Alumni

How About a Mocktail?

Master mixologist John deBary ’05CC shares an original non-alcoholic drink recipe for Dry January and beyond.

By
Rebecca Shapiro
|
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John deBary (Naima Green)

John deBary ’05CC has spent his career behind the bar — first at Manhattan’s legendary speakeasy PDT, then as the director of the beverage program for the Momofuku group, where he worked for nearly a decade creating cocktail menus for

dozens of restaurants.

But while deBary certainly knows — and loves — his spirits, he also firmly believes that you don't need alcohol to make a great cocktail. After leaving Momofuku in 2018, he launched Proteau, a line of non-alcoholic botanical beverages, and published *Drink What You Want*, a recipe book with a full booze-free chapter. And deBary is practicing what he preaches — he decided not to drink alcohol in 2020, a pledge that he kept despite the challenges of quarantine. "I actually found that I rarely missed it," he said. "There are so many ways to create unique and exciting drinks without relying on the traditional tools."

Here he shares one of his signature mocktails, a toned-down take on the classic mai tai that is perfect for Dry January and beyond.



Sarah Tanat-Jones © 2020

Morning(side) Mai Tai

Makes 1 drink

- 1½ ounces chilled apple cider
- ½ ounce apple-cider vinegar
- ½ ounce ginger syrup (recipe follows)
- ½ ounce orgeat*

Garnishes: apple slices and fresh mint leaves

In a shaking tin, combine the drink ingredients. Add ice and shake for fifteen seconds. Strain into an ice-filled old-fashioned glass. Garnish with a few slices of apple and a couple of mint leaves.

Ginger syrup

Makes about 1 cup

- 1 pound fresh ginger, thoroughly scrubbed
- About 1 cup granulated sugar (depending on juice yield)

Using a juice extractor, juice the ginger. Pass the liquid through a gold coffee filter to remove all solids. You should have about half a cup. Combine the ginger juice and sugar in a small saucepan. Cook, stirring occasionally, over medium heat until all the sugar has dissolved. Remove the pan from the heat and allow the syrup to cool for a few minutes. Place the pan in an ice bath and stir every few minutes until the mixture is below room temperature. Use immediately or store in an airtight container in the refrigerator for up to two weeks or in the freezer for up to six months.

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