

ON TV

- FINE LIVING TV
- MONTHLY GUIDE
- SHOWS A-Z
- SPECIALS
- Do you get FINE LIVING TV Network?

HOT TOPICS

- QUIZZES & GAMES
- DESIGN IN DETAIL
- COCKTAIL RECIPES
- CHOCOHOLICS
- THE WINE CELLAR
- WINE CLUB
- SPRING TRAVEL
- HEALTHY RECIPES



RELIVE THE EXCITEMENT

See when to watch

◀ BACK NEXT ▶

THIS WEEK'S POLL

What's your favorite thing about spring?

- Flowers
- Sandals
- No coat
- The time change — longer days
- Spring is not my favorite season

Print Version Email to a Friend

Seven Things You Didn't Know About Martinis

A little bit of trivia to go down smoothly with that olive

By Lisa Rogak

As martinis have made a cocktail comeback, many fans of the drink have taken sides. Debate over America's most stylish and classic concoction will always swirl as some swear by gin while others prefer vodka; the same goes for stirred versus shaken. Others like a healthy dose of vermouth while others prefer to wave the bottle over the glass.

Some martini aficionados are purists while others prefer a wider selection. At the Mayflower Hotel's Town & Country Bar in Washington, D.C., head bartender Sambonn Lek offers a menu of 101 martinis, including the signature Sam I Am, to celebrate Dr. Seuss' birthday.

No matter what side you're on, here are seven fun facts to enhance your education of everything martini:

1. The martini's origins were inspired by Martinez, Calif.

One legend has it that a San Francisco bartender invented the drink in the 1880s for thirsty gold miners and named it after his hometown. Another story claims the drink was created right in downtown Martinez. Either way, the martini has been the city's official libation ever since.

2. Gin or vodka?

Nick Mautone, Grey Goose mixologist and author of the book *Raising the Bar*, says the drink was first made with gin, since vodka wasn't widely distributed in the United States until the 1930s. As for the taste, "A vodka martini is more subtle and tastes cleaner, while a gin martini has more pronounced aromatics and a bigger bite," Mautone says.

3. Shaken or stirred?

Shaking the martini "bruises" the gin, sharpening the flavor. Terri Dennis of [The Martini Diva blog](#) maintains that shaking results in a more healthful drink since the friction creates antioxidants. The cinematic incarnation of James Bond — perhaps the world's most famous connoisseur of martinis — prefers his drink shaken while in author Ian Fleming's books 007 likes them stirred. But according to Anistatia Miller and Jared Brown, authors of *Shaken Not Stirred: A Celebration of the Martini*, in *Casino Royale*, the first Bond book, the suave spy actually drank a Vesper: three parts gin to one part vodka with a splash of Lillet Blanc and a lemon peel.

4. Martinis can be an effective beauty treatment, among other uses.

Marie Scalogna-Watkinson of Manhattan-based Spa Chicks On-The-Go offers clients an Appletini Manicure. "The sugars in the alcohol and apple juice are a natural exfoliant," she says. Just mix equal parts vodka, sour apple schnapps and apple juice, and pour into two martini glasses: one to soak a hand and one to drink. Brian Ellison of Death Door's Spirits, a distillery in Wisconsin's Door County, says that since martinis are all alcohol they could be used as an astringent or a solvent. "The best astringent would be a very dry vodka martini, while a dirty martini would hurt like the dickens and the olive juice could cause infection," Ellison says.

5. The martini has inspired writers and sages to wax lyrical on the drink.

Dorothy Parker, famous for her biting quips, said, "I like to drink martinis, two at the most. Three I'm under the table, four I'm under the host," and actress Myra Loy repeated a favorite maxim: "Martinis are like breasts: one is not enough and three are too many."

6. Bored with the same old olives and lemon peels? Try fruit as a garnish instead.

Darryl "Dr. Mixologist" Robinson suggests soaking dried fruit in cognac overnight. Robinson tends bar at Hudson Bar, one of New York's hottest nightspots, and he likes dried pears, mangos, pineapples, raspberries, dates and even prunes as an accent.

7. Finally, martinis are not just for humans.

For her dog Pixel, Dennis, the Martini Diva, developed the Bow Wow Martini: water, beef bouillon, pretzel sticks and Snausages dog treats.

Whether it's for you or your four-legged friends, the martini is designed to be enjoyed and savored — shaken or stirred.



HomeGoods

the **seaside style** event

starts Thursday, April 10

[LEARN MORE](#)



Ads by Google

[TalkDrinks](#)

Cocktail and Drink Recipes by Leading Mixologists
[talkdrinks.com](#)

[Mix Drinks](#)

Get Mixed Drink Recipes & Other Mixed Drink Info Here.
[AboutMixDrinks.info](#)