



## What You Need to Know about VODKA

The U.S. is the largest vodka market in the world, with over 100 brands and 300 Vodkas available. In just a few decades, Vodka has become the most popular spirit in the world. Cocktails previously made with Gin, are now made with Vodka. A result of marketing? Perhaps.

The government defines Vodka as: “neutral spirits, so distilled, or so treated after distillation with charcoal or other materials as to be without distinctive character, aroma, taste or color.” What distinguishes Vodkas from one another are the base ingredients used in the distillation and the water. Most spirits are made only from certain prescribed ingredients, but Vodka can be distilled from many ingredients that can be fermented into alcohol, such as grains (wheat, rye), vegetables (potatoes), and even fruits (grapes). Vodka drinkers know that vodkas have their own distinctive character, flavors, and aromas.

Vodka is produced all around the world: the United States (*Smirnoff, Skyy, Hangar 1*), Russia, France (*Grey Goose, Ciroc*), The Netherlands (*Ketel One*), Poland (*Belvedere and Wyborowa*), Sweden, New Zealand (*42 Below*), Switzerland.

*Smirnoff* made headlines in February, when *The New York Times* announced that its Dining Section panel selected *Smirnoff* the winner in a blind taste test of 21 vodkas. The panel of mixology and food and beverage experts found *Smirnoff* to be “pure, clean and ultra smooth, with pleasing texture and classic vodka aroma.” The idea for the New York Times Dining section's tasting panel was to sample a range of the new high-end unflavored vodkas that have come on the market in the last few years in their beautifully designed bottles, and to compare them with a selection of established super-premium brands.

## Spring Cocktail Recipes

**Tips & Techniques:** *a chilled glass is essential for the perfect cocktail. Either place the glasses in the freezer for half an hour before use, or fill each glass with crushed ice just before use, and throw away the ice when you make the drink!*

### White Pirate

*Wildly popular on the West coast of Florida, this drink is a take-off from the White Russian.*

1 ½ oz Captain Morgan Spiced Rum

1 ½ oz Kahlua

Half & Half or Milk to fill glass

Shake over ice and pour into a highball glass.

### Fuzzy Navel – the classic recipe

1 oz. Vodka

1 oz. Peach Schnapps

5 ½ oz orange juice

Pour ingredients into a shaker. Shake sharply. Strain into the glass and garnish with a slice of orange and a red cherry.

### Fuzzy Martini – the modern version

2 ½ oz Vodka

1 oz Peach Schnapps

1 slice peach

### Vodka Gimlet

1 ¾ oz Vodka

2/3 oz Rose's Lime Juice

Pour ingredients into a glass filled with ice. Stir, then garnish with a wedge of lime in the drink.

*Note: When beers and spirits were stored in barrels, bar managers used a small, sharp hand tool, called a gimlet, to tap into them, which has given its name to this small, sharp-tasting cocktail.*



### **Bellini**

Peach Juice

Dry sparkling wine or champagne

Quarter-fill a chilled flute with peach juice and finish with the sparkling wine/champagne and stir. Garnish with a wedge of peach on the rim of the glass. To make fresh peach juice: blanch to remove the skins, remove stone, place in a blender with a touch of fresh lemon juice, blend for a few seconds. Can store in freezer.

*In 1943 an exhibition of work by Venetian painter Bellini inspired Giuseppe Cipriani, the bartender at Harry's Bar in Venice, to create this extraordinarily famous champagne and peach juice cocktail. It was a favorite of Ernest Hemingway and Noel Coward when they were in town.*

### **Key Lime Martini**

4 parts Vanilla Vodka

1 part simple syrup

1 part fresh lime juice

splash pineapple juice

Pour vodka over cracked ice in a cocktail shaker. Add simple syrup, fresh lime juice, and splash of pineapple juice. Shake well and strain into a martini glass. Garnish with a slice of pineapple or lime. Also – can rub the rim of glass with lime juice, and dip the glass into a plate filled with graham cracker crumbs for a Key Lime Pie flavor!

### **Apple Martini**

3 parts Vanilla flavor Vodka

1 part Apple liqueur

Fresh apple slice

(for a less strong version, use 2 parts vodka, 1 part apple juice, and 1 part apple liqueur)

Combine liquid ingredients in a cocktail shaker with cracked ice, and shake well. Strain into a chilled martini glass. Garnish with apple slice.

### **Sour Apple Martini**

2 oz Lemon flavor Vodka

½ oz Cointreau

½ oz Sour Apple Pucker Schnapps

¾ oz fresh lemon juice

### **Tango Martini Recipe (made with Rum)**

2 oz Orange Rum

½ oz Raspberry liqueur

½ oz triple sec or cointreau

1 oz pineapple juice

1 splash cranberry juice

1 orange

Shake ingredients with ice and strain into a chilled martini glass. Squeeze orange juice into the bottom of the glass, and garnish with a twist of orange.

### **Jack Daniel's Lynchburg Lemonade Recipe**

1 part Jack Daniel's Tennessee Whiskey

1 part sweet and sour mix

1 part triple sec

4 parts 7 up or sprite soda

Place ingredients in a Mason Jar! Add ice and stir. Garnish with lemon slices and cherries.