

Bartales

Best of

N. 20 | APRIL 2019

SUPPLEMENT OF BARTALES



FACE TO FACE / SIBILLINE WISDOM
THE ANISE LADIES



LIQUID STORY / LEMONADE
SIMPLE AND FRESH



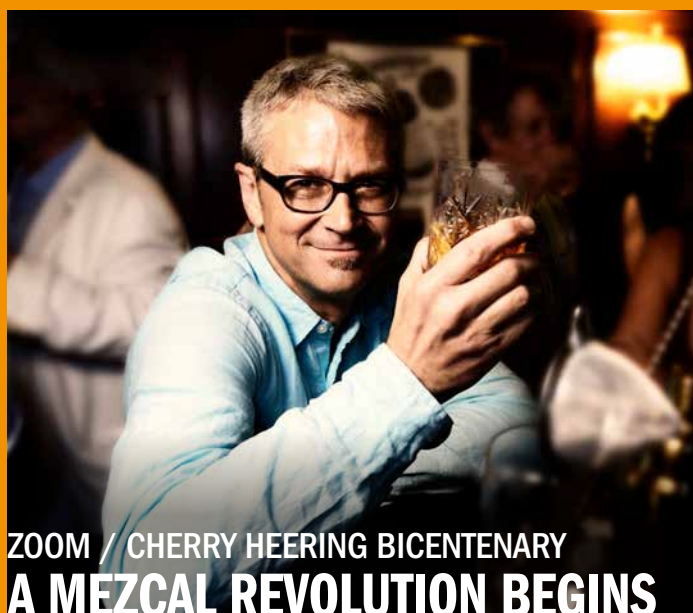
HOT SPIRIT / AWAMORI
**SPIRITS FROM THE LAND
OF THE RISING SUN / 1**



LIQUID STORY / UNDERBERG
RIGHTSIZE BITTERS



HOW TO FEEL / SCIENCE AT THE BAR
LOW TEMPERATURES



ZOOM / CHERRY HEERING BICENTENARY
A MEZCAL REVOLUTION BEGINS



—
PURO
DISTILLATO
DI 34 ERBE
—

SIPS OF PLEASURE

It's here – single-use plastic has been banned. Thanks to the new directive which has been definitively approved, the European Parliament requires member states to ban the use of a range of disposable plastic items by 2021. These include plates and cutlery, straws, cotton buds, stirrers and balloon sticks. Without a (plastic) straw, it will be even more satisfying to sip on what has always been one of the most refreshing drinks and one that anyone can make for themselves. I'm referring to lemonade (*on page 12*), a clever mix of water, lemon and sugar – an ancient blend that has its roots in the history and culture of many European countries, from the Middle East and the Mediterranean, to even influencing the habits of the populations of northern Europe and abroad. It was born in France, but it became particularly popular in Great Britain especially from the late 1800s thanks to the Royal Navy's large-scale use of lemon and lime juice as an effective means of preventing and curing scurvy. And thanks, most of all, to the "Lemonade Sellers", those who mainly sold lemonade; "street vendors" or "street sellers" of food and beverages such as coffee, tea, ginger beer, milk, mulled wine and of course lemonade, meticulously immortalised by Dorè in 1872. They were the forerunners of our most modern and celebrated bartenders.

Follow us



BarTales
Best of

N. 20 | APRIL 2019

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DRINK RESPONSIBLY



ROMA BAR SHOW **International Bar & Beverage Trade Show** **first edition**

On **Monday 23 and Tuesday 24 September 2019**, at the Palazzo dei Congressi in Rome's EUR district (no. 1 Piazza John Kennedy), from 10:00 until 21:00, the first edition of "**ROMA BAR SHOW**" will be held, an international event exclusively dedicated to the beverage sector. The **ROMA BAR SHOW** project was born out of a need for the industry, its businesses and those working within it to meet and engage at an Italian event with international exposure, with the aim of raising the profile of the spirit industry and mixology in Italy.

The event aims to becoming the leading bar, beverage and hospitality sector exhibition in Italy. The **RO-MA BAR SHOW** will be a reference point for professionals, a high-profile marketplace for doing quality business and discovering the latest industry innovations in terms of products, cocktails, trends, raw materials, equipment and semi-finished products.

Starting from this, its first edition, the **ROMA BAR SHOW** will boast a packed programme that will engage Rome in an intense line-up of master classes, talks and conferences, side-line and out-of-expo events dedicated to the trade and the consumer that will involve visitors and the city for the duration of the event.

Speakers will include industry professionals and international guests, who will share their experiences and knowledge on trends and industry innovations. The **ROMA BAR SHOW** will not only be an exhibition space, but rather a stage where new experiences can be tried first-hand through the stories of the participating brands.

Among the dedicated spaces are the evocative Le Terrazze of the Palazzo dei Congressi with its splendid views that embrace the entire city of Rome, the prestigious open-air theatre and the hanging gardens that complete the outdoor spaces where the exhibiting companies will recreate new spaces with a different feel. The event as a whole will be enriched by the participation of a prestigious pool of international bar-tenders.

Every year the **ROMA BAR SHOW COCKTAIL BAR** will pay tribute to a classic of Italian mixing. In its first edition RBS will celebrate the centenary of Negroni represented in the interpretations of Italy's foremost bartenders.

Special attention will be paid to the world of food, pairings, and the use of coffee in mixing through tastings and performances with highly innovative and artistic content.

The artistic management of the **ROMA BAR SHOW** will release further news in due course.

For more information:

info@romabarshow.com

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THE ANISE LADIES

A poker of women at the helm of the historic Varnelli distillery Celebrating its 150th anniversary

BY MELANIA GUIDA

The most recent addition is completing its delicate decantation process. It is a delicious peach liqueur, aged for twenty years. It is called “Persico” and it will awaken in the spring, limited to 3,500 numbered bottles. It is the emblem of the 150th anniversary of the Varnelli distillery in Pievebovigliana, the new-comer among the other ways of celebrating a century and

a half of production, which commenced on 30 September 2018 and which will continue throughout 2019. “We will carry on celebrating until September 30th”, explains Orietta Varnelli, “which is the feast day of San Girolamo (St. Jerome). He is the perfect representative for a company that had two Girolamos lead it in years gone by: the founder of the business, and doctor Girolamo, champion of the third





generation, but also our father”.

