

# The Hide Bar Newsletter

Newsletter Number 27

May 2009



## Contents

Spirit Special

Twitter Drinks

Featured Drink

Aperitif

Tuesday Tastings

Digestive

## Spirit Special

As it's the Cinco de Mayo coming up, we had to put a Mexican spirit here really.

## Aperitif

Dear Paul,

*Welcome to the May newsletter. Hopefully it finds you well and enjoying a few more days of sunshine at some point to come. We'll see.*

*May brings with it a few classics of the drinking calendar. Firstly, this Saturday, the 2nd May, is Kentucky Derby day. For those of us who aren't particularly horse or betting folk, this is the perfect opportunity to engage in the consumption of the famous Derby drink instead - the Mint Julep. The 'official drink' of the Derby since 1938, this mix of Bourbon, mint, sugar and crushed ice, traditionally served in a pewter julep tin probably has its origins around the early 1800s. Come and join us for a few, although I doubt we'll reach the 120,000 served over the two days of the race each year.*

*Secondly, 5th May allows us to drink to the Cinco de Mayo, a celebration of the victory of the vastly outnumbered Mexican forces over the French in 1862, or just a good excuse for a party and a glass or two of Tequila. We have over 30 tequilas and mezcals for you to choose from, one of which is featured in the newsletter this month. Please also see our chalkboard for specials on the night, including our Mexico City cocktail.*

*Thirdly, and most importantly, 13th May is the anniversary of the first use of the word 'cocktail'. 1806 to be precise, in the Balance and Colombia Respository. Got to be worth celebrating with a concoction or two!*

*May 12th to the 14th is the [London International Wine Fair](#) and [Distil](#). If you can claim links to the drinks industry and are particularly keen on your wine, these are events not to be missed. ExCeL plays host to 1300 exhibitors and around 25,000 wines, along with lots of spirits and*

## La Penca Mezcal



Mezcal is the lesser-known relative of Tequila, but made in a very similar way from different agave species and from outside the region of Tequila (mainly in Oaxaca). It's the one traditionally served with El Gusano - the worm (actually the larvae of the agave snout weevil).

La Penca has all the wonderful earthy, smoky and peppery notes of a good mezcal. It mixes well (try our Passion de Maya with passion fruit, lime and agave syrup), or is great on its own with a shot of sangrita on the side.

The current restrictions on wandering around Mexico are probably not going to help the celebrations this year, but we can raise a glass to toast from London.

## Twitter Drinks

We've recently discovered the delights (or potential to waste time) that Twitter offers. Whilst we're not at the stage of broadcasting our every serve yet, there are lots of things out there that you might find interesting.

**Thestraightpour** Louisiana radio cocktail feature. Lots on Tales of the Cocktail

**Ryewhiskey** for all your rye needs, including tasting notes

**Cocktaillovers** with some great recipes and other cocktailian knick knacks

**WineandSpirits** Magazine of New York - lots of handy wine updates

**DrinkCraftBeer** should you be thinking of making any

**RumDood** rum musings from a

cocktail events. Tasting is strictly for research purposes only.

The 16th May is Eurovision finals night. Your opportunity to drink large quantities of cheap sparkling wine at home as we certainly won't be showing it!

Looking ahead a little, for those of you who are really enthusiastic about your cocktails, New Orleans holds the biggest celebration of the cocktail from the 8th to the 12th July. [Tales of the Cocktail](#) has everything cocktail, from books to antique bar equipment, cocktail competitions to rye seminars.

Happy celebrating!

Paul

## Tuesday Tastings

We hold our tastings every other Tuesday, with a charge of £10 per person.

Tastings start at 7pm and last around 2 hours. They are a mixture of tasting, talk from one of us, a winemaker, spirit producer or expert of some kind, general chat, plus a little bit of food to pair with the tastings.

They are held in our back room, so we are limited to 25 participants on a first-come basis. We can take reservations for the tasting, but due to no-show bookings, we need to take payment in advance. Please let us know if you would like a table in the bar afterwards as well.

[Click here to reserve space at a tasting](#)

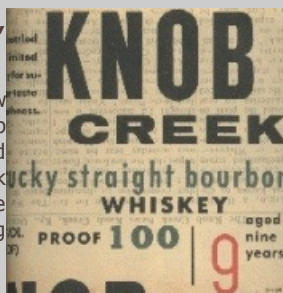
### Tuesday 5th May, 7pm Hendricks Gin

If you haven't already tried Hendricks, then what sort of a gin drinker are you? Excellent stuff, with some intriguing ingredients, served slightly differently to other gins, and all wrapped up in a lovely package. Hendricks UK brand chap will be coming to taste some gins with us, tell us a bit about production and will no doubt be showing off a few cocktails. See if you can guess the two 'surprise' botanicals (quiet at the back if you know already!).



### Tuesday 19th May, 7pm Bourbon

Fancy trying a few a knowledgeable chap great examples and Are you a Maker's Mark fan, or a member of the chance to decide (loving the moment myself).



bourbons? We'll have showing you some what to do with them. drinker, Knob Creek Jim Beam club? Your the Jim Beam Black at

### 7pm rose wines

### Tuesday 2nd June, Italian white and

Details to be confirmed in the next newsletter.

## Digestive

### What's in a name?

**WiseBartender** one of The Hide's bartenders, now assessing the bars of Beijing

Sign up at [twitter.com](https://twitter.com) if you want to have a look. here are many more drink sites out there. Tweeting not required...

