

# TIKI

MODERN TROPICAL COCKTAILS

SHANNON MUSTIPHER



RIZZOLI  
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## MISSIONARY'S DOWNFALL

I don't come across this drink often enough, and I think it deserves a hell of a lot more play than its more popular counterparts, the Piña Colada and the Painkiller—similar cocktails that push coconut cream and pineapple to the fore, while the citrus and rums brighten and spike what could be enjoyed as a sweet virgin drink. In the Missionary's Downfall, the coconut cream is replaced by apricot liqueur, giving us a significantly drier cocktail with a higher alcohol content and serving as an ambassador for Tiki to those who are disinclined toward drinking rum. Should apricot brandy prove difficult to find, consider using a dry apricot liqueur; Marie Brizard makes an excellent one, as does Rothman & Winter.

### **Recommended spirits:**

Diplomático Planas

Rothman & Winter Orchard Apricot

1 ounce aged white rum

½ ounce apricot brandy

1 ounce Don's Mix (see page 176)

1 ½ ounces pineapple juice

½ ounce fresh lime juice

10 to 15 fresh mint leaves

### **Garnish:**

Mint sprigs

Pineapple wedge

Lime wheel, scored

Combine all in a blender with pebbled ice. Blend on high speed until smooth, approximately 15 to 20 seconds. Pour into a hurricane glass and garnish with a generous mint bouquet, pineapple wedge, and scored lime wheel.



## MESSAGE IN A BOTTLE

Green vegetal notes, the hallmark of rum agricole, receive a welcome lift from a kaffir lime leaf–infused rum. Like the skins of the fruit, the leaves contain aromatic oils, albeit in a concentrated, considerably more potent form; a little goes a long way. Its floral notes harmonize with those imparted by lychee, a light, fragrant juice with a clean, dry finish. Pungent and earthy ginger brings a layer of depth and complexity to the drink as well as a long, spicy finish.

### **Recommended spirits:**

Diplomático Planas

Rhum J.M Blanc

Marie Brizard Orange Curaçao

1 ounce kaffir lime leaf–infused rum (recipe follows)

1 ounce rhum agricole blanc 100 proof

¼ ounce orange Curaçao

½ ounce ginger syrup (see page 176)

½ ounce lychee juice

¾ ounce fresh lime juice

### **Garnish:**

Banana leaf

Pineapple spear

Kaffir lime leaf

Combine all in a shaker with cubed ice. Shake and strain into a snifter over crushed ice. Serve with bamboo straws and garnish with a banana leaf, pineapple spear, or kaffir lime leaf.

**Kaffir Lime Leaf–Infused Rum:** Combine 1 fresh kaffir lime leaf and 12½ ounces (375 milliliters) aged white rum in a glass or nonporous, nonreactive container. Let steep at room temperature for 2 hours. Drain and discard leaf before use. Decant into a clean bottle and store refrigerated indefinitely.





## TIGER LILY

The Tiger Lily is ideal for those moments when you are in a mood for a fresh, floral daytime or brunch cocktail. Yuzu is one of the freshest, clearest expressions of citrus in a liqueur that I have experienced and it brings a delightful combination of crisp, punchy citrus and floral notes, while the soft, mellow botanicals from the elderflower liqueur add a hint of honeyed sweetness.

### **Recommended spirits:**

Campo de Encanto Pisco

Marie Brizard Yuzu Liqueur

Giffard Fleur de Sureau Sauvage

1½ ounces pisco

½ ounce yuzu liqueur

⅛ ounce elderflower liqueur

1 ounce white grapefruit juice

½ ounce honey syrup (see page 175)

2 dashes Angostura bitters

### **Garnish:**

Pineapple spear

Orange twist

Edible flower

Combine all in a shaker with a small scoop of crushed ice. Aerate with a stand mixer or wand blender for 10 to 15 seconds—the liquid should be slightly frothy. Strain into a hurricane glass over pebbled ice and garnish with a pineapple spear, an orange twist, and an edible flower.







