

LIQUEURS

by Sharon Kirkham

There's a whole world of different liqueurs out there – far too many for us to feature in these few pages. And while this broad cross section is by no means a comprehensive list, all of these liqueurs are available locally.



Cape Velvet Cream

Produced in early 1981, Cape Velvet Cream is proudly South African. Its deliciously distinct flavour has won many fans, who enjoy it over crushed ice, with milk or as a dessert ingredient. The second most popular cream liqueur in the country, the product certainly stands out on the shelf, thanks to its unique, softly rounded bottle. Two other decadent variants – Cape Velvet Cream English Toffee and Cape Velvet Cream Strawberry – were successfully launched in 1982.



Baileys – the Original Irish Cream

Baileys is not only the first cream liqueur ever made, (November 1974), it is also the world's No.1 selling cream liqueur today. This Irish success is a blend of fresh Irish dairy cream, triple-distilled Irish whiskey, fine spirits, chocolate and vanilla. Its versatility allows it to be enjoyed as part of a dessert or in hot drinks. However to truly appreciate Baileys distinctiveness, pour two tots of Baileys over ice to enhance its delicious authentic taste.



Kahlua

As dark and mysterious as the bottle that holds it, Kahlua is the world's best-selling coffee liqueur. Native to Mexico, it is produced from the best, shade-grown, free-trade Arabica coffee beans. These are roasted to develop flavour and ground to hold in sweetness. The ground coffee is then extracted and blended with the finest imported rums and the sweetest vanilla. The result is an exotic coffee-tasting liqueur that is perfect served over ice, with milk or cream, or in cocktail classics like Kahlua White Russian and Kahlua Black Russian.



Tia Maria

With a history that can be traced 300 years to Jamaica, Tia Maria is rich in both heritage and flavour. Smooth in texture, warm and dark in colour, this medium-strength liqueur blends cane spirit, Jamaican coffee, vanilla and sugar. Tia Maria is best enjoyed over ice, or mixed with cola, lime and lemonade, orange juice and lemonade, or cranberry juice.



Ilala Cream

Wholly developed and produced in South Africa, Ilala Cream is made from the ilala palm, a species indigenous to sub-tropical Southern Africa. Sap is tapped from the ilala palm and fermented for two or three weeks, before being filtered and double distilled. Hazelnut and fresh dairy cream are then added to create a smooth blend with subtle toffee flavours. Lower in fat than many other creams, Ilala blends beautifully with coffee, hot chocolate or milk, or served in a creamy cocktail, neat or on ice.



Southern Comfort

In New Orleans in 1874, Martin Wikes Heron attempted to rectify the sometimes rough-tasting barrel whiskey that arrived from Kentucky and Tennessee. By blending it with flavours including peach, orange, vanilla, sugar and cinnamon, he created 'Cuffs and Buttons', the easy-drinking liqueur that later became known as Southern Comfort. Now consumed the world over, Southern Comfort can be enjoyed with Coke or Appletizer, as an essential cocktail ingredient or popular shooter served with lime.



Drambuie

Some 260 years ago, the apothecary to Scottish rebel Prince Charles Edward Stuart, was tasked with creating a drink to warm, satisfy and refresh his master. The golden elixir he created was a blend of malt whisky with herbs, spices and other exotic ingredients. This tonic became known as Drambuie. Today, the rich and complex taste of Drambuie is achieved by using a base of fine Scotch malt whisky, a hint of heather honey and flavoured with herbs. It is particularly refreshing when mixed with Ginger Ale.



Frangelico

The unusual Frangelico bottle, shaped like a monk with a rope belt around the waist, reflects the intriguing history of this hazelnut liqueur – which dates back 300 years to the early Christian monks who lived in the hills of the Piedmont region of Northern Italy, where Frangelico is produced. Skilled in the art of producing food and drink, the monks would use wild hazelnuts and other local ingredients and distill the liqueur upon which Frangelico is based. Flavoured with toasted wild Italian hazelnuts, cocoa and vanilla berries, Frangelico can be added to coffee or poured over crushed ice, while cocktails such as Nutty Thrill, Hazelnut Martini and Gingershot Hot Chocolate make exciting dessert alternatives.



