

WINE ENTHUSIAST

M A G A Z I N E

SHING-SUMMER RUM DRINKS

COCKTAIL OF THE MONTH SUNNY & DRY

The lively combination of gin, spearmint and lime make this fresh-ingredient cocktail from Cyrus' Scott Beattie an excellent summer sip.

For the cucumber simple syrup:

2 cups granulated sugar
1 cucumber, cut in half and seeded
30 mint leaves

For the drink:

1½ ounces Junipero gin
10 spearmint leaves
10 lemon balm leaves
½ teaspoon Kaffir lime zest, optional
½ ounce Cucumber Simple Syrup
(recipe below)
Seltzer water

To make the cucumber simple syrup: Stir sugar into one cup of boiling water until dissolved. Chop one half of the cucumber, and add it and the mint leaves to the mixture. Let syrup sit for a day. Chop remaining half of the cucumber into little, thin half moons. Strain syrup over remaining cucumber.

To make the drink: Chiffonade the spearmint and lemon balm and add all the other ingredients except the seltzer to an empty mixing glass. Fill the glass with ice and shake well.

Add to a Collins glass, top with seltzer, and stir.



COCKTAIL OF THE MONTH THE SPIRIT REALM

YOU ARE WHAT YOU DRINK ORGANIC BARTENDERS GO FOR THE GOLD WITH TOP INGREDIENTS.

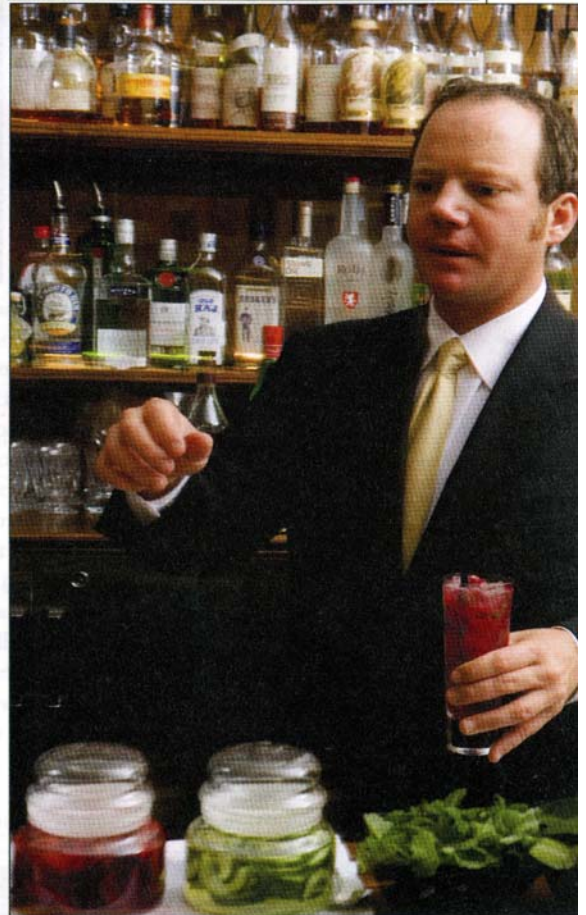
You wouldn't want bacon-flavored bits on a salad of farmer's market field greens. Yet most folks settle for the liquid equivalent when they order cocktails at the nation's best restaurants and bars.

"I'm amazed how you can go into world-class restaurants that make amazing food with all sorts of organic ingredients and have fantastic wine lists, but when you go to the bar it's the same old mass-produced alcohols, same pre-fab (cocktail) mixers, and canned juices," says bartender Scott Beattie (pictured), a staunch supporter of the latest passion in the spirits world: organic ingredients. The goal is to teach a public that is boffo for all things organic to extend that mentality to their highball glasses.

"People don't settle for mediocre food or wine anymore," he says. "Why settle for mediocre cocktails?"

Beattie tends bar for the Healdsburg, California restaurant Cyrus, where his commitment includes efforts like procuring ice made only from the soft, calcium-rich water filtered through Kentucky's limestone soils for his bourbon on the rocks. A Beattie "Clermont Manhattan" is built with bourbon infused with vanilla beans and hand-zested lemon peels, and with Amarena cherries, the exquisite, tart fruit grown around Bologna and Modena, Italy. Don't even mention Maraschinos to Beattie.

At Prana, a new Indian fusion restaurant in San Francisco, bartender Alison Harper is working her own artisanal alchemy, making original concoctions with all manner of seasonal organic fruit and herb purées. Standards include her Bloody Krishna: a mix of chili, cilantro and curry leaf-infused vodka, Bolt House farms vegetable juice, a touch of lime, fresh horseradish and toasted cumin; and the English Rose, comprised of muddled English cucumber, Hendricks gin, rose essence, fresh mint and a splash



of Pimms. "You don't have to abandon healthful just because you're going out nightclubbing," Harper jokes.

Distilleries and others in the cocktail-industrial complex are also paying attention. Square One Organic Spirits is the producer of an organically grown and fermented rye vodka, and Modmix recently launched a line of organic cocktail mixers in flavor combos such as citrus Margarita, lavender lemon drop and pomegranate cosmopolitan.

But is all of this interest in the organic really about health to the average consumer? Harper says it's simpler than that.

"What it all comes down to is that cocktails made with good organic ingredients just *taste* better."
—PAUL ABERCROMBIE