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That's Amari: An Ancient Love of Herbal Drinks

by **Rachel Safko** (<http://www.worldoftea.org/author/rachel-safko/>) 2 days ago 72 views



I loved amari before I even knew what it was. I lived in an old-time New York-Italian neighborhood for ages and sometimes found myself ordering digestifs from dessert menus. It's what you did. In fact, the tradition of taking amaro after dinner goes back centuries, to a time when people got their medicine straight from the garden, from botanists or the apothecary, usually as a tincture or tea. Most amari taste medicinal and tend to embody the essence of bittersweet. Known to treat everything from stomachaches to cholera, they're made by infusing brandy or other spirits with herbs, leaves, flowers, roots, bark, fruit peels, and spices. Once the sugar's added, the infusion's aged for weeks, even years. Recipes for classic Italian amari vary from region to region, or even town to town, often based on whatever's locally available.



Black Manhattan with Owl's Brew Amaro. Credit: Owl's Brew

Tapping into the roots of amari

"Amari is ultimately a botanical infusion," said Jennie Ripps, founder of the New York-based Owl's Brew (<http://www.theowlsbrew.com/story/>) (a tea mixer for cocktails) and Brew Lab, which works with restaurants to develop customized tea menus. It's not surprising, perhaps, that she and other tea companies are making post-dinner teas or herbals that call up Fernet-Branca, or aperitifs like the near 150-year-old French Lillet to whet the appetite before a meal.

Ms. Ripples, who makes tea and herbal versions of nostalgic sodas, from a green tea and cherry riff on Dr. Pepper to a chamomile-pineapple take on Mountain Dew, was inspired to create non-alcoholic renditions of Fernet and Campari using an infusion of herbals and diluted simple syrup. She dug up a bunch of old recipes and wanted to capture the most essential flavors of well-known fernets and Campari (which she made with hibiscus, lemon, and orange peels); her fernet includes mint, gentian, rose petal, almonds, lemon peel, caramel and a host of other ingredients. A few New York restaurants have caught on: you can order her fernet and Campari at Quality Italian (<http://www.qualityitalian.com/home.cfm>), alongside more than half a dozen traditional amari to complement panna cotta, chestnut roulade and cannoli.



Murta berries in the wild from Rishi sourcing trip. Credit: Rishi

The Milwaukee-based Rishi (<http://www.rishi-tea.com/>), which sources high-quality, sustainable ingredients from around the world for its teas and herbals, recently offered customers aperitivo and digestivo blends via their monthly Herb Lab series. "We often test out dozens of recipes for each of the blends in our series," said Rishi's Jeffrey Champeau. "Herbal apertifs and digestifs seemed like a nice option for winter—they're a natural counterbalance to food and that feeling of post-holiday indulgence," he added. (I was grateful to have snapped them up early on, since both blends sold out, and won't be made again; Rishi creates new recipes every month for the series and rarely brings back favorites.) Their digestif herbal blend sparkles with citrus peels, cardamom and fennel as well as a unique saffron made from poppies grown in Afghanistan.

It's inspired by an Amaro Nonino (<http://www.grappanonino.it/en/products/amaro-nonino-quintessentia.html>) he and his colleagues came across at Chicago's Eataly (<https://www.eataly.com/>), a light, floral grappa-based amaro with notes of citrus, saffron and sarsaparilla. I headed over to Eataly in New York to try it out myself, and was able to get a flight of amari, including the amazingly dry, honey-sweetened knock-your-socks-off Varnelli Dell'Erborista (<http://www.varnelli.it/en/products/amaro-dellerborista>), which the sommelier suggested with blue cheese.

Tea: the secret ingredient?

