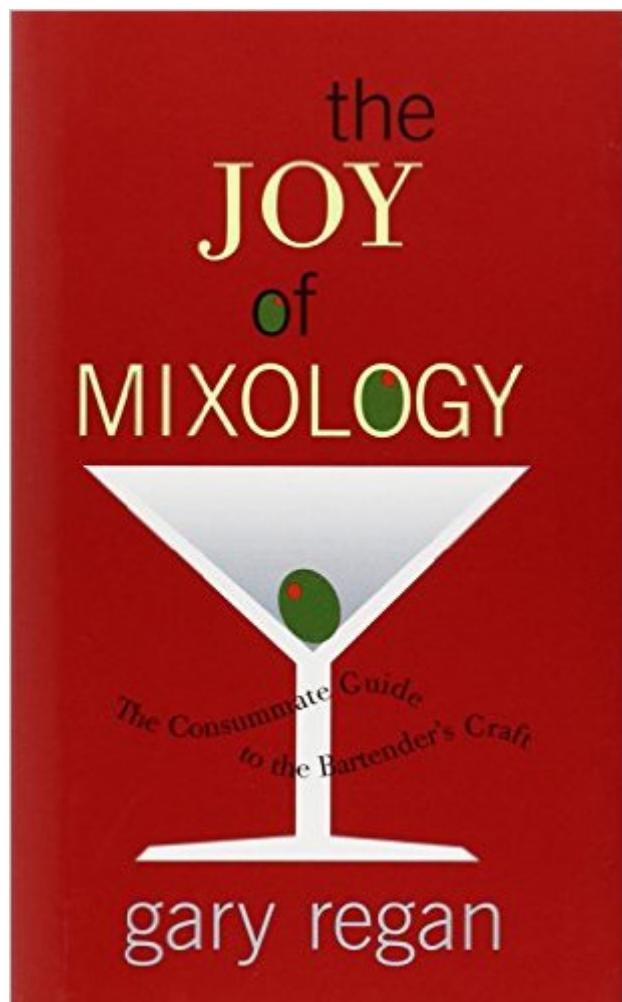


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The Joy Of Mixology: The Consummate Guide To The Bartender's Craft



Synopsis

An original book on the craft of mixology is a rare gem. Gary Regan's *The Joy of Mixology* is such a gem, one whose genius lies in Regan's breakthrough system for categorizing drinks that helps bartenders "both professionals and amateurs alike" not only to remember drink recipes but also to invent their own. For example, once you understand that the Margarita is a member of the New Orleans Sour Family, you'll instantly see that a Kamikaze is just a vodka-based Margarita; a Cosmopolitan follows the same formula, with some cranberry juice thrown in for color. Similarly, the Manhattan and the Rob Roy, both members of the French-Italian family, are variations on the whiskey-vermouth-bitters formula. In this way Regan brings a whole new understanding to the world of cocktails and how to make them. Not only will you learn how to make standard cocktails, you'll actually learn to feel your way through making a drink, thereby attaining the skills needed to create concoctions of your own. And as Regan explains methods for mixing drinks, how to choose bartenders' wares and select spirits and liqueurs, and the origins of many cocktails, you'll feel as though you're behind the bar with him, learning from a master. Plus, his charming and detailed history of mixed drinks raises this far above the standard cocktail guide fare. With more than 350 drink recipes, *The Joy of Mixology* is the ultimate bar guide. Ground-breaking and authoritative, it's a must-have for anyone interested in the craft of the cocktail.

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Customer Reviews

Your average cocktail/bartender book is usually just the result of somebody gathering together as

many recipes as they can find, prefacing it with the obligatory "how to stock your home bar" chapter, then selecting "File / Print..." Is it any wonder then that people these days are confused as to what a Martini really is? Thankfully, Gary Regan has shown us that a mixology book can be far more than we have come to expect. In "The Joy of Mixology", Gary lays out for us the results of what obviously has been many years of research into what cocktails really are, and how to make them properly. First he covers the common topics such as history, bartending, garnishes, glassware, but with far more interesting information than you most likely have seen elsewhere. Mr. Regan then dives into laying out the various styles of cocktails and mixed drinks, and how to understand them in ways that focus on the proper and well-balanced construction of each style. There is a lot of meat in how he organizes his lists, and a wealth of information behind their proper construction. Cocktails really don't need to be as confusing as they seem to be to most people. This book goes a long way in not only making sense of the large array of cocktail selections available, but also in bringing to light the potentials of a "Quality" cocktail experience.