One hundred and fifty years that between Pievebovigliana and Muccia, in the heart of the Sibillini Mountains, saw four generations of herbalists follow the other, and who were able to uphold the old methods of craftsmanship and secrecy of the recipes with conscientious professionalism. In 1988 the oldest liqueur brand in the Marche region became a joint-stock company, and the capital belongs entirely to the Varnelli family. It is run by four women: Donatella, Orietta and Simonetta, led by their mother Elda, who is president of the distillery.

They are a team of energetic, strong-





willed women, deeply connected to the culture of the region, and custodians of the craftsmanship that allows the refined excellence of Varnelli products to be recognised in Italy and around the world. Among them all are the icons of the brand: the “Varnelli anice secco speciale” (special dry anise), the “Amaro dell’Erborista” (the herbalist’s bitters) and the “Amaro Sibilla” (Sibilline bit-

ters), initially created as an antimalarial and antipyretic due to its high content of great yellow gentian, cinchona and many other medicinal plants. “These are the thoroughbreds, as I call them”, says Simonetta – historical products. I think

of the aniseed-based liqueurs: they have always been a category that has alternated between highs and lows when it comes to the interest shown by the bartending sector.

“We’ve started on a programme of evangelisation, to spread the culture of drinking aniseed liqueurs more widely”



“It’s true. It’s no coincidence that we’ve just started on a programme of “evangelization”, Simonetta reveals, incisively. Which means? “Spreading the culture of drinking aniseed-based liqueurs more widely”. How so? “By educating people about this ancient product, which is so important in mixing and which, we mustn’t forget, was one of the first liqueurs”.

Let’s talk about Amari – it is a golden era for the sector. “It all started eight years ago. I was in Florence for the Varnelli Awards”, says Simonetta, “and for the first time I brought home only one bottle of Amaro, and it was open too. Time’s had changed; everyone wanted Amari”. What brought this about? “The craft beer

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VARNELLI
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SAVIGLIANO
2006).



trend had begun. This is a trend that has shifted tastes towards bitter drinks, and regionality". With the focus on health as an accomplice, do you think it will continue for much longer? "We need to watch out for inflation. I wouldn't want a rebirth of traditional liqueurs to end up becoming a problem for the whole sector".

How important is the culture of tradition within small producers when considering the spirit industry at a global level? "It's an important value, and our strength. It's an advantage we must look after", continues Orietta, "and tradition is especially what people like about it overseas".

A century and a half of history is a noteworthy legacy. Looking to the future, even though you are still young and vibrant, are you making plans for the new generation to enter the company? "Of course we're thinking about it. Our children and grandchildren are getting ready, but we won't rush into anything".

Will there be any other initiatives marking the 150th anniversary celebrations? "Yes, there is going to be a "Varnelli" Magnum and in the next few months we will be launching an award. It will highlight the wonders of the Sibillini Mountains both nationally and internationally, through different forms of art because I feel it's truly a privilege to live and work in this area", Orietta concludes proudly.

Melania Guida

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SIMPLE AND FRESH

The queen of “non-alcoholic” drinks, perfect for every occasion and a must in mixing

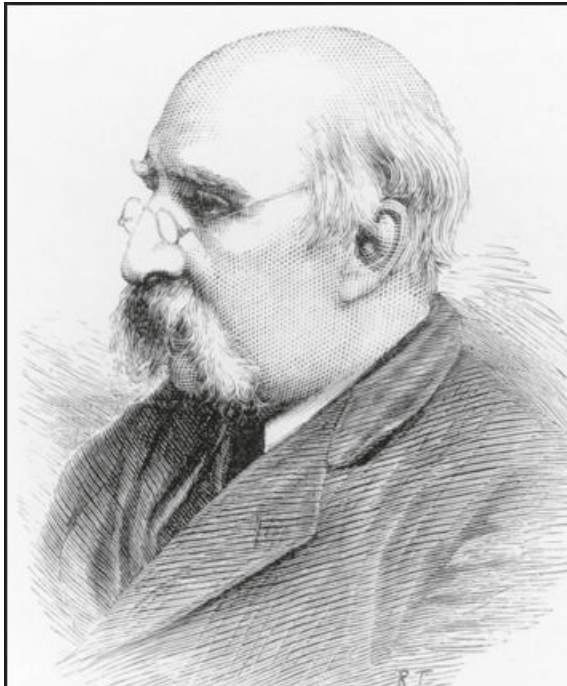
BY LUCA RAPETTI

Fresh juice of one lemon, a little sugar and water – these three simple ingredients combined and dosed according to one’s taste provide one of the most refreshing drinks and one that anyone can make.

Lemonade is a name with deep roots in the history and culture of many European countries, in a journey between the Middle East and the Mediterranean, and that has even influenced the habits of the people of northern Europe and overseas. Limonadiers, the ancestors of the modern bartender, played a decisive role in spreading the popularity of this drink. During the sixteenth century in the Court

of Catherine of Medici in France, Limonadiers were those who held the know-how and techniques for preparing of syrups, cordial, liqueurs and other types of drinks.

Given the proximity of France to England, lemonade and other similar drinks spread across England quickly and its diffusion was unstoppable. The popularity of lemonade in Great Britain received a significant boost from the end of the 1800s thanks to the wide-scale use of lemon and lime juice by the Royal Navy as a means to prevent and cure scurvy. As early as the 1700s, lemonade was served on social occasions and often it was found together with other prepara-



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EIFFEL TOWER LEMONADE



PRODUCERS
 TOP PHOTO, A SHERBET SELLER. ABOVE, THE WHITE COMPANY. TOP LEFT, HENRY MAYHEW AND, BELOW, THE SHETLAND TIMES (SATURDAY 11 AUGUST 1900).

tions that were very fashionable in those years, such as coffee and capillaire. From the middle of the same century numerous advertisements for "acid of lemon and orange" appeared for use in punches, lemonade and jellies, which undoubtedly reduced the costs and preparation time albeit sacrificing the freshness that only the fresh fruit provides.

