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Get Cracking

Don't be chicken about using egg in your next cocktail

ROCKY WASN'T SO TOUGH. Not to belittle his ability to go 15 rounds in the ring and his habit of sparring with sides of beef, but drinking raw eggs? That's old hat.

Not to mention old *school*. For centuries, bartenders have utilized the fruit of the fowl to enhance the texture, body and appearance of drinks. Whole eggs provided richness to Colonial-era flips and eggnogs, and a frothy egg-white head lent finesse to sours and fizzes through the 19th and early 20th

centuries. Changing tastes and salmonella scares nearly eliminated the egg from the barroom, but thanks to today's classic-cocktail renaissance (and modern food-safety practices), many bartenders are rediscovering the egg.

Foamy, bitters-topped Pisco Sours are popular at bars ranging from Nopa in San Francisco to Eastern Standard in Boston; at The Violet Hour in Chicago, the Miraflores is a riff on this classic, made with grapefruit juice and honey syrup. For the past two years, Green Street in Cambridge, Mass., has celebrated Easter with a menu of egg-based drinks, such as the Pink Lady. And in New York, Flatiron Lounge owner Julie Reiner is so fond of cocktails made with eggs that she named her new bar in Brooklyn after a classic gin-and-egg drink, the Clover Club. Many bartenders aren't stopping at the white: At Teardrop Lounge

in Portland, Ore., the cachaça-based Rio Flip is emboldened with a whole egg, and the rich and aromatic Colleen Bawn—a mixture of rye whiskey, a whole egg and herbal liqueurs that dates to 1903—is an off-menu winter drink at Seattle's Zig Zag Café.

At Arnaud's French 75 Bar in New Orleans, bartender Chris Hannah occasionally uses egg whites to lend extra body to margaritas and sidecars but says his favorite egg-enhanced drinks include the Absinthe Suisse—a classic New Orleans eye-opener made with egg white, crème de menthe and absinthe—and the Ramos Gin Fizz, a fragrant mixture of gin, egg white, orange-flower water, cream and citrus, vigorously shaken until the drink has a thick, "ropy" texture. "It's like making a meringue when you're cooking," Hannah says. "You just shake it until it has that nice, frothy consistency." This egg-enlivened quality is prized among cocktail fans—and is several stages of elegance above Rocky's viscous breakfast. —Paul Clarke



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Clover Club (Back Right)

Originally named for a Philadelphia social fraternity that started meeting in the 1880s, this drink now lends its name to a bar in Brooklyn.

2 oz. gin
 ¾ oz. lemon juice
 2 tsp. raspberry syrup (real pomegranate grenadine may be substituted)
 1 egg white
 Ice cubes
 Tools: shaker, strainer
 Glass: cocktail

Combine ingredients in a cocktail shaker. Seal and shake, without ice, for at least 10 seconds. Open and add several large cubes of ice. Shake very hard for at least 10 seconds; strain into chilled glass.

Adapted from *Old Waldorf Bar Days*, by Albert Stevens Crockett, 1931

Coffee Cocktail (Left)

While the name is deceptive—there's no coffee in the recipe—this rich drink is excellent with brunch.

1 oz. brandy
 2 oz. ruby port
 1 tsp. sugar
 1 whole egg
 Ice cubes
 Tools: shaker, strainer
 Glass: goblet
 Garnish: freshly grated nutmeg

Combine ingredients in cocktail shaker and add several large cubes of ice. Shake vigorously for at least 10 seconds; strain into chilled goblet. Garnish.

Adapted from *Jerry Thomas' Bar-Tender's Guide*, or *How to Mix Drinks*, 1887

Delicious Sour (Front)

Chris Hannah updates this classic cocktail with easier-to-find but still delicious apricot brandy; use a quality peach brandy to try the original 1891 version.

2 oz. applejack
 2 oz. apricot brandy
 Juice of 1 lime (about 1 oz.)
 1 egg white
 1 tsp. sugar
 1 oz. chilled seltzer or club soda
 Ice cubes
 Tools: shaker, strainer
 Glass: goblet

Combine all ingredients except seltzer in a cocktail shaker. Seal and shake, without ice, for at least 10 seconds. Add several large cubes of ice; seal and shake hard for at least 10 seconds; strain into chilled goblet. Add seltzer.

Chris Hannah, Arnaud's French 75 Bar, New Orleans



Mixing With Eggs

When mixing with eggs at home, freshness is a must. The danger of food-borne illness, while remote, can be minimized by washing eggs and taking care to prevent contact between the shell's exterior and the edible portion within; removing the yolk further reduces the risk. For those who still harbor concerns, pasteurized whole eggs and egg whites are available in many supermarkets.

To maximize the froth when mixing with egg whites, many bartenders first perform a “mime shake,” shaking the liquid ingredients for 10 to 20 seconds without ice (putting the spring coil from a Hawthorne cocktail strainer in the shaker helps whip the drink into a foam), then adding large pieces of ice and shaking again, very hard, for anywhere between 10 seconds and—for a classic Ramos Gin Fizz—several minutes. For less of a workout, you can instead use a battery-operated milk frother, such as that from Aerolatte (available on [amazon.com](https://www.amazon.com)), to whisk the liquid ingredients before shaking with ice. When mixing for a group, one typical egg white is sufficient for two or three drinks.