



The Monthly Mixologist Moment

with
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Happy Saint Patrick's Day!

March 17, 460 AD, marks the death of Ireland's beloved patron saint and initially was observed as a religious feast day known as St. Patrick's Day. The tradition eventually immigrated to colonial America in 1737, where the city of Boston first embraced the custom of public celebrations. The first ever St. Patrick's Day Parade, however, took place neither in Boston nor Ireland, but in New York City, circa 1762.

Fast-forward a few thousand years to contemporary festivities, and the old saying "Everybody's Irish on St. Patrick's Day" starts to make sense. While the biggest gathering would be Dublin's St. Patrick's Day Festival – a fusion of religious and secular celebrations attended by nearly 1 million revelers – there are parties, parades and green-beer nights the world over ... and more than a few without an Irishman in sight. It is easily and happily one of the busiest bar nights of the year.

Green beer aside, an authentic potable from the Emerald Isle is Irish whiskey, which has long battled the stigma of obstinate mixability in cocktails; a label that, quite frankly, is unfounded, for Irish whiskey's flavor complexity clearly offers greater prospects for mixing. Every drop of Irish whiskey produced today is made at just three distilleries, is generally triple-distilled, and is a blend of pot-distilled, malted and unmalted barley whiskeys with column still grain whiskey. These products stand out from their Scottish neighbors primarily due to the fact that Irish barley is not kilned over an open peat fire, hence the lack of smokiness. Midleton Distillery in County Cork produces John Jameson Irish Whiskey, first produced in 1968 and blended from roughly equal parts pot- and column-distilled whiskeys with approximately 10 percent aged in sherry casks. Its hints of oak, vanilla, caramel and apple makes this 80-proof whiskey ideal for mixing drinks or as a stand alone tipple.

Perhaps the best known of all the tipples crafted with Irish whiskey – and a staple on St. Paddy's Day – is the Irish Coffee. The Irish Coffee is credited to Joe Sheridan, a bartender at Ireland's Shannon Airport, who created the piping-hot mixture to warm his chilly patrons, inside and out. In 1952, the Irish Coffee found its way to the United States via travel writer Stanton Delaplane. He shared the recipe with Jack Koeppler, barman at San Francisco's Buena Vista Café, where today they serve more Irish Coffees every day than anyone in the world.

Slainte! (Irish for "Cheers")



Irish Coffee



1 1/2 oz. Irish whiskey
2 sugar cubes
Strong brewed coffee
Freshly whipped cream

In a heated Irish coffee class, add sugar cubes and dissolve in approx 5 ounces of hot coffee. Add whiskey and top with a collar of freshly whipped cream.

"Cream as rich as an Irish brogue, coffee as strong as a friendly hand, sugar as sweet as the tongue of a rogue, and whiskey as smooth as the wit of the land."

- Joe Sheridan, inventor of the Irish Coffee