5 CLASSIC BOURBON COCKTAILS

The Spirited Woman's Guide to Mastering Classic Whiskey Cocktails

bourbonwomen.org

I N T R O D U C T I O N



Welcome to "5 Classic Cocktails.” This eBook is a celebration of the rich tradition of bourbon and the art of cocktail making, tailored specifically for women who appreciate the finesse of a well-crafted drink.

Bourbon, a spirit deeply rooted in American history, offers a complex and versatile base for some of the world's most beloved cocktails. In this guide, we dive into the heart of bourbon culture by exploring five timeless classics: the Old Fashioned, Manhattan, Whiskey Sour, Highball, and Julep.

These cocktails are more than just drinks; they are a testament to the elegance, strength, and versatility of women in the bourbon community. Each recipe in this book is a piece of history, a blend of art and science, that has stood the test of time. By mastering these classic recipes, you're not just mixing a drink; you're embracing a cultural heritage and making a statement about the role of women in the spirited world of bourbon.

Whether you're a seasoned bourbon aficionado or new to the world of whiskey, these recipes will empower you to expand your cocktail repertoire and impress your friends, family, or even just yourself. As you turn each page, you'll find more than just ingredients and instructions; you'll discover a world where tradition meets innovation, and where every sip tells a story.

So, gather your cocktail shaker, select your favorite bourbon, and prepare to embark on a delicious journey through the heart of bourbon culture. These cocktails make it easy to invite friends and family into the fabulous world of bourbon. It’s a fact that people who might not sip bourbon neat or on the rocks would be more than willing to try a well-crafted cocktail. Welcome to the world of bourbon cocktails, where every sip is a celebration of flavor, history, and the joy of craftsmanship.

In the annals of cocktail and bourbon history, each of these five classic drinks stands as a testament to the enduring legacy and evolving tastes of spirits enthusiasts.

The Old Fashioned, often hailed as the cornerstone of the cocktail world, represents the essence of bourbon's rich history. Its simple yet profound combination of bourbon, sugar, water, and bitters harks back to the earliest definition of a cocktail, making it a timeless favorite.

The Manhattan, with its sophisticated blend of bourbon and vermouth, garnished with a cherry, captures the elegance of its namesake city. Born in the late 19th century, this cocktail reflects the refined palates of a burgeoning cocktail culture and remains a symbol of classic cocktail artistry.





The Whiskey Sour, with its perfect balance of bourbon, lemon juice, and sugar, showcases the harmonious blend of strength and sweetness. Its origins, dating back to the 1870s, reveal a penchant for bright, citrusy flavors in the bourbon tradition, offering a refreshing contrast to its stronger counterparts.Even earlier iterations of punch used the same basic structure in

The Highball, in its refreshing simplicity, combines bourbon with a fizzy mixer, often ginger ale or soda water. Emerging in the late 19th century, this cocktail exemplifies the evolution of bourbon consumption, from neat sipping to a more casual, sociable drink.

Lastly, the Mint Julep, a symbol of Southern hospitality and tradition, has been a staple of bourbon culture since the early 1800s. Revered for its aromatic mint and the cooling effect of crushed ice, it's not just a cocktail but a cultural icon, especially at events like the Kentucky Derby.

Each of these cocktails not only highlights the diversity and adaptability of bourbon but also marks significant chapters in the broader narrative of cocktail history.

CONTENTS

1 OLD FASHIONED

2 MANHATTAN

3 WHISKEY SOUR

4 HIGHBALL

5 MINT JULEP



CHAPTER 1

OLD FASHIONED

ABOUT THE OLD FASHIONED

The Old Fashioned is a cocktail that stands as a true classic in the world of bourbon. Its origins date back to the early 19th century, making it one of the oldest known cocktails. Originally referred to as a "whiskey cocktail," it was valued for its simplicity and elegance. This drink has evolved over the years but always stays true to its roots: bourbon, sugar, and bitters, served in a stylish, understated fashion. It's a drink that has witnessed the ebb and flow of cocktail trends, yet remains a steadfast favorite for bourbon enthusiasts.



