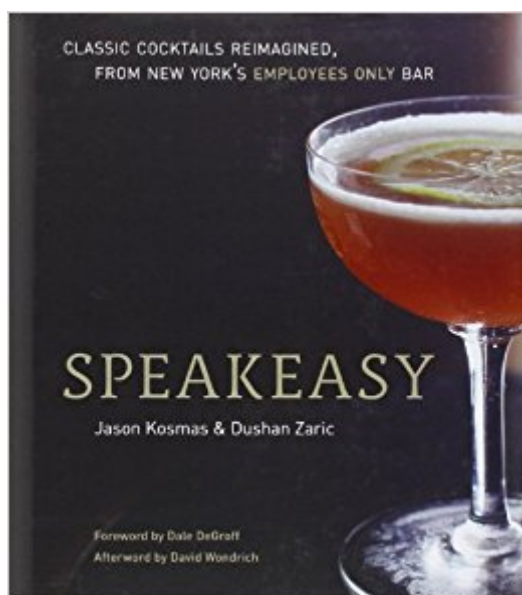


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Speakeasy: The Employees Only Guide To Classic Cocktails Reimagined



Synopsis

Time-honored cocktails like the New York Sour and the Sidecar were born during the era of Prohibition, the blessedly bygone social experiment that turned drinking into an underground adventure. In those days, hard beverage options were usually made with homemade hooch and flavorings of dubious origin and quality. Thankfully, a cocktail renaissance has emerged in many of today's bars, where inventive drinks showcase both the artistry and craft of bartending. At their moody and atmospheric West Village bar-restaurant Employees Only, master mixologists Jason Kosmas and Dushan Zaric can regale you with colorful tales of cocktail origins or just pour you a mean drink. In Speakeasy, Kosmas and Zaric take their inspiration from traditional favorites, then use the finest spirits, the freshest ingredients, and a good measure of reverence for their craft to elevate the mixed drink to artisanal status. More than 80 imaginative libations that riff on the classics are showcased in this one-of-a-kind collection. Recipes emphasize fresh fruits and herbs, homemade syrups and infusions, and a careful balancing of flavors, with a mind toward seasonality. A Ginger Smash is offered in four different versions: kumquat, pineapple, pear, or cranberry, depending on the time of year. The Millionaire becomes the Billionaire with the addition of homemade grenadine and 107-proof bourbon. And the South Side becomes the West Side by replacing the gin with sun-kissed Meyer lemon-infused vodka. With the specter of Prohibition firmly in the past, Speakeasy shares recipes for the choicest potent potables, reimagining the finest drinks of yesterday for today's thirsty imbibers.

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Customer Reviews

Fall into Cooking Featured Recipe from Speakeasy by Jason Kosmas and Dushan Zaric: Mata Hari

The Mata Hari best exemplifies the creative process utilized at Employees Only of taking classic ideas and modernizing them through an expression of big flavors and culinary technique. Inspired by the luscious brandy classic Sidecar, the Mata Hari blends Cognac with chai-infused sweet vermouth and fresh pomegranate juice to introduce soft tannins and exotic spice. Rose hips adorn this cocktail which awaken the olfactory senses, alluding to what comes next. Stunning to look at, seductive on the nose, and vibrant on the pallet, the Mata Hari is one of the first and most popular cocktails at Employees Only. --Jason Kosmas and Dushan Zaric Makes one drink Ingredients 1 1/2 ounces Louis Royer Force 53 VSOP cognac 1 ounce Chai-Infused Sweet Vermouth 1/2 ounce freshly squeezed lemon juice 1/2 ounce pomegranate juice 1/2 ounce simple syrup 3 dried organic rose buds, for garnish Pour the cognac, vermouth, juices, and syrup into a mixing glass. Add large cold ice cubes and shake vigorously. Strain into a chilled cocktail glass and garnish with rose buds. Dominant flavors: deep red pomegranates with roses on the nose Body: rich, full mouthfeel Dryness: medium Complexity: high Accentuating or contrasting flavors: chai, cinnamon, and clove interweave Finish: lingering, black tea, spicy