In 1851 Henry Mayhew, British journalist and founder of "Punch" magazine,

compiled "London Labour and the London Poor", an extensive report comprising hundreds of pages of descriptions and details concerning the conditions of the less affluent social classes in the British capital. He also mentioned the job of the "Lemonade Seller", who mainly sold lemonade. They were counted among the category of "street vendors" or "street sellers" of food and beverages such as coffee, tea, ginger beer, milk,


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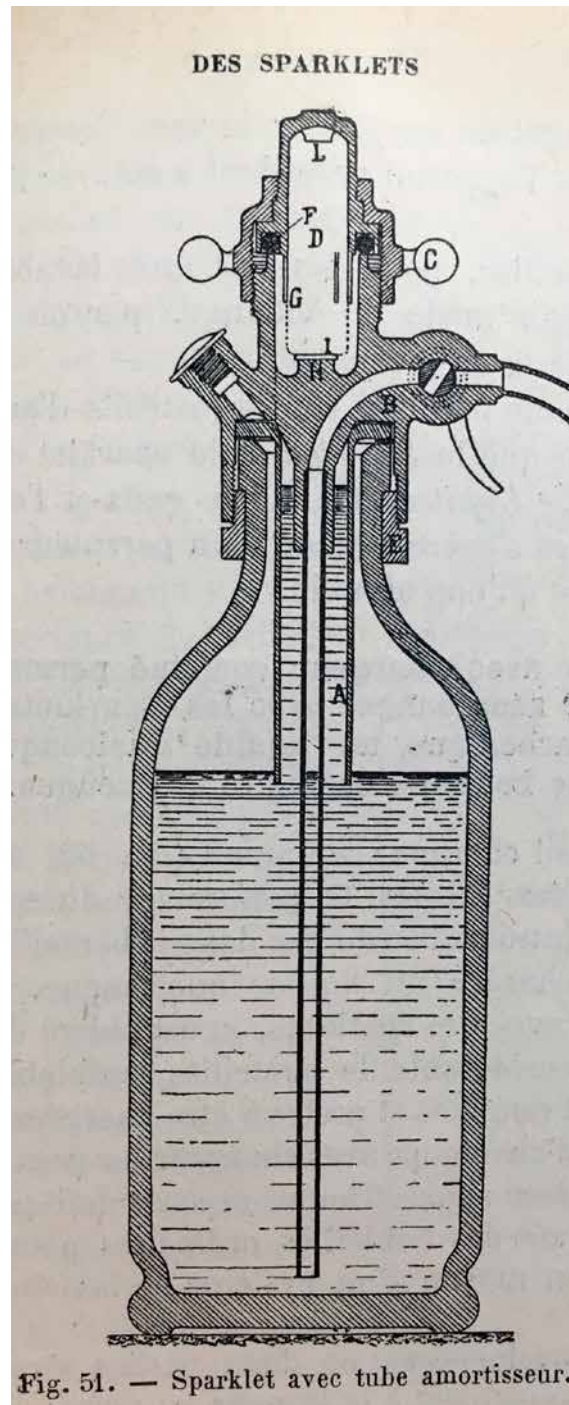


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INVENTIONS

FROM THE TOP:
 ALNWICK
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 (SATURDAY 26
 AUGUST 1876)
 AND AN
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 CODD'S
 PATENT. RIGHT,
 A SYSTEM FOR
 PRODUCING
 BUBBLES.

mulled wine and of course lemonade. The latter, along with ginger beer, was the best-selling thirst-quencher, generating a large part of the individual seller's profit. Mayhew's lemonade recipe consisted of bicarbonate of soda, tartaric acid, sugar and lemon essence. Many sellers used to cut slices of lemon and placed them in the drinks they were going to serve,



to grab the attention of the public's eye and convince them of the freshness of their product.

The meticulous illustration of the "Lemonade vendor" by Gustav Dorè in 1872 faithfully represented this street vendor, equipped with a sort of stone container similar to a barrel, known as a "stone-barrel", which contained water



DRAWINGS
SOME WORKS
DEPICTING
LEMONADIERS.

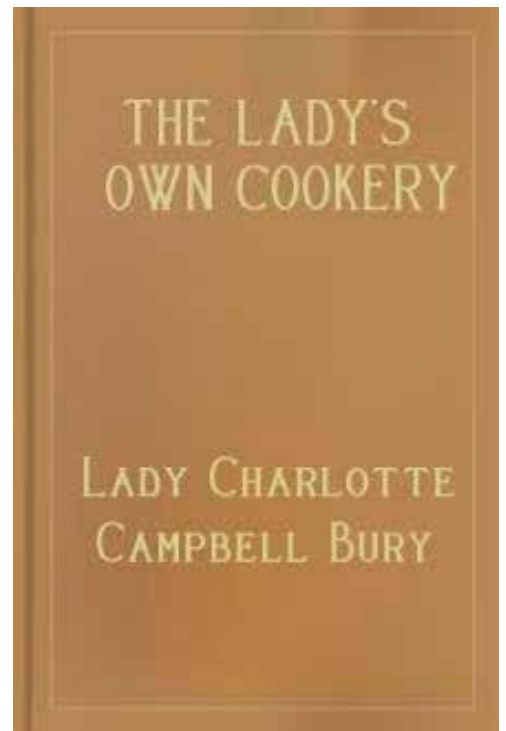
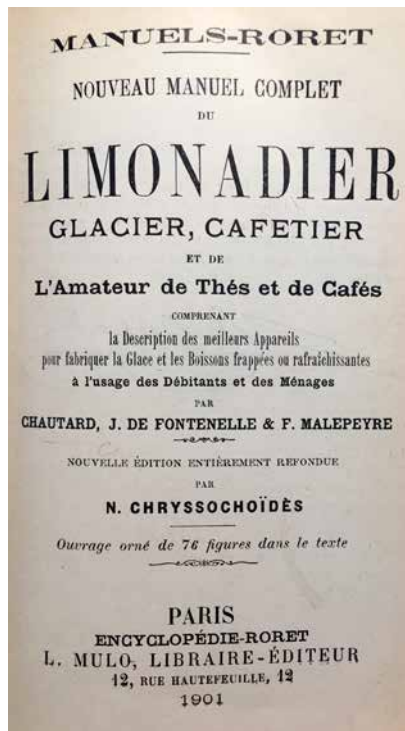
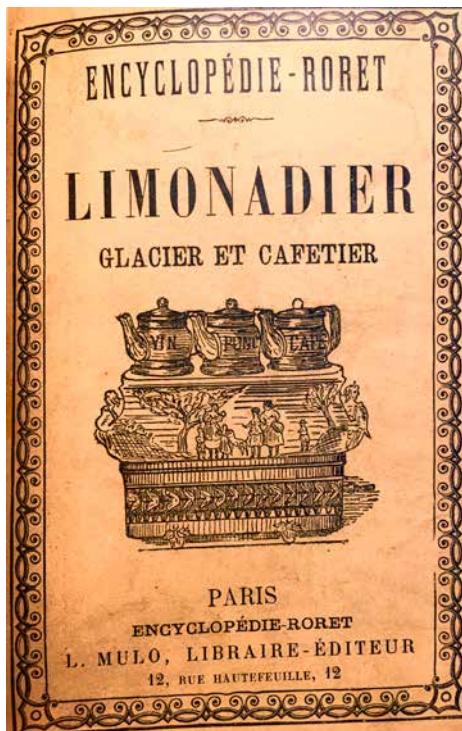


from the nearest public water pump. The ingredients mentioned in Mayhew's recipe were in powder form. When it was time to serve the drink, the seller added a dose equivalent to a tablespoon to the glass of water, and it was stirred until the mixture had completely dissolved. It was then served to the customer. Needless to say, adhering to certain hygiene practices, including washing of the equipment and glasses used, was completely unknown at that time.

