

A top-down view of four glasses filled with a light pink wine cocktail, topped with crushed ice and a fresh strawberry slice. The glasses are arranged on a white tray with a black border. The background is a dark blue fabric with a repeating pattern of small white and light blue flowers.

Wine Cocktails

FROM
imbibe



Wine Coolers

Photos by JOHN VALLS

It started with frosé in 2016, which led to friesling in 2017, which escalated to frojolais in 2018. But if you strip away the portmanteaus and the memes, it's easy to see why wine remains a champ of summer drinking. Lower in alcohol than spirits, wine can lengthen a cocktail while adding complexity, with mixable profiles ranging from fizzy and fruity to dry and savory. We tapped bartenders across the country for their favorite takes on wine-forward cocktails to beat the summer heat, no hashtag necessary.



This Isn't Goodbye

Green tea gets a fizzy boost from sparkling wine in this simple summer punch. "The bubbles and floral, citrus notes of the wine help highlight the more complex earthiness of the green tea, while the dryness balances the sweetness of the honey," says Nicholas Dowling, co-owner and bartender at Daps Breakfast & Imbibe in Charleston. "Wine allows you to incorporate a ton of flavor and complexity into a cocktail without overwhelming the palate with a lot of alcohol."

1 750 ml. bottle dry sparkling white wine
12 oz. brewed green tea, chilled
3 oz. fresh lemon juice
9 oz. honey syrup (2:1)

Tools: punch bowl, ladle
Glass: punch or stemless wine
Garnish: mint leaves, lemon wheels

Mix all the ingredients together in a punch bowl with a large block of ice to chill. Garnish with fresh mint leaves and lemon wheels.

**NICHOLAS DOWLING AND
JEREMIAH SCHENZEL
DAPS BREAKFAST & IMBIBE
CHARLESTON, SOUTH CAROLINA**

The Daybreaker

Straddling the line between two summer classics, this cocktail from P6—the new rooftop bar in the LINE Austin hotel—combines the juiciness of sangria with the sparkle of a spritz. “The Daybreaker sits between the two,” says the hotel’s beverage director, Brian Floyd. “I love lengthening a cocktail with a wine, and we chose a classic New Zealand Sauvignon Blanc because of its bright and lovely citric notes—specifically grapefruit.”

1 oz. Aperol
½ oz. gin
2 oz. fresh grapefruit juice
2½ oz. Sauvignon Blanc
1 dash grapefruit bitters
Chilled soda water

Tools: shaker, strainer
Glass: rocks or stemless wine
Garnish: citrus twist or slice

Shake the first 5 ingredients with ice, then strain into an ice-filled glass. Top with soda water, then garnish.

BRIAN FLOYD
P6, AUSTIN

Nester's Refresher

Summers in the South call for extra-strength refreshment, so Mike McDermott, bar manager at Tin Tin in Atlanta, created a drink that was both crushable and "bracingly tart." To keep it sessionable, he reached for a fortified wine. "White port has pronounced flavors of honey and nuts, which makes it great for mixing, enabling it to hold up particularly well to other loud flavors like citrus, Suze and tonic," says McDermott. "It's everything you'd want on a hot summer day: fresh, bitter, tart and bubbly."

1 oz. dry white port
(Tin Tin uses Kopke)
1 oz. fresh lemon juice
½ oz. Suze
½ oz. simple syrup (1:1)
3 dashes Peychaud's
bitters
2 oz. chilled tonic water

Tools: shaker, strainer
Glass: Collins
Garnish: lemon twist

Shake all the ingredients except the tonic water with ice, then strain into an ice-filled glass and gently stir in the tonic water. Garnish.

MIKE MCDERMOTT
TIN TIN, ATLANTA



Deci's Roommate

Portland restaurant and wine bar OK Omens mixes a sparkling French rosé with a traditional French spirit to craft this summery, and extra-aromatic, riff on a classic. "This drink is really a French 75 variation," says bar director Alex Blair, "but my starting point was the wine. The Bugey Cerdon is like spring flowers and strawberries in a glass, and the Calvados adds spice and orchard-fruit qualities."

1 oz. Calvados
¾ oz. fresh lime juice
½ oz. rich simple syrup (2:1)
2 oz. demi-sec sparkling rosé

Tools: shaker, strainer
Glass: small Collins
Garnish: lime wheel

Shake the first 3 ingredients in an ice-filled shaker, then add the sparkling rosé to the shaker (but don't shake) and strain into an ice-filled glass. Garnish.

ALEX BLAIR
OK OMENS
PORTLAND,
OREGON



Que Syrah, Syrah

Wanting to create a summery cocktail that echoed the fruitiness of sangria, Sarah LM Mengoni, lead bartender at Double Take in Los Angeles, tasted through all of the bar's by-the-glass wines. "It was the flavors of black pepper and strawberry in the Syrah that I really honed in on," says Mengoni, who made a fresh strawberry syrup and peppercorn-infused vodka to amplify the flavors. "The wine isn't just the inspiration for this cocktail, it's the backbone."