I'm surprised that this book doesn't have more reviews - I am usually too preoccupied or lazy to take the time to write reviews, but in this case I had to speak! This really is THE BOOK if you're looking to learn the art of mixology, the craft of the cocktail, the joy of boozing it up in a delicious and debonair way! I am rather obsessive with the whole mixing drinks thing - and an obsessive buyer of cocktail books - but the only two that really matter - the only two that are ESSENTIAL and not just a novelty to own - are this book and Dale Degroff's the Craft of the Cocktail. Buy others if you have the inclination, but if you're wondering what to buy to learn, or to enjoy, or to be able to say you have the definitive books on the subject - buy those two. And believe me, I've tried out enough of the recipes to KNOW what I'm talking about!

The chart in the middle of the book is invaluable. At a glance you can see what you can make with the ingredients on hand and confidently experiment without straying too far off tried and true formulas (who knew the Sidecar and Margarita were related?).

There are really a couple of subjects that this book covers:- Recipes: lots of them with the author's own variations. Not all of the recipes I tried were great. It looks like Gary Regan is trying to provide an inclusive collection of recipes rather than a selection of the best ones. He even includes some that he doesn't care for,- Tips for professional bartenders: as a home mixologist I couldn't relate to that.- The standard info on how to and garnishes etc. And finally, what I consider to be the heart of

this guide: A (for me at least) original, useful and very educational way of grouping cocktails into families. There are lots of tables and descriptions that explain the groupings. This was a real eye-opener for me because it really made it clear how good cocktails were constructed and why a margarita and a cosmopolitan are very, very similar. There are also some great sections that compare the density of various brands of liquors which is extremely helpful when making layered drinks. All in all, this is not a perfect book but there is really a lot of original content that I've never seen anywhere else. If you like Alton Brown and a pseudo-scientific approach to cooking then you'll definitely enjoy Gary Regan's book.

I own several other cocktail books but this one is by far my favorite. As other reviewers have mentioned, Gary goes well beyond the usual list of recipes (though his recipes are great). The way he has grouped drinks into various families, arranged by common ingredients or techniques, has helped me to understand cocktails in a much more sophisticated way. The book also, as I hoped it would, introduced me to lots of new drinks by starting with cocktails that I knew and liked, and then making it easy to find other drinks that are related. I'm glad I have a few other books, particularly *The Craft of the Cocktail* by Dale DeGroff, but I only use the others to see how their authors have tweaked a given recipe. If you're looking for a book that gives you plenty of recipes, but also tells you WHY and not just HOW, then *The Joy of Mixology* is my top recommendation.

When reading this book, it will feel more like you are having a conversation with Gary Regan than you are learning a trade. Not that Regan doesn't have anything interesting to say, just the opposite, but the book has more of a story-based approach rather than an instructional approach in its organization. I was also fairly disappointed with the lack of visuals, and for a book that stresses the importance of visuality in bartending it certainly did not feel like it needed to demonstrate anything beyond a few crude hand-drawn boxes here and there. Regan does, however, delve into the history of cocktails and the origin of cocktails but never goes into the history of specific liquors which I found a little odd. Above all, the thing that irritated me about this book beyond anything was the fact that even though he took an extra step to categorize drinks which makes it easier to learn he takes a major step backwards by only providing the recipes in alphabetical order in the very back of the book. This was by no means a bad book, but I felt for the price and the ratings that something else could be bought that was a little more accessible. I went to Barnes and Nobles and found many other books which were more helpful and were also at a cheaper price than this one.

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