There was no shortage of real "Lemonade fountains", set up on rectangular wagons, sometimes beautifully decorated and equipped with everything needed for serving the customer. For those who could afford to own or even hire a fountain, it was a sure source of income, both thanks to the larger quantity of product available and ease of movement, as well as the very size of the apparatus which obviously attracted people's eye

in the crowded streets. As you can imagine, sales of lemonade and in general of "cooling drinks" were dictated by the weather that could completely thwart or favour the income of these vendors.

The London summer was certainly the time when business peaked. On hot days, lemonade vendors gathered in areas with the highest influx of people, such as the



London Stock Exchange. At the sound of “A halfpenny a glass, a halfpenny a glass, sparkling lemonade”, the “lemonaders” tried to attract the attention of passers-by, offering not only classic lemonade but also flavoured versions. In the raspberry variation, cochineal carapace was added as a natural dye. However, given that at that time ice was not available and

the drink was simply served by using the coldest water available, it often happened that the cochineal oxidized due to extended exposure to the sun and as a result changed the colour from red to brown, making the drink not as inviting to passers-by.

Then there was also Imperial, a type of lemonade made with cream of tartar (potassium bitartrate), a natural leaven-

ing agent extracted from grapes, which was very common in those years. In “The Lady’s Own Cookery Book” by Lady Campbell Bury of 1844, three Imperial recipes appeared. In 1851 chef Alexis Soyer produced his Nectar, a sort of lemonade to which apple, raspberries, quince and lemon were added and then made fizzy. In a short time the fame of this drink grew considerably and many imitations of Nectar were sold on the streets of London, as Mayhew himself pointed out in his reports.

In south London, Robert and Mary White, two modest merchants from Camberwell, contributed greatly to the spread of lemonade in England. In 1845 they started their business of selling ginger beer on a small cart. Soon they also began to pack lemonade “made with real lemons” and sold in characteristic stone bottles. In 1871 the Whites opened a factory in Cunard Street to increase volumes, given the growing demand for their products. The patent for the glass bottle

In 1845 Robert and Mary White contributed to the spread of lemonade through the sale of ginger beer

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BUSINESSES

ABOVE, CREAM OF TARTAR. RIGHT, A 'WHITE' TRUCK. BELOW, ROBERT AND MARY WHITE. TOP RIGHT, HIRAM CODD PHOTOGRAPHED BY JOSE MARIA MORA.



with a marble top, conceived and patented by Hiram Codd only two years later, gave further impetus to sales of carbonated beverages, and lemonade above all, as it meant that the beverages remained fizzy for longer. All drinks available in Codd bottles were listed in an advertisement in 1881 and lemonade was the first one mentioned.

Thanks to its simple preparation and its ability to bring in ever-changing flavours using seasonal fruit, lemonade has gradually established itself in the non-alcoholic beverage sector, used in any type of occasion and in mixing. The current English market is proof that lemonade is a must-have product for the British. New products make their appearance by focusing on the use of the best ingredients possible and sometimes refer to recipes of the past. Below are some of the lem-



onades currently present in England on a large scale.

SCHWEPPE'S LEMONADE

One of the flagship products of the company created more than two centuries ago by Swiss Jacob Schweppes. This lemonade uses a secret mix of lemon and lime essential oils that are expertly combined and left to rest for a few days at low temperature. The recipe is inspired by that of the original Schweppes Aerated Lemonade of 1835 and is colourless, with a fragrant note and the right amount of sugar.

FENTIMAN'S VICTORIAN LEMONADE

Made with the juice of one and a half lemons grown in Spain, this lemonade is made with the original "Botanical Brewing" method used since 1905 especially for producing the famous Fentimans Ginger Beer. The method involves a short fermentation stage in a solution of water, sugar and yeasts with the botanicals used for each beverage. Victorian Lemonade is a pale yellow colour and its cloudiness indicates no filtration, leaving a glimpse of the organic residue used during the production of this drink.

FEVER TREE SICILIAN LEMONADE

Sfumatrice-Torchio is the signature of this lemonade that exploits the aromatic burst of the oils and juice of Sicilian lemons from the fertile slopes of Mount Etna. The process, which makes use of a "sfumatrice", is usually used in the perfume industry for extracting aromatic oils from the citrus fruit. Fever Tree claims to be the only company to use this system in beverage production. Although the sugar content is higher than most of the lemon-



WHITE'S
TOP, SOME OF
THEIR
PRODUCTS.
ABOVE, CODD
BOTTLES.

ades on the market, it serves to balance the intensity of the juice used. The finish is delicate, full and refreshing.

FRANKLIN & SONS ORIGINAL LEMONADE

In 1886 George, Albert and Frederick Franklin founded their business at 171 High Street, Rickmansworth, London, which consisted of a grocery store, where they also initially produced ginger beer. Over the years they developed a very wide



range of products and this made them among the most esteemed brands in the capital and in general in England. Original Lemonade combines high quality water from Staffordshire and South American lemons, in particular from Argentina. The sugar used is made from beets grown in England and no other sweeteners or colourants are added. This lemonade is inspired by historic recipes, especially the most popular ones of the Victorian era.

LUSCOMBE SICILIAN LEMONADE

Since 1087 the Luscombe estate, located in south Devon, has had a rich history linked to high quality horticulture, thanks to its fertile land and favorable climatic conditions. Known above all for its cider, the history of Luscombe in soft drinks production began in 1997 when Gabriel David and his father, Julian, focussed on creating traditional juices and drinks using the best ingredients available. Their Sicilian Lemonade contains 14% organic Sicilian lemon juice, organic cane sugar, water from Devon

and is not carbonated, unlike the more common lemonades on the market. The final touch, which gives a pleasant and fragrant note and a natural sweetness, comes from Madagascar vanilla, whose extract is added to the other ingredients.

