



The new Mojito

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By Rachel Forrest August 27, 2008 6:00 AM

Just when we got used to the tall chilly rum, simple syrup, muddled mint and a spritz of seltzer cocktail the Mojito, another one travels up from far away, this time from Brazil.

It's the Caipirinha (kie-purr-REEN-yah) made with lime, sugar, ice and a liquor called cachaça (ka-SHAH-sa), a relative of rum from Brazil made from unrefined fermented sugar cane juice (rum is made from molasses or aged sugar cane juice).

It's what I drink when I go to Brazo restaurant. In fact, I don't even have to ask anymore, it just appears like a vision in front of me. Ahhh. It's becoming more and more popular in other area restaurants too, this national cocktail of Brazil, refreshing and tangy, with a lighter flavor than rum and a more fruity feel on the palate.

I've also seen cachaça referred to as pinga and there are more regional terms, but cachaça is now a trademark so that's what we'll see up here for the most part.

The liquor was created by Portuguese settlers in Brazil in the 1500s and at first the fermented sugar cane juice was sipped by slaves in its rough form. It was subsequently refined and distilled and the production grew through the 1700s and 1800s as a drink imbibed mostly by the lower classes. Now of course it's trendy. Go figure.

There are more than 4,000 brands of cachaça in Brazil in unaged or white and aged or gold varieties. You'll find the white in the most popular cocktail, the caipirinha, but the aged version is more likely to be sipped slowly with nothing else in it, like any premium liquor.

Here are some good summer drinks made with cachaca, including the traditional caipirinha. I got these from a company that makes a good cachaça, called Boca Loca (www.drinkbocaloca.com). Many of these are made with ingredients we can get at the local farmers market right now.

Herb Cane

- 3 basil leaves
- 6 mint leaves
- 2 ounces Boca Loca Cachaça
- .5 ounce Chartreuse (green)
- .5 ounce brown sugar syrup
- 1 ounce fresh squeezed lemon juice
- 1 small orange peel

Muddle basil and mint into shaker. Pour in next four ingredients and shake vigorously with ice. Strain liquid into rocks glass. Squeeze essential oil from orange peel into drink and drop in for garnish.

The Majestic

- 3 small diced pineapple pieces
- 2 ounces Boca Loca Cachaça
- .5 ounce Chartreuse (Yellow)
- .5 ounce brown sugar syrup
- .5 ounce fresh squeezed lime juice
- 1 dash orange bitters
- 1 ounce seltzer water

Muddle pineapple in shaker. Add next five ingredients and shake vigorously with ice. Strain liquid into highball glass, adding seltzer water while pouring. Garnish with pineapple frond and serve.

Boca Royale

- 1 whole strawberry
- 2 ounces Boca Loca Cachaça
- .5 ounce brown sugar syrup
- .5 ounce fresh squeezed lemon juice
- 1 ounce sparkling wine

Muddle strawberry into shaker. Add next three ingredients and shake vigorously with ice. Strain liquid into highball glass adding sparkling wine while pouring. Garnish with lemon and serve.

Traditional Caipirinha

- 1 lime cut into 6 sections
- 2 teaspoons sugar
- 2 ounce Boca Loca Cachaça

Muddle limes and sugar in rocks glass to form a paste. Add ice to top of glass, stir in paste with ice. Add Boca Loca, stir and serve.

The Dish

It's that time of year again! The fantastic Hampton Beach Seafood Festival is on Sept. 5, 6, 7 down there at Hampton Beach (of course). All of the food is great, but I love the culinary demos each day. This year they've got chefs from The Bedford Village Inn, Rick's Café and Grill in Kingston, the Atkinson Country Club, The Old Salt, Chez Boucher, Bonta, The Colosseum in Salem, Blue Water Café in Newburyport and many more. Check out the events at www.hamptonbeachseafoodfestival.com.

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