3 oz. Syrah
¾ oz. black peppercorn-infused vodka
1½ oz. strawberry syrup
¾ oz. fresh lemon juice

Tools: shaker, strainer
Glass: wine
Garnish: whole, fresh strawberry

Shake all the ingredients with ice, strain into an ice-filled glass, then garnish.

Strawberry Syrup: Juice fresh strawberries in a juicer (or pureé the fruit in a blender and press through a fine-mesh strainer) to yield 1 cup of strawberry juice. Combine with 1 cup of granulated sugar and mix until the sugar dissolves, then bottle and chill. Keeps refrigerated for up to 2 weeks.

Black Peppercorn-Infused Vodka: Combine 10 grams (about 2 tsp.) of black peppercorns with 1 cup of vodka in a sealable glass container and let sit for 24 hours. Strain through a coffee filter and bottle for use.

SARAH LM MENGONI
DOUBLE TAKE
LOS ANGELES





Kiss from a Rosé

"We don't have a frozen drink machine, so we wanted to make an à la minute frosé," says Longway Tavern bartender Anna Giordanno. "The floral nature of pisco is beautiful on its own, but also plays well with other grape spirits, so why not rosé? The fresh, muddled strawberry adds body and a fruitiness that really highlights the wine."

1½ oz. dry, fruity rosé
¾ oz. pisco
½ oz. fresh lemon juice
½ oz. fresh lime juice
½ oz. rich simple syrup (2:1)
2 strawberry slices
Chilled soda water

Tools: shaker, strainer
Glass: rocks
Garnish: strawberry slice

Shake the first 6 ingredients with ice, then strain into a rocks glass and fill with crushed ice. Top with a splash of soda water, then garnish.

**ANNA GIORDANNO
LONGWAY TAVERN
NEW ORLEANS**



Kalimotxo Mule

Spain's classic combo of red wine and cola gets a refreshing boost with bright, spicy ginger syrup in this riff from Nashville's Vandyke Bed and Beverage. "I've always had an obsession with the Kalimotxo," says general manager and beverage director Freddy Schwenk. "I thought one way to add intrigue to the cocktail would be to fuse the flavors with a Moscow Mule. Turns out swapping the vodka for a nice Tempranillo and adding a kick of ginger is actually delightful."

2 oz. red wine (Vandyke uses Tempranillo)
¾ oz. ginger syrup
½ oz. fresh lime juice
Cola (Vandyke uses Coca-Cola)

Tools: shaker, strainer
Glass: highball
Garnish: mint bouquet and a lime wheel

Shake the first 3 ingredients with ice, then strain into an ice-filled glass and top with cola. Garnish.

Ginger Syrup: Combine fresh ginger juice with an equal amount of sugar by weight, stirring until the sugar dissolves. Bottle and refrigerate, using within 2 weeks.

FREDDY SCHWENK
VANDYKE BED AND
BEVERAGE, NASHVILLE

Going for Gold

A “total beach cocktail” is how Daniel Miller, beverage manager for the Philly-based Vedge Restaurant Group, sums up the vibrantly tangy Going for Gold. With an eclectic selection of wines under his purview, Miller gets experimental with cocktail applications. “Orange wine works great as a cocktail ingredient,” he says. “It has a ton of different flavor profiles like orange peel, golden raisin, almond and dried fruit. It provides a nice acidity, with a complexity that a high-acid white wine cannot.”

1¼ oz. orange wine (V Street uses Cardedu “Nüo” Vermentino)
1½ oz. manzanilla sherry
½ oz. ginger syrup
1 oz. tangy pineapple syrup
½ oz. fresh lime juice
2 dashes Angostura bitters
Chilled soda water

Tools: shaker, strainer, fine strainer
Glass: Collins
Garnish: salt rim, marigold (or other edible flower)

Rim your glass with salt, then fill with ice. Add the first 6 ingredients to an ice-filled shaker. Shake vigorously, then double strain into the prepared glass. Top with soda water and briefly stir.

Ginger Syrup: Combine fresh ginger juice with an equal amount of sugar by weight, stirring until the sugar dissolves. Bottle and refrigerate, using within 2 weeks.

Tangy Pineapple Syrup: In a saucepan, combine 15 oz. of fresh pineapple juice, ½ cup of granulated sugar, 2½ oz. of distilled white vinegar, and a small pinch of salt. Heat and stir until the sugar is dissolved. Cool and bottle for use within 2 weeks.

DANIEL MILLER
V STREET, PHILADELPHIA



