

Living



"Something about glamour interested me. All my schoolbooks had drawings of women on terraces with a cocktail..."
—Bill Blass

Drink

BOTTOMS UP! A classic cocktail is always in style

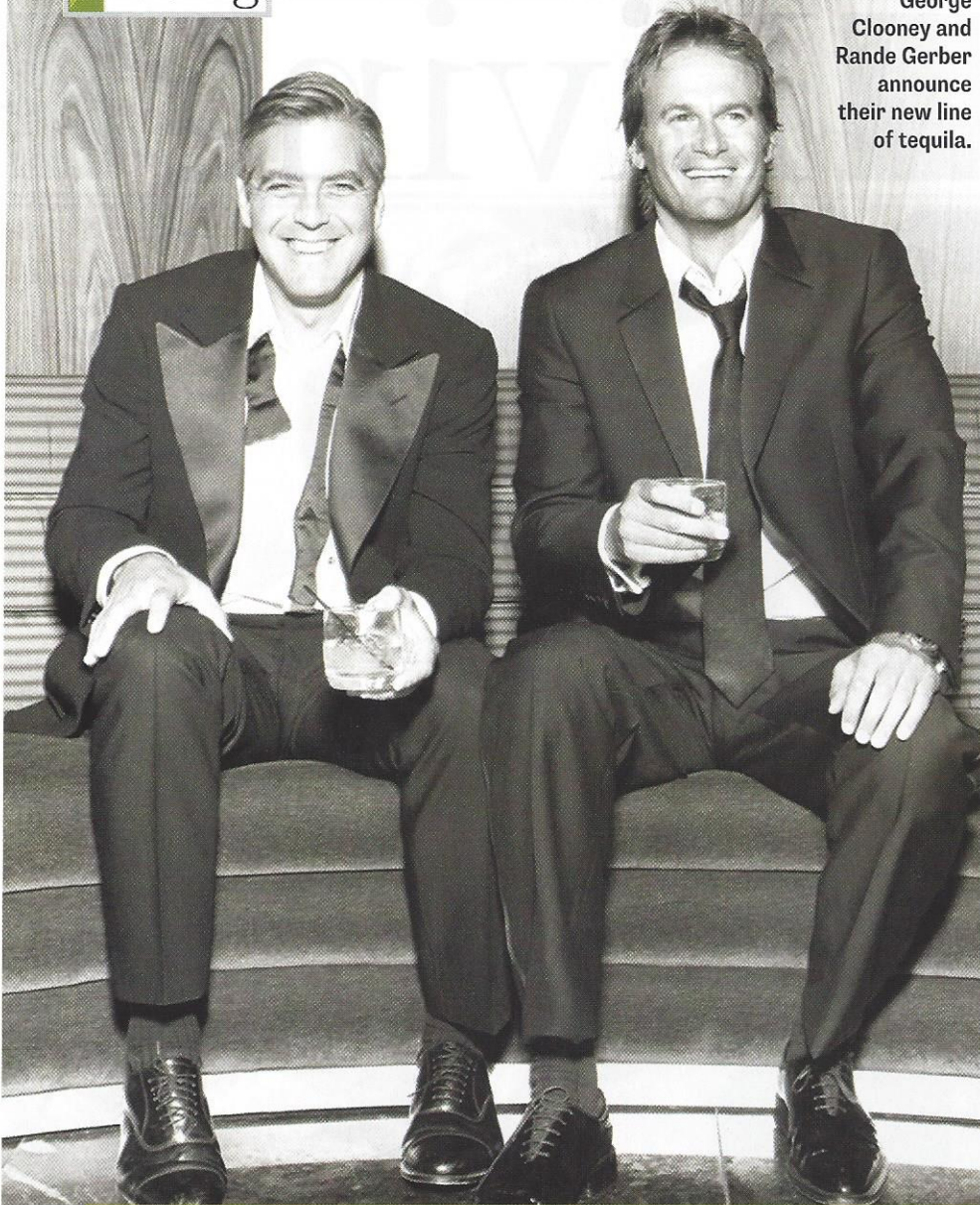
By Margaret Swaine

SOME DRINKS EXUDE sophistication. An old-fashioned (muddling cubed sugar, whiskey, bitters) in the hands of *Mad Men's* leading guy, Don Draper, fits like a well-tailored suit. James Bond's "shaken-not-stirred" martini is as suave as his pickup lines. There's constant drinking in Rick's Café in the movie *Casablanca*, but the most swish cocktail was the ►

Humphrey Bogart and Ingrid Bergman as the star-crossed lovers in *Casablanca*

PHOTO: [unreadable]

George Clooney and Rande Gerber announce their new line of tequila.



