

Mix It Up They Go. Honest.



Julie Keefe for The New York Times

By PETE WELLS

RYAN MAGARIAN cannot explain why he called his rum drink with bell pepper and basil the Love Unit. "I have no idea why that name jumped into my head," he said. But he does know that the cocktail has overcome its out-of-nowhere name and its peculiar combination of ingredients to become a big seller at the Hyde Lounge in West Hollywood. Mr. Magarian recommends using the vanilla-flavored rum made by Mount Gay, and advises "spanking" the basil leaf garnish to release its aromas. "Put it on your palm and slap it," he said. "It just makes all the difference in the world."

THE LOVE UNIT

Adapted from Ryan Magarian
Time: 10 minutes

- 3 red bell pepper rings, sliced $\frac{1}{4}$ - to $\frac{1}{2}$ -inch thick
- 3 basil leaves
- 1 ounce vanilla rum
- 1 ounce light rum
- $\frac{1}{4}$ ounce fresh lime juice
- $\frac{1}{2}$ ounce fresh grapefruit juice
- $\frac{1}{2}$ ounce simple syrup.

1. In a cocktail shaker gently muddle two bell pepper rings and two basil leaves. Add remaining ingredients. Fill shaker with ice and shake vigorously for 6 seconds.

2. Pour drink through a fine mesh strainer or cheesecloth into a chilled cocktail glass. Place second basil leaf on palm of one hand and slap it with the other. Flout it atop drink. Balance other bell pepper ring on rim of glass.

Yield: 1 cocktail.



Tony Contino/The New York Times

ANY bartender will instantly recognize the Stray Dog as a simple variation on the Cosmopolitan. Pure pomegranate juice stands in for cranberry juice cocktail, and improves on it. I developed the recipe in collaboration with a friend who had discovered that pomegranate has a surprising affinity for the licorice flavors of Pernod. The technique of rinsing the glass with Pernod is an old bartender's trick that is employed in the Sazerac, a New Orleans classic. Although I have borrowed or stolen nearly all the inspiration for the Stray Dog, I take full responsibility for its failure to catch on.

THE STRAY DOG

Time: 5 minutes

Splash of Pernod, ouzo or other licorice-flavored spirit

- 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ ounces vodka
- 1 tablespoon Cointreau
- 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoons fresh lime juice
- 1 ounce pomegranate juice (fresh or Pom Wonderful brand).

Splash some Pernod in a chilled cocktail glass, swirl it around well, then dump it out. Add ice to a cocktail shaker and pour all remaining ingredients into it. Shake and strain into glass.

Yield: 1 cocktail.



Tony Contino/The New York Times

JOSE MIRANDA of WD-50, who is known to almost everybody as Juice, grew up in Puerto Rico, where his mother used to make what he called a sports shake out of Carnation instant milk, brown sugar and egg yolks. "I figured me becoming this mixologist, I'd try to incorporate this into a cocktail, and I liked the way rum worked with it," he said. He tells guests that the Malta Fizz is "almost like an egg nog. Just to stir people in the right direction," and added, "Once they have one they say, 'Wow, this is not what I expected.'" Invariably the surprise is a pleasant one. "I sold close to 25 of them last night," he said on Sunday.

MALTA FIZZ

Adapted from WD-50
Time: 5 minutes

- 2 ounces amber rum
- 2 ounces malta (carbonated malt beverage)
- $\frac{1}{4}$ ounce lime juice
- 1 ounce simple syrup
- 1 egg yolk
- Ground cinnamon for garnish.

Add ice to a glass cocktail shaker. Pour in all ingredients. Shake vigorously for 20 seconds to emulsify egg yolk. Strain into a Collins glass filled with ice. Garnish with ground cinnamon.

Yield: 1 cocktail.



Julie Keefe for The New York Times

THE horseradish pomegranate margarita was developed by Ryan Magarian for a private party in Aspen last summer. The guests were skeptical, and their skepticism didn't evaporate the minute they tasted it. "It wasn't an instant like," Mr. Magarian said. "They'd chew on it. They didn't dislike it right away but they didn't like it, either. But then they would come back to the table with a whole group of people and say, 'You've got to try this.'" He suggests checking the intensity of the horseradish tequila infusion after about 12 hours. "I try not to get too much heat," he said, "but I want your eyelids to shake."

HORSERADISH POMEGRANATE MARGARITA

Adapted from Ryan Magarian
Time: 5 minutes plus 24 hours' infusing

- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup fresh horseradish, peeled and chopped
- 1 cup silver (blanco) tequila
- $\frac{1}{2}$ ounce Cointreau
- $\frac{1}{4}$ ounce fresh lime juice
- $\frac{1}{2}$ ounce pomegranate juice
- $\frac{1}{2}$ ounce simple syrup.

1. In a bowl mix horseradish with tequila and let mixture sit for 24 hours. Strain through cheesecloth.

2. Pour 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ ounces horseradish-infused tequila and all other ingredients into a cocktail shaker. (You will have some leftover tequila mixture.) Fill shaker with ice and shake it vigorously for 6 seconds. Add ice cubes to an Old-Fashioned glass and pour drink over them.

Yield: 1 cocktail.



Photographs by Julie Keefe for The New York Times; center, Tony Contino/The New York Times

TALK ABOUT A TWIST Ryan Magarian, a bar consultant in Seattle, makes a margarita with horseradish and pomegranate juice, above, and a cocktail with red bell pepper and basil, top. Center, Jose Miranda of WD-50 makes a Malta Fizz, with an egg yolk.