The name of a drink can be very influential to its success or failure. It can provoke instant familiarity and reassurance that you're going to get what you want, or it can be the thing that draws your eye to it in the first place, leading you to try new things.

If we exclude those crass or crude cocktails that use their name to hide the ridiculousness of the drink, there is a sense of artistry in the naming process. Would the Manhattan be so well known if it had been the Rye Martini? Would the Cosmopolitan be quite so ubiquitous were it called the Pink Punch? And let's not even consider the literal translation of Mojito into 'A Little Wet'.

## Featured Drink

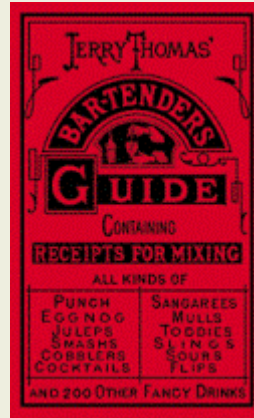


**Downtown Riot**  
£7.00

A Rye-based variation on the Manhattan from Rufus this month. Rhubarb Amaro gives it a complex bitterness, with the violet adding a lovely lightness and sweetness on the finish.

- 60ml Sazerac Rye
- 15ml Lillet vermouth
- 10ml Rabarbaro (Italian rhubarb Amaro)
- 5ml creme de violet

Stir over ice in a mixing glass, then strain into a chilled cocktail glass. Add a lemon twist over the drink to finish.



Broadly speaking, cocktail names fall into four categories. Firstly there are those named for the style of drink, such as the Sour (spirit, citrus and sugar), Fizz (as for a sour but made long with soda), Martini (short, strong), Flip (spirit, sugar, spices and egg) or Old-Fashioned (spirit, sugar, bitters, stirred). These are the simplest to recognise and pretty informative. The cover of the 1887 edition of Jerry Thomas' Bartenders Guide gives us a summary of the styles of drink available at the time, most of which are still common in cocktail names.

Secondly, there are those named after people or places involved in their creation - The **Manhattan** is pretty obvious, although more specifically thought to be named after the Manhattan Club where it was first listed in 1874. Many other bars of the classic cocktail period from the turn of the last century liked to get their name in the book - the **Clover Club** (Philadelphia), **The Savoy Cocktail** (London), **The Buck's** (Club) **Fizz** (London) or the **Pegu Club** (Burma) for example. There are a fair number of references to particular drinkers as well. The **Negroni** (named after the Count who, in 1911, preferred his Americano fortified with gin instead of the usual soda water) and the **Margarita** (a Mexicanised version of Marjorie King's name, an actress from the 1920s who was allergic to every spirit except Tequila - and presumably triple sec).

Thirdly there are the class that set out to capture the flavour, colour or character of the drink. Here I include the **Corpse Reviver** (Four... taken in quick succession will unrevive the corpse - Harry Craddock), **Death in the Afternoon** (named after one of his own works by Hemmingway in a celebrity cocktail book. His instructions were "Pour one jigger absinthe into a Champagne glass. Add iced Champagne until it attains the proper opalescent milkiness. Drink three to five of these slowly."), **Gimlet** (named after the small, sharp tool used by bar managers to tap into their barrels of spirits and beer, the drink is short and sharp), **Dark 'n Stormy**, **Treacle** (created by Dick Bradsell in London during the 1990s) as well as our own **Passion de Maya** and **Ruby Shoes**. To me, the name that best captures the drink is probably the **Mai Tai** - from the Tahitian "Mai Tai - roa ae", meaning "out of this world - the best"!

Finally there are the names that were chosen to tell a story. In the case of the **Sidecar**, for the First World War Captain who always arrived at Harry's New York Bar in Paris in a sidecar. For the French 75, it was Henry at Henry's Bar in Paris who took on the title after the First World War light field gun of the same name (the original cocktail didn't have the Champagne to lengthen it, so was short and packed a serious kick - like the gun). The **Scofflaw** (rye whiskey, dry vermouth, lemon juice, grenadine and orange bitters) was created during prohibition, also at Harry's in Paris. The word was used to describe someone who drank alcohol - or scoffed at the law of prohibition.

The final drink, on what has turned out to be rather a list for you to work your way through should it appeal, is the **Monkey Gland** cocktail. Appropriately for the last one on the list, this drink is a good pick-me-up, which could be why it was named after the 19th Century practice of transplanting an ape's gonads into elderly men to renew their get-up-and-go. At least that's the story as told by Gary Regan, and as one of those cocktailians who knows a thing or two, I'm not going to argue. The first use of the name can be credited to a couple of bars, but both in Paris during prohibition - clearly a fruitful period in the history of naming.

## Links

[London International Wine Fair](#)  
[Distil](#)  
[Tales of the Cocktail](#)

[Hendricks Gin](#)  
[Knob Creek](#)  
[Jim Beam](#)  
[Maker's Mark](#)

[The Hide Bar website](#)  
[Our Latest Drinks Lists](#)  
[email us](#)

## **Monkey Gland Cocktail**

*60ml gin*

*30ml freshly squeezed orange juice*

*2 dashes absinthe (English-style) or Bénédictine (American)*

*2 dashes grenadine*

I hope you've enjoyed the list. Perhaps you can now cut us a little slack when, having deliberated for a good while on how to make your ideal drink, we look a little aghast at having to christen the thing as well. It takes parents at least 9 months to figure out what to call their children!

Paul