French 75s. Each particular cocktail is imbued with its own sense of style based on its provenance and history. That style is then bestowed on the one who orders it.

Fashion seems to be part of the DNA of many Italians, and their choice of drinks is no exception. Aperol, invented in 1919 in Padua, Veneto, is an eye-catching orange in colour with a unique bittersweet taste from an infusion of herbs and roots, including rhubarb and quinine. Only 11 per cent alcohol, its fresh versatility was and still is perfect for aperitif-style cocktails for hours of socializing without getting drunk.

The spritz (wine with soda water) is believed to have originated during the Austrian occupation of Italy in the 19th century. In the ensuing years, many different versions of the Veneto Spritz became popular, particularly the Aperol and soda mix. It was such a hit that by 1995 it was sold in single-serve, ready-to-drink bottles. Socializing over an Aperol Spritz (prosecco, Aperol and soda water) in the piazzas was part of the rhythm of everyday life in northern Italy.

More recently, in the past 10 years, the Aperol Spritz, known as Spritz Veneziano in the International

SPRITZ VENEZIANO

- Ice
- 3 parts Prosecco
- 2 parts Aperol
- 1 splash soda water
- Orange slice

Put ice in wine glass. Pour in Prosecco, Aperol and soda. Top with orange slice in the glass. (The orange keeps the Aperol from settling to the bottom.)

WATERMELON MARGARITA

- 1½ parts Casamigos Blanco Tequila (or any tequila blanco)
- 1 part fresh lime juice
- ½ part orange liqueur
- 6-8 chunks watermelon (flesh only)
- ¼ part agave nectar
- Ice

Muddle watermelon in a cocktail shaker. Add the rest of the ingredients with ice. Shake and pour into a rocks glass. Garnish with a slice of watermelon.

CHARRED BLOOD ORANGE COSMOPOLITAN

- 1.5 oz Johnnie Walker Black Label Whisky
- 0.75 oz freshly squeezed lime juice
- 0.5 oz simple syrup
- 0.25 oz Benedictine
- 1 oz blood orange juice
- Blood orange rind

Build the ingredients in a Boston glass (Boston glass shakers are common bartending tools) and shake. Garnish with the rind heated indirectly using a lighter.

Bartenders Association's official cocktail recipe list, has become the chicest drink to order pre-meal. The Aperol bottle's back label highlights the famous 3-2-1 recipe of this cocktail (see recipe, far left).

Then there's the glamour of a celebrity connection. Willie Nelson put his name on Old Whiskey River bourbon, Dan Aykroyd owns a piece of the action in Patrón Tequila, Rock and Roll Hall of Famer Sammy Hagar struck it rich with Cabo Wabo Tequila and Sammy's Beach Bar Rum, but none are as big a heart throb as George Clooney. Clooney partnered with his amigos Rande Gerber (husband to supermodel Cindy Crawford) and Michael Meldman (developer of luxury residential and resort properties) to produce Casamigos Tequila. (It was introduced to Canada last year.)

Casamigos is made from 100 per cent Blue Weber agave, grown in Mexico's Jalisco highlands for a minimum of seven years. After harvest, the agave *piñas* are roasted in traditional brick ovens and then fermented for more than 80 hours. This creates a lovely forward agave flavour that's ultra-smooth and sophisticated with a silky elegance.

Casamigos is all over social media with 20 billion impressions via Facebook, Twitter, Pinterest, Instagram (plus they have a website and blog). Their Watermelon Margarita (see recipe mid-left) is as *au courant* and tasteful as Amal, Clooney's brilliant wife and future Best Dressed Hall of Famer.

