

BARTENDER ADVISORY GROUP

FUN FACTS

The Moscow Mule

Was created in 1941 in a Santa Monica *joint* called the Cock “n” Bull... an Irish Pub. Unfortunately, the heirs to the original club had no interest in keeping it going, and it recently closed; but it survived for over half a century. The story goes that the owner of the Cock “n” Bull, Jack, had a substantial supply of ginger beer and couldn’t sell it. Between World War II and the political climate that followed, his Smirnoff Vodka salesman, John, was also having trouble selling vodka to the American public... so they created the Moscow Mule.

The copper mug got into the picture when a lovely Russian woman, Sophie, immigrated to the United States with her husband and 2000 copper mugs that she had designed; her father owned a copper factory in Russia and he couldn’t sell them either. My version is that Jack’s bartender was the one who created the cocktail while Jack was having drinks with Sophie in the corner of the bar... *just my opinion of course.*

“Breakage”

The term “breakage” has become synonymous with the liquor you went through during the normal course of business, basically, how many empty bottles need to be replaced before the next shift starts. Several ... okay, many, many years ago, the term was actually created by government agencies for the number of empty liquor bottles that you had to “break” at the end of your shift.

This was a requirement of many of the liquor agencies of individual state and local governments. For years, there was a metal post installed, usually next to the speed rack in front of the well. When a liquor bottle was emptied, the bartender was to insert the neck of the bottle over the metal post. The bartender then snaps the neck of the now empty liquor bottle. The thought process behind this was so that bar owners, and/or bartenders, would not buy cheap “well” liquor and pour it into the now empty premium liquor bottles.

Wine Temperatures

The temperature that wine should be stored is different than the temperature than the serving temperature. Serving a wine at “room” temperature will be different when you are living in Hawaii or the Mojave Desert. The “experts” will give a range between 38 and 69 degrees with the range based on light or medium-bodied, full bodied, light white or sparkling, but really, whether you are the customer, the wine salesman, the wine maker, or the resident sommelier, it’s just an opinion; but the bottom line is that the customer will choose what they like.

White wine and sparkling should be served between 45 and 55 degrees - Red wine should be served between 62 and 69 degrees - Both red and white should be stored at 55 degrees. Whether you are considered a rookie bartender or a seasoned veteran; you can choose my **45/55/65** rule. It will be managements job to get it technically right, but it’s always good to know your shit. Champagne and sparkling wines should be served at 45 degrees, white wine at 55 degrees and red wine at 65 degrees. If your guest is carrying a thermometer with them, please let them know where they can stick it... *diplomatically of course.*

Whiskey v Whiskey

This is all about the origin... if the product was created in Scotland, Canada or Japan.... it is Whisky... if the product was created in the United States or Ireland... it is Whiskey. There are only two exceptions to this rule; if the creator of the product, hired someone who didn't drink, and had no clue about the history of the company... to design the label; and Makers Mark Bourbon. The family used Whisky instead of Whiskey, to pay homage to their Scottish heritage... *good for them*.

Brandy v Cognac

To start, Cognac is a subcategory within the vast realm of brandy. So, technically speaking, all Cognac is brandy. But to be Cognac, it must be made in the very specific region of Cognac, located in the west of France, wedged between Bordeaux and La Rochelle. Brandy is essentially the high-octane cousin of wine and is usually made by distilling wine, although a few may use different fruit, the process generally concentrates the alcohol content to somewhere between 35-60% by volume. Like wine, there will be many different production requirements based on region, climate, etc. Generally, where there's good winemaking infrastructure, there's also a brandy presence. The spirit is produced in many places covering the globe besides France, from China, Russia, South Africa and Italy to the U.S.

Mixing Tins

A pair of mixing tins will usually consist of one that is metal, and one that is tempered glass. The tempered glass will fit into the metal tin and a quick tap on its base will seal them. Please do not try to pair two metal tins... it won't work; and the fact that tempered glass is used will keep you safe when you are trying to break the seal.

Triple sec is a dry style of orange liqueur; and is sometimes used to describe orange liqueurs in general. Triple sec is a liqueur, with a strong, sweet alcoholic liquor. For most well-stocked bars, orange liqueur is a vital component. It can be used in classic cocktails like the Long Island Iced Tea, the Cosmopolitan, Sidecar and Margherita; as well as being enjoyed on its own, "neat". Orange liqueur provides fruit flavor, complexity, and subtle sweetness.

Triple Sec

The "Triple sec" category can be somewhat confusing, depending on who you are asking. Certain brand names are synonymous with different styles, and origin stories are hazy to say the least. Here's a quick overview of the basics.

Today, the term triple sec is often used as a generic term for any orange liqueur and may denote a low-grade knock-off; using added sugar to mask the poor quality and taste. High-quality triple secs, meanwhile, can be consumed neat or as part of a cocktail; and can be used quite often in Mixology.

Triple Sec

A dry style of orange liqueur, triple sec hails from France. Some attribute the actual name as being a translation of the words "triple dry." According to Cointreau, the self-proclaimed creator of the product, says it is a reference to triple distillation (which, apparently, doesn't actually occur in its preparation).

Curaçao

The Lucas Bols distillery was established in 1575, and has been producing liqueurs for more than 400 years. Bols says it had hundreds of liqueur and spirit recipes under its belt by 1820, with Curaçao being one of them; but Curaçao is generally agreed to be the original orange liqueur; and was created in the 19th century by Dutch

settlers on the island of the same name. Curaçao is now both a brand and category name. The liqueur is traditionally rum-based but modern iterations are also made with distilled grain spirits.

Made with tropical oranges that were planted by the Spanish, quality Curaçaos are typically sweeter than other orange liqueurs; and will range in strength from 15 to 40 percent ABV. As with all popular beverages, cheap imitations appeared, often including extra sugar to mask poor flavor. This led to the spirit becoming more closely associated with sweetness rather than orange flavor. Most drink enthusiasts prefer to steer clear of the modern-day, artificial Curaçaos in orange, blue, and green hues.

Cointreau

Cointreau is one of the best-known brands of the triple sec style of orange liqueur. The drink was first released in 1875 and is made using a mixture of sweet and bitter orange peels, combined with sugar beet alcohol. Cointreau has a crisp, smooth, orange flavor; and its high-quality production means you can enjoy it neat, over ice, or in cocktails. Cointreau uses three types of orange in its liqueur: sweet, macerated, and bitter. Edouard Cointreau decided to call the concoction “triple sec,” a reference to the triple concentration of the ingredients.

Grand Marnier

Is classified as a Curaçao/triple sec hybrid, made from a mix of Cognac, distilled bitter orange essence, and sugar. It first appeared in 1880, and was originally called “Curaçao Marnier,” in reference to its high quantity of brandy. Like Cointreau, Grand Marnier measures 40 percent ABV, and can be enjoyed neat or in mixed drinks.

Of Note: Cognac is a type of brandy from the Cognac region of western France, located south-west of Paris and just north of Bordeaux. The base wine is made primarily from white grapes Ugni Blanc, Folle Blanche, and Colombard. Distillation occurs twice, exclusively in a copper pot still. The resulting *eau de vie* is a clear liquid with roughly 70 percent alcohol.

Bartender