# POOLSIDE

I had the Piña Colada—all white rum, coconut cream, and lime—on my mind here, but wanted to dial back the sweetness a bit. Enter the baked-fruit flavors of banana. This adjustment draws out the vegetal and dry chocolaty notes in both the Navy-strength rum and cachaça employed here. Papaya brings an additional layer of depth to the drink, while the ginger adds a spicy kick and draws everything together for a long, layered finish.

## **Recommended spirits:**

Plantation O.F.T.D. Rum

Navy Rum Blend (see page 169)

Avuá Oak Cachaça

**1 ounce Navy-style rum**

**½ ounce aged cachaça**

**½ ounce ginger syrup (see page 176)**

**½ ounce banana milk (see page 129)**

**½ ounce papaya juice**

**½ ounce fresh lemon juice**

## **Garnish:**

**Lime, zested**

Combine all ingredients in a blender with ice. Flash blend for 8 to 10 seconds and pour into a swizzle cup (see page 180) or Collins glass. Garnish with freshly grated lime zest.



# STRANGERS IN PARADISE

While the prevailing perception of mezcal is that it is smoky, gravelly, and even rough, in fact, it can also, by turns, be floral, fruity, silky, smooth, and refreshing. This recipe blends a mezcal espadín with a heavy dark rum, taking a cue from the blending of a heavy and light rum in a Mai Tai (see page 28). This version then takes an about-face from that original template, focusing on darker, savory flavors while pushing the citrus to the rear.

## **Recommended spirits:**

La Favorite Coeur de Canne Rhum Agricole Blanc

Hamilton 86 Demerara Rum

Yola 1971 Mezcal

Giffard Ginger of the Indies

1 ounce rhum agricole blanc

½ ounce aged rum

½ ounce mezcal espadín

½ ounce ginger liqueur

¾ ounce macadamia syrup

¾ ounce fresh lime juice

⅛ ounce Fernet Vallet

## **Garnish:**

Lime shell, scored

Mint sprig

Pineapple spears

Dehydrated pineapple wedge

Combine all but fernet in a shaker with cubed ice. Shake and pour all contents into a skull or tall Tiki mug. Top with pebbled ice and float fernet on top. Garnish with a scored lime shell, fresh mint, 2 to 3 pineapple spears, and a dehydrated pineapple wedge.





# TAMARINDITA

A favorite dessert ingredient in Asian and Latin American cuisines, tamarind is, at turns, acidic, earthy, and slightly sweet; in drinks, it is delightfully bright, piquant, and zippy. Banana and Panamanian rum—known for its balance of dry, aromatic fruit and buttery toffee notes—add layers of roundness to the palate, while the amari bring bitter cacao nibs and an element of savory to tie it all together.

## **Recommended spirit:**

Ron Abuelo 7-Year Añejo Rum

**2 ounces aged rum**

**½ ounce Cynar**

**1 ounce tamarind puree**

**1 ounce banana milk (recipe follows)**

**¼ ounce fernet**

## **Garnish:**

**Cinnamon stick, grated**

Combine all but fernet in a blender with ice. Flash blend for 15 seconds and strain into a rocks glass over pebbled ice. Top with Fernet and garnish with freshly grated cinnamon.

**Banana Milk:** Peel 1 ripe banana, then cut into chunks and freeze until solid. Combine frozen banana, 1 cup water, ½ teaspoon vanilla extract, 1 teaspoon honey or syrup sweetener, 1 teaspoon cocoa powder, ¼ teaspoon cinnamon, and ¼ teaspoon freshly grated nutmeg in a blender and puree on high speed until smooth, adding water if needed. Banana milk is best used right away, but will keep in the refrigerator for up to 2 days (some discoloration may occur). You can extend that by a couple of days by adding 1 ounce of high-strength spirit to the mix—a 151-proof aged rum is delicious.







# SCULLY COURT PUNCH

Bitters—essentially spices and herbs macerated in high-proof alcohol—are, in fact, a type of bottled cocktail, just sans sugar and citrus. Here, two bitters with the most profound ties to cocktail culture are lengthened and softened with the addition of a mellow bourbon—Mellow Corn is made from 90 percent corn and 10 percent rye and malted barley, then aged for at least two years. Ginger accents the spice notes of Angostura, while pineapple complements the sweetness of the Peychaud's.