OLD FASHIONED RECIPE



INGREDIENTS

2 oz of premium bourbon
1/2 oz of simple syrup
2-3 dashes of Angostura bitters
Orange peel for garnish

INSTRUCTIONS

1. In a mixing glass, combine the bourbon, simple syrup, and bitters.
2. Add ice to the glass and stir the mixture gently for about 30 seconds, chilling and diluting it slightly.
3. Strain the mixture into a rocks glass filled with a large ice cube or sphere.
4. Express the orange peel over the drink by gently squeezing it to release the oils, then rim the glass with the peel and add it to the drink as a garnish

TIPS AND TRICKS FOR THE OLD FASHIONED

Select a Great Bourbon: The quality of your Old Fashioned heavily relies on the bourbon you choose. Opt for a high-quality bourbon that you enjoy drinking neat, as its flavors will prominently influence the cocktail.

Match Bourbon Flavors with Bitters: Pair the flavor profile of your bourbon with suitable bitters. If your bourbon is on the sweeter side, classic Angostura bitters work well. For a spicier bourbon, consider orange or chocolate bitters to complement its notes.

Experiment with Different Simple Syrups: The type of sugar in your simple syrup can greatly impact the taste of your Old Fashioned. Experiment with different sugars - from white to raw, or even brown sugar - to find the perfect match for your bourbon and bitters. Each type of sugar brings a unique depth and sweetness to the cocktail.

Use High-Quality Cherries: Garnishing with a cherry can add a final touch of complexity. Avoid maraschino cherries and opt for higher-quality alternatives like Luxardo cherries. They offer a richer, more authentic flavor that can make a noticeable difference in your drink.

Slightly Underdilute with Regular Ice: If you're serving your Old Fashioned with regular ice cubes instead of one large cube, aim for slight under-dilution. Regular ice cubes melt faster, so by underdiluting initially, you'll reach the perfect dilution as the drink sits.





CHAPTER 2

MANHATTAN

ABOUT THE MANHATTAN

The Manhattan stands as a quintessential cocktail with a rich and somewhat mysterious history. Its creation is commonly traced back to the early 1870s in New York City, with several legends attributing its origin to exclusive social events, one of the most popular being a banquet hosted by Lady Randolph Churchill at the Manhattan Club. However, this tale is often disputed, considering Lady Churchill was likely in England at the time of the supposed event.

Despite its unclear origins, the Manhattan quickly rose to prominence, embodying the sophistication of New York's elite. This cocktail's enduring appeal lies in its simplicity and elegance. It became a symbol of urban refinement and has maintained its status as a staple of cocktail culture.



MANHATTAN RECIPE



INGREDIENTS

2 oz Rye or Bourbon Whiskey
1 oz Sweet Vermouth
2 Dashes Angostura Bitters
Maraschino Cherry for garnish
Optional: A twist of orange peel for garnish

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Chill your cocktail glass in the freezer for a few minutes.
2. In a mixing glass, measure out 2 ounces of your preferred rye or bourbon whiskey. Add 1 ounce of sweet vermouth.
3. Add 2 dashes of Angostura bitters to the mix.
4. Fill your mixing glass with ice. Use a bar spoon to stir the mixture gently for about 30 seconds.
5. Strain the cocktail into your chilled glass.
6. Garnish with a maraschino cherry. For an added twist, you can also garnish with a twist of orange peel. To do this, twist the peel over the drink to release essential oils, then rub it around the rim of the glass and drop it into the cocktail.

TIPS AND TRICKS FOR THE MANHATTAN

Select a High-Quality Bourbon or Rye: The whiskey you choose will significantly impact the taste of your Manhattan. Opt for a high-quality bourbon or rye whiskey that you enjoy drinking neat. The smoother and richer the whiskey, the better the final cocktail will be.

Matching Bitters to Bourbon or Rye: Experiment with different bitters to complement the specific bourbon or rye you're using. While Angostura bitters are a classic choice, branching out to other bitters like orange, chocolate, or even aromatic can add an interesting twist and enhance the flavor profile of your whiskey.

Balanced Ingredients: The key to a great Manhattan is balance. Pay attention to the ratio of whiskey to vermouth. The classic recipe calls for 2:1, but feel free to adjust slightly to suit your taste preference.

Stir, Don't Shake: Stirring your Manhattan ensures clarity and a silky texture. Shaking can introduce air bubbles and cloud the drink. Stir for about 30 seconds to properly chill and dilute the cocktail.





CHAPTER 3

WHISKEY SOUR

BOURBONWOMEN.ORG

ABOUT THE WHISKEY SOUR

The Whiskey Sour holds a notable place in the tapestry of cocktail history, with its roots intertwined with the early nautical tradition of punch. Originating in the late 1700s, this classic cocktail was a seafarer's remedy against scurvy, made from ingredients readily available on long voyages: whiskey, lemon juice, and sugar. This simple mixture not only provided a necessary dose of vitamin C but also helped make the rough whiskey of the time more palatable. As the drink made its way ashore, it evolved, maintaining its fundamental components while refining its balance and presentation.