Kosmas and Zaric (You Didn't Hear It from Us), owners of Employees Only, a not-so-hidden take on a Manhattan speakeasy, offer instruction on recreating classic drinks and stirring up some modern variations. Fresh ingredients are their mainstay, but since the focus is on old-school cocktails, fewer intense flavor combinations arise than what might be found in a more contemporary collection of artisanal concoctions. Not that there's anything wrong with that. It's curious, for instance, to learn that the Manhattan, circa 1882, contained more vermouth than it did rye, while its modern version calls for a bourbon to vermouth ratio of 2 to 1. Among the 90 offerings, there are some that one would proudly order across a crowded bar, such as the New York Sour with its shakeup of 101-proof rye, lemon juice, and dry red wine. Others would best be acquired on the down low, like the Monkey Gland, a cocktail of absinthe, gin, orange juice, and Grenadine. There is also the Amelia, a sequel to the Cosmopolitan, starring blackberry puree and elderflower liqueur. For the more literary minded, there is the Hemingway daiquiri, a supposed favorite of Papa's, wherein grapefruit juice finds harmony with rum and maraschino liqueur. (Oct.) (c) Copyright © Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved.

Great cocktail book. I have a bunch of others, but this is definitely my go-to book when looking for a

solid drink. It's certainly not an encyclopedia of different recipes, but rather a distillation (pun acknowledged) of classic and new recipes into a core set of reliable, interesting drinks. I personally hate bar books that have 1000 recipes, since it's impossible to narrow down which ones to choose, and even more impossible to randomly select a good drink. I'd much rather have a well-curated list of several dozen drinks to choose from. I was a bit nervous about it at first since most of the recipes in this book call for specific liquor brands or have relatively esoteric ingredients, but it turns out it's a great excuse to experiment a tiny bit. It also helps that many of the recipes have the classic formulation (e.g., classic Manhattan) and then the authors' take on the drink ("Manhattan cocktail"), which are often taken from historical formulations of the cocktail. You quickly realize that these drink recipes are a lot more malleable and forgiving than you'd otherwise think, and they have always been changing with the times. Overall a fun book, both for solid classics and for trying some new drinks. I've never yet had a drink go wrong, and have added about 10 awesome drinks to my rotation.

I've been interested in better cocktails for a couple years now and have visited a bunch of well known places in NYC (Pegu Club, Death & Co., Apotheke, Clover Club, etc.) that specialize in this style. I'm so happy I can finally have this book. I've made 4 cocktails so far, in the first couple days, and have loved every one. Be prepared to get a bottle or sixty of something you may not have yet. Stuff like, 5 kinds of bitters, Maraschino Liqueur, Absinthe, High-proof Rye, High-proof Bourbon, Green & Yellow Chartreuse, etc. But it's all worth it if you love these kinds of cocktails. They also include great stories of how the drink ended up on their menu and, tasting notes (how it Should taste). The ones I tried: Martinez, Aviation, Billionaire Cocktail and Greenwich Sour. Can't wait to visit in the city.

I've used this book for 3-4 years as my go-to cocktail prep book. Every recipe I've made is fantastic, with perfect balance amongst ingredients/elements. Whenever I look up cocktail recipes online, for example, the balance tends to be way off. Not the case with Speakeasy. Some reviewers are complaining about the expense of the ingredients, which while not entirely unfounded, I think is way overblown. Yes, many different named (and expensive) spirits are called for (e.g., Charbay Ruby Red vodka), but I've found substitutes readily available at my local Bevmo. Sub a decent triple sec for Grand Marnier, for example. Use common sense and decent inputs and you will be delighted with the results!

short on text, few new cocktails. worth a quick read.

If you're a cocktail nerd/aficionado this book is excellent. It was written by the group at Employees Only in NYC, a trendy "speakeasy" style bar. While the bar is fun, its more fun to have their delicious cocktails in a setting that doesn't involve you bumping into 200 people all night. Buy the book, invite your friends and have your own bar for the night.

This book is a mainstay at our main home bar. They are tall pour drinks so be warned, but we've made most drinks in the book. I've also chatted with local bartenders and they've agreed this book knows what it's talking about.

Bought this for my son and he loves it! He made a few of these drinks for us while visiting, and they were delicious! Great pictures and classic drinks. Great book for any one who wants to learn how to make a fancy or classic cocktail.

Bought one for my son as well! All arrived as expected. Have enjoyed learning to make cocktails my father used to make long ago.

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