THREE CENTS

Born in 2014 from the idea of four Greek friends and professionals, Vassilis Kalantzis, George Bagos, George Tsirikos and Dimitri Dafopoulos, Three Cents is inspired by the Great Depression, when “Soda Fountains” were very popular and served the first carbonated drinks. Two Cents was the price for the cheapest drink on offer, while if some syrup was added to enhance the flavour, the cost was Three Cents. This is a range of soft drinks especially ideal for use in mixing. Lemon Tonic Three Cents is a combination of three different Greek citrus fruits – a refreshing blend of lemon, lime and bitter Mediterranean orange combined with natural quinine.

Luca Rapetti

Vermouth & Spirits
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Negroni Del Professore

IN A WORLD FULL OF TRENDS,
WE WANT TO REMAIN CLASSIC

Tradition, terroir, people
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SPIRITS FROM THE LAND OF THE RISING SUN/1

The other way of drinking Japanese

BY ALESSANDRO PALANCA

Japanese cuisine is without doubt one of the most highly regarded in Italy. The now widespread distribution of themed establishments and restaurants has allowed the Italian consumer to get to know that type of cuisine that has sushi as its most authentic ambassador.

But the culinary culture of the Land of the Rising Sun has also brought to the

fore those spirits that are part of its history and that combine with it thanks to tradition and typicality. Sake and Japanese whisky are already being enjoyed by passionate and demanding consumers. Sake, although still undervalued in terms of its consumption and potential, is found in all the variations that go best with food pairings. In many cocktail bars Japanese



whiskies are highly sought after by whisky lovers, with a market value such that it is capturing the attention of many industry analysts, and Japanese beers are becoming increasingly popular.

However, there are other typically Japanese spirits that are much less known and which we want to cover here. These are liqueurs and spirits that the Japanese drink often, such as umeshu, yuzushu, awamori and schochu. Awamori is typical of the island of Okinawa, the southernmost prefecture of Japan, where it has been produced for at least 600 years and is also called shima or “shochu of Okinawa”, as it is the only place where it is produced by 47 distilleries. Some say that this spirit is older than sake and consider it the oldest Japanese spirit.

This distillate is obtained from long-grain rice fermented with black koji mould which is typical of the island. This particular strain was discovered in Okinawa and its scientific name, *Aspergillus awamori*, is directly related to its origins. It is a mould that is particularly resistant to high temperatures and the humidity of the tropical





climate. It converts the starch macromolecules in the rice into simple sugars. The husk is removed, the rice washed and then steamed, then inoculated with the koji mould according to the same principle used for sake production. This process that lasts from 2 to 3 days is what the producers call “Zen Oji zukuru”, and differs from sake production where white koji is used almost exclusively.



Distillation of moromi, the fermented rice mash, takes place in a traditional still and lasts about 4 hours

The fermentation process must be able to produce a substantial amount of citric acid and can reach up to 20% ABV. The origin of the name is not certain. According to some, the term “awamori” ties back to the meaning of the word. In Japanese “awa” means “foam”, and “-mori” stands for “to rise, to stand up”. It could indicate the turbulent phase of alcoholic fermentation that produces foam. According to others, it is an ancient

method of measuring alcohol content, very similar to that used by the mezcaleros (las perlas). The liquid is poured into a small cup from a height equal to the length of an outstretched arm and the foam produced is observed. Distillation of moromi, the fermented rice mash, takes place in a traditional still heated directly by a flame fed by large fans. It is a unique distillation process that lasts about four hours to obtain a spirit that reaches 70% ABV.

Water is added to achieve the final product with an alcohol percentage of about 30%. It also reaches around 40%, with the

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PRODUCTION

ON TOP, A FERMENTATION PHASE AND SHEQUASAR. ABOVE, THE DISTILLER AND, RIGHT, THE FEED FLAME.

exception of hanazake awamori which is about 60% and is native to the island of Yonaguni, also in the Ryukyu archipelago. Hanazake is strongly symbolic of funeral rituals. In the island of Yonaguni, bodies are not cremated, but placed in a coffin with two jars of hanazake. The coffin is placed in tombs dug into the rock, near the sea. Seven years later, on the anniversary of their death, the bodies are removed from their coffins.

This is when the relatives of the deceased meet, open one of the preserved hanazake jars and use the spirit to clean the bones. Once this is done, the rest of

the bottle is used to start incinerating the remains. The second bottle of hanazake is drunk by the men who take part in the tribute to the deceased. Women use a few drops to wet their skin.

Young awamori can have a very particular taste, but there is also an aged type of awamori, called kusu. The minimum aging is 3 years, and it can also go up to 20, 30 and 40 years, although some producers claim that it can also be aged for 100 years if properly preserved.

During World War II, the Battle of Okinawa, called “Operation Iceberg”, was the largest battle of the Pacific campaign and

lasted from March to June 1945. For US forces, Okinawa was the last step before the invasion of the major islands of Japan. Entire villages were completely destroyed by the fighting.

It is said that a huge stock of jars containing over 400-year-old awamori was destroyed. This awamori dated back to a time when Okinawa was not part of Japan, but formed the Ryukyu Kingdom along with the surrounding islands. It is aged according to an ancient ritual method called *shitsugi* and takes place in terracotta containers or *kame*, kept at a low and constant temperature in the cellars. A series of decantations of distillates of various ages creates blends of various ages that are known as *kusu*. In order to call it such, *kusu* must contain at least 51% of 3-year-old awamori, and the remainder can be made up by young spirits. The finest distillates bear the words 100% *kusu* and have a rich complexity.

Typical in Japanese-style bars called *izakaya*, awamori is usually drunk with cold or hot water, soda or ice. Many drink it mixed with shequasar juice, a small, rather bitter mandarin originating from Taiwan and Okinawa, lemon juice or other fruit, added to tea and coffee. The more alcoholic versions are drunk as a digestif and awamori is also excellent in mixing.

Some of the most popular awamori brands in Okinawa are Zanza, Todoroki, Kikunotsuyu, Kura and Zuisen. Awamori is often used as a condiment and in cooking. *Koregusu* is typical in Okinawa, a condiment made from dried chillies infused in awamori and used in the traditional Okinawa *soba*, with *tofuyo*, fish and pork, fries and generally all the typical Japanese dishes. Sales of awamori are currently doing very well.