## **Recommended spirit:**

Mellow Corn Straight Corn Whiskey

500 milliliters (17 ounces) bourbon

250 milliliters (8½ ounces) ginger syrup (see page 176)

100 milliliters (3⅓ ounces) pineapple juice

200 milliliters (6¾ ounces) fresh lemon juice

125 milliliters (4¼ ounces) Angostura bitters

15 milliliters (½ ounce) Peychaud's Bitters

## **Garnish:**

Lime wheels

Combine all ingredients and stir to mix. Keep at least 4 hours or up to overnight in a covered container in the refrigerator. Stir before serving. If utilizing a punch bowl, pour over a large block of ice to slow dilution. Garnish with lime wheels.

## SUGAR AND SYRUPS

There are a number of ways to sweeten a cocktail, and different sugars will impart a different mouthfeel in addition to different flavors. Most bars rely on simple syrup for speed and consistency, even in their Daiquiris; however, the traditional preparation, and my recipe (see page 16), calls for granulated sugar. In a shaken drink, sugar won't totally dissolve, existing instead as tiny particles held in suspension, giving the drink a subtle but distinct effervescent quality. Syrups do dissolve, lending a smoother, if heavier, texture and pleasing body to the finished cocktail.

Syrups may be a cocktail maker's best secret weapon because they can be kept readily at hand, mix quickly and evenly into cocktails, and enable easy experimentation to create new and customized cocktails. Recipes for specialty syrups abound (and follow, below); however, there are widely available brands that professionals and Tiki experts alike trust for their quality and consistency. Reàl Cocktail Ingredients and Small Hand Foods both make a range of tropical fruit–infused syrups, including banana, mango, and passion fruit. Exotic fruit and nut flavors, like papaya, pistachio, and macadamia nut, can be found from Amoretti, Hella Cocktail Co., Monin, or Torani.

**Simple syrup** is a classic 1:1 combination of sugar and water that scales up easily to any volume needed. Heat 1 cup water in a small saucepan over medium-high heat. Once it comes to a boil, add the sugar and stir briskly to dissolve completely. The syrup is done when the liquid is clear, about 5 minutes. Brush the inside of the saucepan with a wet pastry brush as needed to remove sugar crystals as they form. Remove from heat and let cool to room temperature. Keep in the refrigerator for 3 to 4 weeks.

**Rich syrup** is a favorite of many bartenders since it adds more sweetness by volume and gives the drink an even fuller body. Double the amount of sugar in the simple syrup recipe, keeping a close eye on crystallization while simmering. Keep in the refrigerator for up to 2 weeks.

**Demerara syrup** has an earthy flavor and more vibrant body, making it ideal for drinks with a dark spirit base. Since the golden brown grains of Demerara sugar are larger than granulated sugar crystals, the syrup, while flavorful, is actually less sweet than simple syrup. Keep in the refrigerator for 3 to 4 weeks.

**Cane syrup**, also known as *sirop de canne*, is essential for a proper Ti' Punch (see page 14) and has a fresh, raw quality. Made from fresh-pressed cane juice, cane sugar retains some of the vegetal terroir from the sugarcane. Variations add orange zest, cinnamon sticks, vanilla beans, whole cloves, or allspice berries, and even bay leaves. Keep in the refrigerator for 3 to 4 weeks.

**Vanilla syrup** adds smooth, creamy sweetness to drinks with any dark or spiced spirit base in one of two ways: Add up to 1 tablespoon vanilla extract to water in Demerara syrup recipe. For a more authentic style found in classic Tiki bars, pour hot simple syrup over 1 whole vanilla bean, split lengthwise, in a glass jar or bottle and let cool. Keep syrup made with extract in the refrigerator for up to 2 weeks; syrup made with a whole vanilla bean will keep in the refrigerator for 1 week.