Amarula

Light brown to caramel in colour, Amarula has a fresh, smooth and well-rounded taste with tones of chocolate, vanilla, coffee and a hint of citrus. With its nuances of marula fruit, this natural, wild fruit cream liqueur has an exotic taste and aftertaste. During production, marula fruit are gathered, their kernels removed and the ripe flesh crushed before being fermented. The resultant marula wine is then distilled and matured in oak casks for about two years, after which it is blended with the finest fresh cream to a smooth, soft and stable consistency.



Nachtmusik

A rich and smooth chocolate liqueur, Nachtmusik can be enjoyed neat – either chilled or at room temperature – or with a variety of mixers, such as hot or cold milk. It can also be added to coffee or desserts, one such being a Don Pedro-style drink where Nachtmusik is poured over ice cream. The liqueur is also a versatile cocktail ingredient.



Oude Meester

Vibrant and refreshing, Oude Meester liqueurs are oak matured to create a uniquely balanced, mellow and complex liqueur that is ideal for cocktails. Launched in 1965, Oude Meester is available in two flavours, namely Peppermint and Ginger. Very versatile, both can be enjoyed as an after dinner drink, as a tall cocktail with mixer, poured over ice-cream or with milk.



Mandarine Napoleon

Made according to the original recipe, Mandarine Napoleon has a distinctive flavour which comes from the tangerine mandarin in France. In its production, fresh mandarin peels are blended with selected superior fine spirits and Cognac. From cocktails to cooking or simply served straight or on ice, this liqueur's unique and distinctive flavour has been pleasing palates since 1892.



Angels' Share

Originating from the Cape's renowned Van Ryn Brandy Distillery, Angels' Share Brandy Cream was launched in 1999. A skillful blend of the finest matured brandies from the Van Ryn Distillery with the highest quality fresh cream and other natural ingredients. Angels' Share carries hints of orange blossom and indulgent flavours of spice. This cream aperitif is particularly satisfying served neat or on ice.



After Shock

Best enjoyed as a cool shooter, After Shock comes in a variety of flavours: Hot and Cool Cinnamon, Deep Cool Citrus and Hot Aniseed flavour. These liqueurs are known for their unique taste sensations – initially hot with a cold finish. With its 40% alcohol content, After Shock is a favourite on the party scene and the UK's biggest shooter brand.



Disaronno

The world's best selling Italian liqueur, Disaronno originated in Saronno, Italy in 1525, and the recipe for this versatile liqueur has remained unchanged. Known as the 'liqueur of love', it is made with a base of premium Italian grape spirit which is then patiently steeped with 17 different herbs and fruits – including apricot kernel oil. Burnished copper in colour, with a bouquet of marzipan and citrus zest, Disaronno's palate is of semi-sweet flavours of almonds, oranges and vanilla.



Jägermeister

Best drunk ice cold as a shooter, or mixed with energy drinks, Jägermeister has become a hit with the 18–35-year-old party crowd – many of whom were introduced to the brand by way of the ubiquitous Jäger Bomb. This uniquely flavoured liqueur is made from a blend of 56 herbs, fruit and bark extracts.



Montez

A rich, smooth and dark-coloured coffee liqueur, Montez boasts a strong South American heritage. Based on the mystique of the ancient Inca legend and the mystery of El Dorado, it is a liqueur from true coffee country. Montez can be consumed neat, in cocktails, Don Pedros, in Irish coffee or poured over ice cream as a dessert.

Butlers

A multitude of flavoured liqueurs fall under the Butlers brand stable, these include:

- Butlers Triple Sec – Orange peels are soaked in distilled water and then steeped in a spirit, before being distilled to create this orange-flavoured liqueur.
- Butlers Espresso – Made with neutral spirit, flavoured with coffee beans for a mocha/coffee flavour and colour.
- Butlers Ginger – This dark yellow liqueur is made with neutral spirit, flavoured with ginger.
- Butlers Strawberry – Cultivated strawberries are macerated with neutral spirit, macerated and sweetened.
- Butlers Blue Curaçao – Made the same way as Triple Sec but then dyed blue.
- Butlers Crème de Banane – Made by maceration of ripe bananas in neutral spirit for a strong banana flavour.
- Butlers Marula cream – Neutral spirit laced with cream and the fruit of the African marula tree.
- Butlers Peppermint – Made from crushed peppermint leaves to remove oils which are then blended with spirit and distilled.
- Butlers Coconut – This clear liqueur is made from spirit distilled with coconut shavings.
- Butlers Cherry Kirsch – Crushed cherries are macerated in spirit.
- Butlers Van Der Hum – Fruit is macerated with spirit, distilled and sweetened to produce this naartjie-flavoured liqueur.