For the record, there is a type of awamori in Okinawa called *habusha*. Its preparation includes the use of vipers, but we won't say any more than that.

Alessandro Palanca

AWAMORI RECIPES



ORIENTAL EXPRESS by Paolo D'Amore Beat Spirits & Kitchen – Policoro (MT)

INGREDIENTS

- 25ml Zanpa Black Awamori
- 35ml Lucano Anniversario
- 20ml Maraschino Luxardo infused with bael tea
- 15ml Riserva Carlo Alberto – Salvia & Limone
- 2 dashes Alchemia Bitter Lemon

Method: stir & strain. Glass: kintsugi. Garnish: bael fruit



OKINAWA BEAT by Alessio Simonini – Sake sommelier – Milan

INGREDIENTS

- 20ml Masahiro 8yo Awamori
- 30ml Negroni Antica Distilleria bitters
- 30ml Jinzu Gin
- 1 dash hm hops bitters

Method: stir & strain. Glass: low tumbler. Garnish: dried rhubarb



NAHA SLING by Valerio Sordi – Club Decò – Milan

INGREDIENTS

- 50ml “Sangosho Black” Yamakawa Shouzo Awamori
- 25ml clarified datterini tomato syrup
- 10ml Kikuisami Umeshu
- 60ml Lung Ching Chinese tea

Method: build. Glass: high tumbler. Garnish: bamboo leaf and grated Sansho pepper



HANGOVER by Cosimo Damiano Felicetti – Ritorno – London

INGREDIENTS

- 40ml Absolute Elyx Vodka
- 10ml Clementi China Antico Elixir
- 20ml hm turmeric syrup hm
- 20ml lime juice
- Top with reimei awamori foam

Method: shake. Glass: glass mug. Garnish: Awamori foam, grated lime zest, 2 slices of dried lime.

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RIGHTSIZE BITTERS

Pocket-sized, single-dose
and with a Brazilian cousin

BY FABIO BACCHI

On 17 June 1846, Hubert Underberg was in the Town Hall of Rheinberg, Germany. As the pragmatic man that he was, he took care of two things on the same day. He married Katharina Albrecht and together they entered the Underberg-Albrecht Company in the local register of companies. Since then Underberg has become a family business known throughout the world. In his youth Hubert had studied in the Netherlands where he learned of a Genever-based drink infused with herbs. Hubert believed that this liqueur could be improved on and, seeing an interesting commercial prospect, he decided to make his own liqueur using





PROTAGONISTS
 IN THE PHOTO,
 FROM LEFT TO
 RIGHT: EMIL II,
 CHRISTIANE,
 AND HUBERTINE
 UNDERBERG.

innovative methods and techniques.

After years of research and experiments to find the right formula, the Underberg brand was born and with it a production standard called "Semper Idem", indicating that quality and production standards would always remain the same. The company grew quickly and it received many awards and prizes. These included the prestigious gold medals at the International Exhibitions of London, Paris and Philadelphia. In 1851, he registered the design of the bottle at Krefeld's Commercial Court.

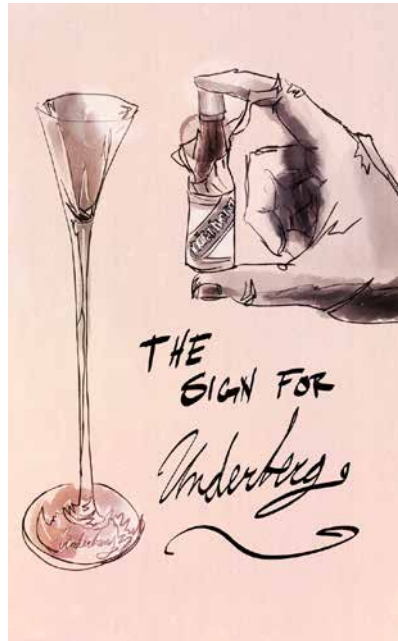
The first shipment of Underberg bitters to the USA arrived in San Francisco in 1860. The Prohibition that was about to be

promulgated did not affect Underberg because it was recognised as a food product. Production of Underberg was interrupted only during the world wars because it became impossible to source the right herbs required for production of the bitters.

Imitations abounded and the distillery stopped production in 1941. The negative period had a significant impact on the company, but in 1949 Emil Underberg, grandson of the founder, had an idea that would forever change the history of Underberg, guaranteeing success without compare. Emil re-opened the distillery and launched the 20ml portion-sized bottle, designed to ensure that just the right amount of Underberg was consumed.



CURIOSITY
UNDERBERG
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This can be done directly from the portion-sized bottle but purists prefer to use a glass designed exclusively for the liqueur. The glass was developed by the founder, Hubert, together with Murano glass masters. It is a narrow glass designed to hold a single portion of bitters. The unusually

For over 40 years Underberg has supported environmental sustainability, as the core of its corporate values

long shape, as much as 24cm, was designed to stand out on the tables thanks to its sophisticated and unique look. The recipe has been a closely-guarded secret since 1846 and the only ones who know it are the members of the founding family who are now in

their fifth generation.

We know that it consists of a hydro-alcoholic mixture of low histamine herbs that are rich in antioxidants, from 43 different countries in the world. It has no additives or added extracts, 44% ABV, and is aged for some months in Slovenian oak

barrels. The manufacturing process, which is also closely guarded, allows the active and aromatic ingredients to be gently extracted from the selected herbs. Since 1949, Underberg has been distributed only in 20ml portion-sized bottles with a hexagonal neck.

This unmistakable and unique characteristic has earned it the title of “the only pocket-sized bitters”. The natural straw paper sleeve around each bottle protects the natural product from light. On the bottle you can read “Underberg is an herb bitters taken for digestion. It is not a beverage. Not to be sipped, but taken all at once and quickly because of its aromatic strong taste. It is also used as a flavoring.” Emil Underberg developed this unique project also to discourage counterfeits and prevent the used bottles of bitters from being filled with fake products.

Since it was introduced in the mid-19th century, Underberg has boasted a large fan base. Today there are fan clubs that celebrate the digestif with a generous loyalty program, called “Tops & More”. Underberg's aroma and taste are partic-

ularly distinctive; certainly bitter, not syrupy or sweet, spicy notes of gentian and liquorice, balsamic and it has a long finish.