**Honey syrup** also lends a creamy mouthfeel, with honey's added floral and herbal notes. Use the same 1:1 ratio for simple syrup with any variety of honey—I like clover or buckwheat, but try your local favorite. Add a generous pinch of sea salt to the water for **salted honey syrup**; the spices from spiced syrup (see page 176) for a **spiced honey syrup** variation; or an equal volume of thawed passion fruit puree for **passion fruit–honey syrup**. Keep in the refrigerator for up to 2 weeks.

**Toasted coconut syrup** adds elegant, exotic flavor and is what I'll often reach for first when a recipe calls for coconut cream. Toast ½ cup unsweetened coconut in a dry skillet over medium-low heat until fragrant and light golden brown. Combine toasted coconut with 1 cup coconut water and 1 cup honey

and follow the simple syrup recipe, simmering the mixture for about 30 minutes. Let cool, then strain and discard solids. Use granulated sugar in place of honey for a brighter, sweeter version. Keep in the refrigerator for up to 2 weeks.

**Don's Mix** is a beloved Tiki ingredient invented by the master at balancing sweet and sour, Don the Beachcomber himself, for adding mellow sweetness and acidity to complex cocktails. Follow the honey syrup recipe, with grapefruit juice in place of water. Keep in the refrigerator for up to 2 weeks.

**Spiced syrup** includes warm, aromatic flavors that pair beautifully with funky rums and rum agricoles. Heat 3 to 4 cinnamon sticks in a dry skillet over medium-low heat until toasted and fragrant (they may give off a little smoke). Add cinnamon and ½ teaspoon whole cloves to simple syrup recipe once it comes to a simmer. Strain and discard the spices from cooled syrup. Omit cloves for a pure **cinnamon syrup** variation. Keep in the refrigerator for up to 2 weeks.

**Ginger syrup** brings exotic warmth that works well with any spirit and most fruit juices. Follow the simple syrup recipe, adding up to 4 ounces fresh ginger, peeled and sliced into thin coins, once it comes to a simmer. Let steep for 45 minutes before straining and discarding solids. Ginger's wild cousins, aromatic galangal and earthy turmeric, also make delicious syrups. Keep in the refrigerator for up to 2 weeks.

**Tea syrup** combines rich mouthfeel with the sharp flavors of black or green teas, or herbal tisanes. Brew according to your favorite method—it should be strong but not tannic or bitter. Follow the simple syrup recipe, using freshly brewed tea or tisane in place of water. Bold black teas like Earl Grey; grassy green tea; fragrant herbal blends like hibiscus and rooibos; and aromatic herbs such as lemongrass and peppermint all make delicious and versatile syrups. Keep in the refrigerator for up to 2 weeks.

**Coffee syrup** is excellent in any cocktail calling for cacao notes, adding sweetness along with rich, round flavors, as well as acidity and tannin. Follow the simple syrup recipe, using brewed coffee in place of water. Coffee lovers can double-brew their coffee (use half the usual amount of water) for an even stronger, more potent flavor. I suggest darker single-origin beans from Mexico, Guatemala, or Sumatra, or a blend incorporating one or more of these for consistency and flavor. Keep in the refrigerator for up to 2 weeks.

**Pineapple syrup** is one of my personal favorites, which I frequently use in place of simple syrup to give any cocktail an extra tropical gloss. Because of the volume of the fruit, I usually start with a double batch of simple syrup—2 cups each of sugar and water. Cut a ripe pineapple in half and half again lengthwise; then peel, core, and cube one quarter. You should have about 2 cups chopped pineapple. In an airtight glass or nonporous, nonreactive container, combine simple syrup and pineapple, cover, and let steep in the refrigerator for 48 hours, then strain and discard solids. Keep in the refrigerator for up to 2 weeks.

**Orgeat** is an almond-based syrup and a truly classical Tiki ingredient, pivotal to a true Mai Tai (see page 28). Essentially a concentrated form of horchata, its floral aromas and subtle, lightly caramelized sugars make orgeat popular in confectionary and baking as well as a great natural bedfellow for the earthy, funky flavors in Caribbean rum. While one can make one's own orgeat at home (see page 102 for Nathan Hazard's macadamia nut variation), it's an ingredient I am happy to purchase. L'Orgeat, Small Hand Foods, and Beachbum Berry all make excellent and widely available versions.