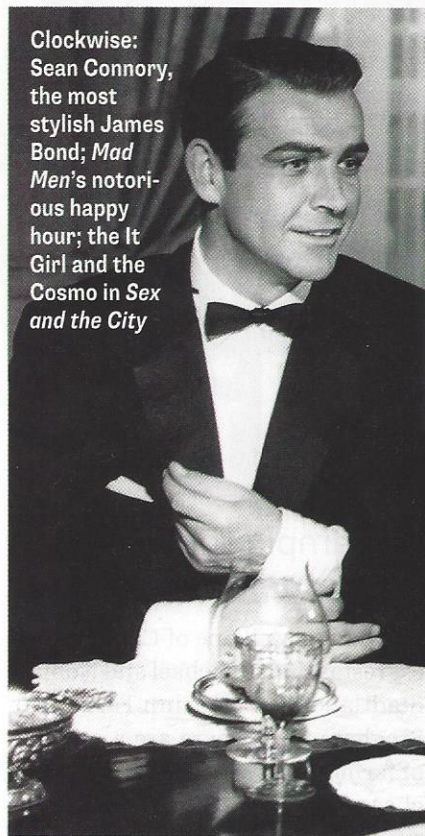
Brown spirits such as whisky, bourbon, rum and brandy are on trend, thanks to retro chic and the renewed interest in complex, flavoured cocktails. This spring saw the launch of the Authentic Caribbean Rum (ARC) marque in Canada to raise awareness of the authenticity, provenance and quality of rums produced in 13 Caribbean countries. New whisky producers are popping up all over

North America, making bourbons, moonshines (unaged whiskies) and ryes and sometimes flavoured with spices, fruits and sweeteners such as maple syrup and honey. Scotch distilleries are making ever more intricate and complicated whiskies (aged in one barrel, finished in another; tinged with sauterne and other wines; super charged with peat smoke and the like).

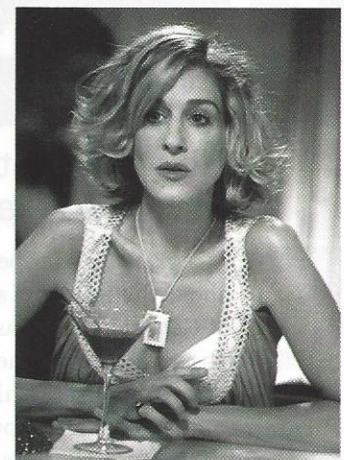
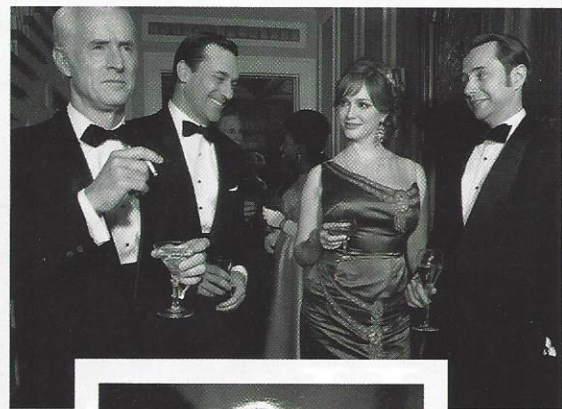
The result is a bonanza for mixologists who have a field day creating new cocktails and toys with the bounty at hand. At the far-out futuristic end of the scale is Scotland's Ardbeg Distillery's Haar carafe, developed in collaboration with

that slowly moves up the funnel of the vessel before being collected in a separate glass. (The carafe uses ultrasound pads and piezoelectric crystals to create sonic vibrations to turn the liquid into a cloud of wafting vapour.) The smoke-like spirit can then be inhaled from the glass through a slotted straw, which turns the mist into a sort of sippable droplet. The inspiration behind this carafe is the haar (fog) rolling in from the sea on the Scottish island of Islay where Ardbeg is produced.

Most of us aren't likely to get a Haar carafe for home use, so instead I bring you a wonderful new recipe from Fairmont Banff Springs Chop House



Clockwise: Sean Connery, the most stylish James Bond; *Mad Men's* notorious happy hour; the It Girl and the Cosmo in *Sex and the City*



Harvard professor David Edwards, an engineer and founder of the Parisian contemporary art and design centre Le Laboratoire. Select bartenders in the U.K. are combining Ardbeg's smoky, peaty 10-year-old Uigeadail with Corryvreckan into the carafe, which forms a cloud

1888 mixologist, David Rennie (see recipe near left). It's a smoky, spiced twist on the Cosmo that incorporates whisky and charred blood orange.

As the Cosmopolitan was the favoured drink of style- and shoe-mad Carrie on *Sex and the City*, its style quotient rides high. ☐