Underberg has supported environmental sustainability for over 40 years and the company follows environmentally-friendly procedures that are at the core of Underberg's corporate values. A classic digestif, the efficacy of Underberg is tested and proven, as well as useful in facilitating the assimilation of beer yeasts. Among the other values of the bitters is that it also carries Kosher and Orthodox certifications. Underberg has always been very discreet about its history. However, the bitters also has a Brazilian cousin, Brasilberg. Doctor Paul Underberg, grandson of the founder, was a cosmopolitan traveller and passionate about foreign cultures. After arriving in the Amazon, he was struck by the healing power of local herbs and plants. Underberg's first export to Brazil took place in 1884.

Brazil was an important market and when the company shutdown prevented exports from taking place, it was decided to produce a local bitters. In 1932 Paul Underberg settled in Rio de Janeiro and started producing the "Underberg do Brasil". The Amazonian plants and roots became perfect substitutes for creating a bitters that immediately became popular in Brazil, particularly among German and Italian emigrants who were familiar with the bitter taste.

Brasilberg is a hybrid of the traditional recipe that uses Amazonian ingredients, is sweeter, herbaceous and fruity, darker in the colour than its European cousin, with 42% ABV. The Rio Negro, Brasilberg & Tonic Water, is a very popular drink in the Amazon. Unlike Underberg, Brasilberg is sold in the classic 1 litre bottle.



The interest that developed a few years ago around bitters has rekindled the spotlight on Underberg too, and in the last 20 years has been brought ever closer to mixology.

Fabio Bacchi



A'MERY by Vincenzo Civita – Picteau Lounge – Florence

INGREDIENTS

- 7,5ml Underberg
- 30ml Tio Pepe Fino Sherry
- 20ml Americano Cocchi
- 10ml saline solution
- Top Cortese tonic water

Method: build. Glass: highball. Garnish: grapefruit zest



RED PINCER by Vincenzo Dario Rutigliano – GinFish – Barletta

INGREDIENTS

- 40ml VII Hills Gin infused with hops
- 20ml Vermouth del Professore Chinato
- 10ml Luxardo Maraschino
- 10ml Underberg

Method: stir & strain. Glass: coupette. Garnish: lemon zest



THE EXPLORER by Vincenzo Losappio – The Spirit – Milan

INGREDIENTS

- 20ml Linie Aquavit
- 10ml Underberg
- 20ml lime juice
- 7,5ml galangal cordial
- 5ml Buddha's hand oleo-saccharum
- Top with RØD Copenhagen Sparkling Tea

Method: shake. Glass: double old fashioned. Garnish: Buddha's hand zest



UNDER THE BALTIC by Christopher Rovella – FIB Piemonte

INGREDIENTS

- 10ml Underberg
- 10ml sugar syrup
- 15ml quince juice
- 35ml Weizenkorn Brand
- Top with gose beer

Method: shake & fill up. Glass: tall tumbler. Garnish: straw made from a wheat stem

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LOW TEMPERATURES

Drying food: one of the main preservation techniques

BY GIOVANNI CECCARELLI



Preserving food has always been a necessity for humans. Why is easy to understand: try to imagine living in a society where there is no abundance of food or constant availability throughout the year. A society without the technological know-how to make it possible to have out-of-season fruits and vegetables, where it is not possible to transport fresh food from one part of the world to another or, alternatively, have food during migrations and long exploration trips.

It is precisely as a result of these challenges that the need to preserve food

was born, and over the centuries different techniques have been developed. One of these techniques, still widely used today in its primordial form, but which has also evolved and been perfected by modern technology is drying (or dehydrating). Drying is a thermal process, generally at temperatures that are not very high, which removes water from food by evaporation in order to preserve it.

The absence of water slows down or even blocks most of the decomposition, such as the formation of mould or browning (oxidation). Traditionally, and in countries with hot climates, both vegetable



and animal-based food requiring drying is laid out in the sun and air and can then be stored for long periods. Drying is also a technique used in cocktail bars, not only to create citrus fruit rings or other dried fruit used as garnishing, but also to create drink ingredients.

The tool needed for drying food in a bar setting is a dehydrator. Through a flow of hot air this appliance gently warms the raw material and evaporates the water. There are basically two types on the market: vertical air flow dryers and horizontal air flow dryers. The former are probably the most widespread because they are very cheap. However, horizontal dryers are preferable, although more expensive, because the drying process is more even (the shelves do not have to be moved), they allow for drying at lower temperatures and the moisture is removed more easily from the dryer because it is pushed by the flow of air.

Finally, one can also dry liquids in a horizontal dryer both on the shelves (using non-stick sheets) or, when removing the shelves, by inserting glasses or jars containing liquids to make reductions at low temperatures. With a dryer one



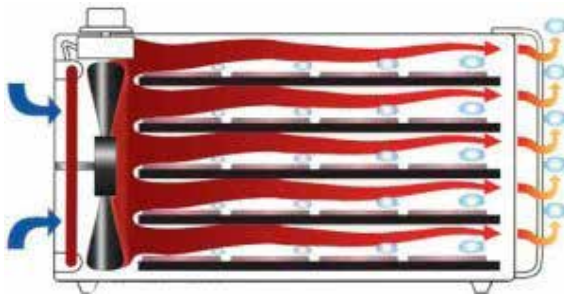
TOOLS
LEFT TO RIGHT,
A HORIZONTAL
AND VERTICAL
DRYER. BELOW,
A FREEZE-
DRYER.

can dry fruits, vegetables and aromatic plants, create powders (by drying the food almost completely and then powdering the dried raw material with a blender), make liquid reductions (liqueurs, juices, etc.), jams, meringues at low temperature (and low sugar content), which is excellent for replacing the raw egg white in sours, flavour salts and sugars, and create great wafers to use as edible



TECHNIQUES

TOP, DRYING IN THE SUN.
 RIGHT, TOMATOES.
 ALONGSIDE, HORIZONTAL DRYING.
 FURTHER RIGHT, A FREEZE-DRYER.



decorations. Another drying technique is freeze-drying.

This technique removes water from a frozen product by sublimation. It can also be used at the bar and in the kitchen, however a freeze-dryer costs several thousand euros. Because of this, it is advisable to buy already freeze-dried fruit and vegetables. There are many freeze-dried products on the market, powders especially, that are great for rehydrating to obtain sodas, syrups, foams or used as powders over sours or as edgings. Once a dried product is made (or purchased), it must be stored appropriately. Since these products tend to absorb a lot of moisture from the external environment, they must be kept in perfectly



dry and airtight containers. Bar spoons, tongs or any other tool used with them must be perfectly dry.