The Whiskey Sour soon became a staple in the whiskey world, beloved for its perfect harmony of tartness and sweetness, showcasing the versatility of whiskey as a base spirit. It represents a bridge between the ruggedness of the high seas and the sophistication of early American taverns, capturing a crucial transition in the evolution of modern mixology.



WHISKEY SOUR RECIPE



INGREDIENTS

2 oz Rye or Bourbon Whiskey
3/4 oz lemon juice
3/4 oz simple syrup
Optional: 1 egg white or 3/4 oz aquafaba for Boston sour
Optional: 1/4 oz red wine for New York Sour
Garnish: Maraschino Cherry and lemon twist for garnish

INSTRUCTIONS

1. In a shaker, combine bourbon or rye whiskey, fresh lemon juice, and simple syrup.
2. Add ice to the shaker, filling it halfway.
3. Shake vigorously for 10-12 seconds.
4. Strain into an ice filled rocks glass or a chilled coupe glass and garnish s desired.

For a Boston Sour (Optional):

- Add an egg white to the cocktail ingredients in the shaker. Shake well without ice first (dry shake) to emulsify the egg, then add ice and shake again.

For a New York Sour (Optional):

- After straining the cocktail into the glass, gently pour a float of red wine onto the drink, creating a layered effect.

TIPS AND TRICKS FOR THE WHISKEY SOUR

Fresh Juice: Always use fresh lemon juice instead of bottled. The freshness provides a brighter, more vibrant tartness to your cocktail.

Simple Syrup Ratio: Adjust the simple syrup ratio according to your taste. If you prefer a sweeter drink, increase the syrup slightly, or reduce it for a more tart profile.

Alternatives to Egg White: For those who prefer not to use egg white or want a vegan option, aquafaba (chickpea brine) provides a similar frothy texture without altering the flavor.

Quality of Whiskey: The whiskey you choose heavily influences the taste of your cocktail. Select a bourbon or rye that you enjoy drinking neat.

Shake Well: Ensure you shake the cocktail vigorously. This is essential for properly integrating all ingredients and achieving the right texture.

Serving Glass: While a rocks glass is traditional, you can also serve a Whiskey Sour in a coupe glass for a more elegant presentation, especially if you're making the frothy version.





CHAPTER 4

HIGHBALL

ABOUT THE HIGHBALL

The Highball, in its simplest form, is a testament to the power of minimalism. It dates back to the late 19th century and the term "highball" is believed to have originated from the railroads; it was the name for a signal with a raised ball indicating a train could pass at high speed. This metaphor aptly captured the essence of the Highball cocktail - quick to make and easy to enjoy.

The Highball gained prominence in Britain and the United States as a way to make whiskey more approachable. In Japan, however, it became a cultural phenomenon. Japanese bartenders, known for their meticulous attention to detail, embraced and refined the Highball, treating it with a reverence that elevated its status. They turned the preparation of a Highball into an art form, focusing on the quality of the ingredients and the precision of the technique, which significantly enhanced the drinking experience. This approach resonated globally, leading to a renewed appreciation for the cocktail.



HIGHBALL RECIPE



INGREDIENTS

2 oz Whiskey
4 to 6 oz chilled soda
Garnish: Lemon twist

INSTRUCTIONS

1. To a chilled Collins glass add one or two large cubes.
2. Add whiskey, the gently add soda to the glass.
3. Stir once or twice with a lifting motion and garnish.

Alternatives to soda/seltzer water:

- ginger ale
- ginger beer
- flavored soda/seltzer
- topo chico

TIPS AND TRICKS FOR THE HIGHBALL

Use One Large Ice Cube: It melts slower than smaller cubes, keeping your drink cold without rapid dilution. This also helps in maintaining the carbonation of the soda.

Experiment with Carbonated Elements: Play with flavored seltzers, ginger ale, or ginger beer to add a unique twist to your Highball.

Chill Both Glass and Bubbles: This keeps the drink colder longer and preserves the carbonation, enhancing the experience.

Adjust Ratios to Taste: The whiskey-to-soda ratio is subjective and can be adjusted to suit your preference.