Cointreau

In 1849, Angers, France, confectioner Adophe Cointreau and his brother, Edouard-Jean created a brand new kind of spirit blended from the unique fruits of the area. So successfully received was their new product that they founded the first distillery in Angers. Edouard's son was determined to create something different to the opaque liqueurs of the time, and produced a crystal-clear liqueur, based on a blend of sweet and bitter orange peels from the most exotic parts of the world. A popular cocktail ingredient, the Cointreapolitan appeals to women everywhere.



Luxardo Amaretto

Excellent for mixing in cocktails, as well as for baking, Luxardo Amaretto is made from pure almond paste and aged for eight months in large vats for a distinctive and well-rounded taste. Only the finest almonds, picked around Avola in southern Sicily, are used to produce this delicate almond liqueur.



Wild Africa

With its soft leopard skin jacket and ubuntu beads, the ethnic packaging of Wild Africa certainly gets noticed on the shelf. Born in the Western Cape Winelands, this light-textured, easy drinking liqueur is a fusion of quality fresh cream, caramel and the purest distilled spirit. An advanced blending process gives the product a shelf life of at least two years and allows it to be kept in the refrigerator and served cold without thickening or separating.

Sambuca

The flavour of Sambuca is derived from the essential oils of anise and fennel. This pungent liqueur has a long history as references to anise drinks can be found in Latin texts, while anise cordials were used for medicinal purposes at sea. The Moors would refer to it as Zambur. Today, Sambuca is enjoyed as a shooter but it can also be mixed with lemonade or used as a cocktail ingredient.



Ramazzotti Sambuca

This original Italian sweet and strong liqueur is made to a traditional recipe involving the careful distillation of star anise. With its powerful fresh taste, it is ideal as a shooter, an after-dinner digestif, on the rocks, in cocktails or coffee.



Zappa Sambuca

Available in original, black, green, red and blue colours, Zappa Sambuca is perhaps best known as a shooter, but this liqueur can also be mixed with lemonade or used as a cocktail ingredient.



Lupini Sambuca

Available in three different variants, Lupini Black has a liquorice taste; Lupini Gold contains 22 carat gold flakes; and Lupini Inferno has crystal sugar growth which creates a hot taste sensation.



Glenfiddich Malt Whisky Liqueur

Launched in South Africa in 2007, Glenfiddich Malt Whisky Liqueur maintains the traditional softness of a liqueur, along with the warmth of oak casks and the subtle taste and aroma of Glenfiddich Single Malt Scotch Whisky. Neither too rich nor too sweet, it has a spicy, honey flavour that makes it perfect over ice, neat or as an after-dinner digestif.



Bartenders' broad liqueur range incorporates unique flavours, ideal served on ice, these include:

- Bartenders Hot Sex – A blend of imported Canton Ginger Liqueur, vodka, dairy cream, chocolate, ginseng and other flavours.
- Bartenders Hot Sex & Brandy – A blend of imported Canton Ginger Liqueur, French brandy, dairy cream, chocolate, ginseng and other flavours.
- Bartenders Bananas Over You – A blend of imported Caribbean rum, dairy cream and banana.
- Bartenders Kick Ass Mudslide – A blend of Caribbean rum, coffee, chocolate and dairy cream.
- Bartenders Awesome Orange – A blend of imported vodka and natural orange flavours.
- Bartenders Pina Colada – Caribbean rum, dairy cream, pineapple, coconut and other natural flavours.
- Bartenders Coconut Rum – Enjoy in coffee with a generous portion of ice.



Irish Mist

This golden liqueur, presented in a sleek bottle, is still made according to an ancient recipe. Aged Irish whiskey is blended with honey, herbs and other spirits to produce a sweet, aromatic and warming liqueur of complex flavour. It's made to be enjoyed on its own, with ice, mixed into a cocktail or as the key ingredient in an Irish coffee.



Rittmeister

A product of Namibia, Rittmeister is enjoyed as a shooter or an 'after dinner' digestif. It contains a blend of the finest herbal liqueurs for a truly unique taste.