In the case of sliced dried products you can put a little coarse salt (which is highly hydrophilic) on the bottom of the jar, cover it with paper and place the dried fruit on top of it.

Giovanni Ceccarelli

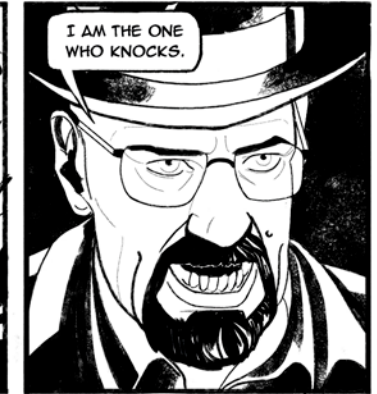
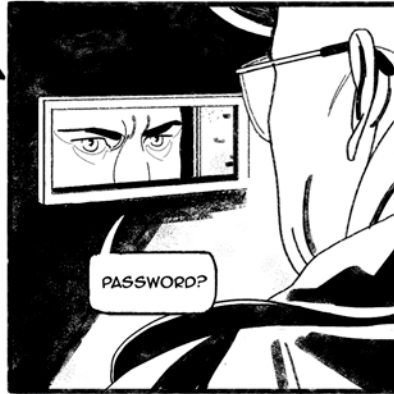
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A MEZCAL REVOLUTION BEGINS

Maguery maven and industry icon Steve Olson celebrates the year Ron Cooper brought artisan mezcal to the US

DI THEODORA SUTCLIFFE

«It was in 1995 that Ron Cooper, an artist with no previous experience whatsoever in our industry, brought his first hand-crafted artisanal mezcal to the US: Chichicapa,” recalls veteran drinks industry maven Steve Olson. “Within a year he had four different single-village mezcals in the US: for 10 years, there were only four. By about 2015 mezcal was a category; by 2016 we’d gone from four brands to over 200».

In a year when agave spirits seem set to continue their global explosion, Olson’s cocktail, Gracias Cooper, pays tribute to Ron Cooper and his brand, Del Maguery. «When I first tasted these mezcals, I freaked out! I went down to one of his villages, I got this Indian guide, and Jimmy Yeager and I – from Jimmy’s in Aspen – we went off into the mountains with my wife», Olson recalls. «Although I continued consulting with many companies for many, many years, I knew something was about

to change – that my life was going to be about preserving the heritage of these people». Over twenty years later, he is now a partner in Del Maguery.

At first blush, agave from Mexico’s Oaxaca highlands doesn’t seem like a natural partner to cherries nourished in Denmark’s cool orchards, but Olson begs to differ. «Mezcal and Cherry Heering are a slam dunk», he says, with an educator’s passion. «The first time I tried mezcal and Cherry Heering, I was screwing around with the Singapore Sling. I stole the Blood & Sand with Mezcal from Charles Joly and tweaked it for the Sangre y Arena with grapefruit and vermouth...».

To pay tribute to Ron Cooper’s discovery, however, Olson moved away from fruit-led mixes to an Old-Fashioned style drink that highlights Chichicapa’s smoke. «The reason this plays so perfectly is that every one of those ingredients has its roots in Mexico: coffee is grown in Oaxaca, chocolate is native to Oaxaca», he says. «It’s



all from Oaxaca, but I'm Norwegian-Danish so to add a little bit of Cherry Heering to the drink is perfect».

It was that Scandinavian heritage which gave Olson his start in drinks. His parents took over a store in the little Iowa town where he grew up and turned it into Trollheim (Home of the Trolls), a Nordic wonderland complete with soda fountain, where Olson was “soda jerk”.

«People would come from miles around to taste my sundaes», he recalls.

Then a family opened a restaurant across the street, and mother and child became sick with leukaemia. «They were spending more and more time in the Mayo Clinic in Rochester, Minnesota, and they trusted me, so they gave me the keys», Olson says. By the time he was 16 he was opening up the kitchen before school, set-



ting up the dining room after school, racing through his homework, then running the bar all night. «When I got out of school and went to college, it was a no-brainer to become a waiter, then a sommelier, then GM», Olson recalls. «I was always



an operations guy, but I hung behind the bar because I loved it».

Like his friend Dale DeGroff, however, Olson's first love was performing arts. By 23, he had graduated in broadcast journal-

ism, was teaching acting classes, directing TV slots for the local news, working on stage, running his own comedy troupe... – and opening restaurants on the side. «I one day realised that I was going to die», he recalls. «I was getting up at 5am and shooting for the news, going out of there to the restaurants and working till 2am: I realised I couldn't do both, I needed to focus on one or the other, and I went back to the restaurant business».

Since then, Olson has opened close to 50 restaurants – including NYC icon Gramercy Tavern – and enjoyed a media profile higher than he could have imagined. «I started writing and doing articles, speaking on national and international stages: I got a TV show on the Food Network», he says. «All of the things I really wanted to do I got to do, and I got them by doing what I really love to do, which is the restaurant business».

At this stage in his career, however, Del Maguey is his focus – and sustainability in particular. Olson is working with a scientist and an architect to revive and modernise the ancient Mesoamerican tradition of making adobe bricks from waste agave fibres. «If we can get every producer of mezcal in Oaxaca to work with us, you can build literally 3,000 one-bedroom homes», he explains. «That would be a step to replacing the 20,000-odd homes that were destroyed in the recent rash of earthquakes – and it's something we can do if we're smart and we're working together».

It might not be the future Olson envisaged when he first went off into the mountains in 1995: yet it's definitely a vision to be grateful for. Gracias Cooper. Muchas gracias, indeed.

Theodora Sutcliffe

LA RICETTA

GRACIAS COOPER

Chichicapa with Cherry Heering, Caffe Amaro and Choc Mole Bitters

INGREDIENTS

- 1 1/2 ounces Del Maguey Single Village Mezcal Chichicapa
- 3/4 ounce J. Rieger Caffe Amaro
- 1/2 ounce Cherry Heering
- 2 dashes Bittermans Xocolatl Mole Bitters

Glass: Double Old Fashioned

Garnish: Wide orange peel

PREPARATION

Fill your mixing glass up with ice cubes and build all ingredients over the ice. Stir very well. Strain into an Old Fashioned glass over a 2X2 cube. Garnish with a wide orange peel.



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