Gentle Stirring: When stirring, use a lifting motion and be very gentle. Aggressive stirring can cause the carbonated mixer to go flat.

Quality of Ingredients: The quality of both the whiskey and the carbonated element is key. Choose a whiskey you love and a a high-quality mixer.

Serving Temperature: Serve the Highball as cold as possible. This enhances the refreshing quality of the drink, making it more enjoyable, especially in warmer weather.





CHAPTER 5

MINT JULEP

ABOUT THE MINT JULEP

The Mint Julep, a quintessential symbol of Southern hospitality, carries a complex and significant history, deeply intertwined with the American South. Its roots can be traced back to the 18th century, originally as a medicinal concoction. However, the Mint Julep, as it is known today, with its signature bourbon, mint, sugar, and crushed ice, was likely invented and perfected by enslaved African Americans. These skilled individuals, often working as bartenders in the antebellum South, played a pivotal role in refining the drink's preparation and presentation, contributing greatly to the cocktail's evolution.

The Mint Julep went on to become a staple of Southern social gatherings and a symbol of the region's hospitality. Its association with the Kentucky Derby has further cemented its status as an iconic American cocktail. This drink, therefore, stands not only as a refreshing indulgence but also as a reminder of the often overlooked contributions of African Americans to American culinary and cocktail history.



MINT JULEP RECIPE



INGREDIENTS

2 oz bourbon
1/2 oz simple syrup
8-10 fresh mint leaves
crushed ice/nugget ice
Garnish: fresh mint and optional powdered sugar

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Place the mint leaves and simple syrup in a julep cup or a rocks glass. Gently muddle the mint with the syrup to release the essential oils. Do not over-muddle, as this can result in a bitter taste.
2. Add Bourbon and fill the cup with crushed ice.
3. Briefly stir the mixture to combine the flavors and to chill the drink. As you stir, the outside of the cup will frost over.
4. Add more crushed ice to form a dome on top. Garnish with a sprig of fresh mint, and optionally, dust with powdered sugar. The mint sprig should be positioned close to the straw or the edge of the cup, so its aroma is enjoyed with every sip.

TIPS AND TRICKS FOR THE MINT JULEP

Choosing the Right Ice: Crushed ice is traditional and preferred as it chills the drink quickly and melts at the right pace, gently diluting the bourbon. Alternatively, use nugget ice.

Quality of Bourbon: The bourbon is the star of this drink, so select a high-quality bourbon that you enjoy.

Gentle Muddling: Be gentle. Over-muddling can release bitter flavors from the leaves.

Chilling the Glass: If possible, chill your julep cup or glass in the freezer to maintain the low temperature frost on the outside of the cup.

Mint Sprig Preparation: Slap it gently between your hands. This action releases the essential oils and enhances the aroma without bruising the leaves.

Sugar to Taste: Adjust the sweetness according to your preference.

Use a Straw: A julep is sipped through a straw placed near the mint garnish.

Metal Cups: If you have a traditional silver or pewter julep cup, use it. Metal conducts temperature well, keeping your drink colder for longer and providing the classic frosty exterior.





NOW GET MIXING!

In summing up, these classic cocktails - the Old Fashioned, Manhattan, Whiskey Sour, Highball, and Mint Julep - are not just beverages; they are storied chapters in the rich narrative of bourbon culture. Each one, with its unique blend of history and flavor, encapsulates a different facet of the bourbon experience, reflecting the spirit's versatility and enduring appeal. As you explore these timeless recipes, you're invited to not just recreate them, but to make them distinctly yours. Experimentation is at the heart of mixology, and each variation you craft is a testament to your creativity and connection to this storied tradition.

Moreover, these cocktails stand as symbols of empowerment within the bourbon community, particularly for women. Historically dominated by male influence, the world of bourbon is experiencing a welcome shift, with women taking their rightful place as connoisseurs, distillers, and mixologists. By mastering these classic cocktails, you're not just enjoying a drink; you're partaking in a movement, embracing the rich heritage of bourbon while contributing to a more inclusive and diverse future.

So, raise a glass to tradition, to innovation, and to the spirited women who continue to shape the bourbon world. Cheers to your journey in the art of cocktail making, and to the endless possibilities that await in every pour.

Bourbon WOMEN®

UPCOMING EVENTS

THANK YOU FOR BEING A MEMBER!

We hope to see you soon at an event, either in person or virtual, but in the meantime, connect with us online:
@bourbonwomen

MORE INFO AT

BOURBONWOMEN.ORG