipirinha (Lady Wasabi via Flickr)

5. Cuba Libre

Worth mentioning just in case you were confused. This isn't actually a cocktail; it's literally just a rum and coke. The name somehow makes it more exciting though doesn't it? Be prepared for free-pour.

Whichever you choose, have a good time and I should probably suggest that you drink responsibly, but that all comes down to you!



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