Tea and amaro can both act as bitters in cocktails, adding depth and complexity to a drink. "It's really about getting the right balance of flavors," said Tyler Fry of Chicago's famed Violet Hour (<http://theviolethour.com/>), which offers a compelling list of noirish amaro-based cocktails, like the Savage Detectives, garnished with a mint sprig and a few drops of tobacco bitters made from rooibos. Mr. Fry recently collaborated with Nick Hruza of Newfangled Spirits on the Mad Hattin', a twist on the Black Manhattan, using rye and Hruza's soon-to-be released Earl Grey tea amaro (called In This Style 10/6), which marries brightness with deep, comforting chocolate-y notes.

More domestic companies in the U.S. seem to be making amari these days with local ingredients, including tea. Amari recipes have historically been kept somewhat secret; tea's likely to have appeared in several herbal liqueurs through the centuries, though it's hard to pin down their provenance, said Fry. I stumbled upon a jazzy new amaro at my neighborhood bar, Brooklyn's The Richardson (<http://www.therichardsonnyc.com/>), made with yaupon holly, a tea-like infusion favored by North American settlers in the 1700s. Modeled after classic Italian amari, Highwire Distilling's Southern Amaro (<http://highwiredistilling.squarespace.com/spirits2016/>) contains both Charleston black tea and yaupon, and happens to be one of the most popular amari at the Richardson right now, which offers other domestic amari on tap, like the elegant Fernet Francisco (<http://fernetafrancisco.com/>).

For the smell of it

Like tea, amari is an all-round sensory experience, often emitting extraordinary fragrance. Smelling the many herbs, flowers and roots is part of the pleasure of sipping it. Champeau points out that aperitifs are traditionally offered to awaken the palate before a meal via both smell and taste. (Rishi's aperitif blend includes a Chilean murta berry frequently used in jam and liqueur as well as schizandra, otherwise known as the Chinese five-taste berry, which adds tartness and a little bite to the brew. For tea purists, light and floral high mountain oolongs or

whites like silver needle can be excellent aperitifs, suggested Champeau, while more heavily oxidized oolongs or puerh may stand in as non-alcoholic digestifs. Think of tea and amari as part of the dining experience from start to finish, and most of all, enjoy. Buon appetito!



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Rachel Safko is a tea specialist and journalist, who writes about everything from ancient Chinese Yixing teapots to French couture. Her most recent features include a cover story about the Swedish art of the coffee break for Edible Manhattan and tea and food pairing for Fresh Cup Magazine. She lives in New York, where she's been known to host tea soirees. Read more at

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毛穴の黒ずみに悩む女性は多いですが、間違えたケアだと、余計に毛穴を目立たせてしまいます。そこで黒炭の力を使った黒ずみ除去で、キレイな毛穴を目指すこともひとつです。黒炭の持つパワーの着目した毛穴ジェルなども販売されていますから、毛穴レスを目指す奈良トライの価値はあるでしょう。黒炭には高い吸着力がありますし、分解力ももっています。ですから、毛穴の黒ずみとなっている汚れまで、根本からしっかりと除去することになります。黒くツツツと目立つ毛穴も、ツルツルとした毛穴へと変わっていく期待感が持てます。毛穴ケアとして、脱毛をするのもひとつです。また、エステサロンで、毛フェイシャルマッサージをするのも良いでしょう。エステティックのTBCは国内でも老舗のサロンですが、長い実績と信頼があります。TBCでは、肌悩みに合わせたフェイシャルエステを受けることができますから、毛穴の悩みもカウンセリングで相談をしてみるとよいでしょう。TBCには技術力の高いエステティシャンが何人もいますから、自分の肌をプロの手に任せてみるというのも良い方法です。TBCは全国的にもサロンがあるので、エステにも通いやすいでしょう。まつげの事を考えると、毎日使っているビューラーの状態もチェックをしたいところです。まつげを毎日持ち上げるビューラーは、ゴムの部分が傷んでいると、恐ろしいことにまつげが切れてしまうことがあります。ゴムは交換できるものですから、ある程度使用したら、新しいゴムに交換をしましょう。気温にもまつげは左右されることがあって、寒くて乾燥すると、水分も対なくなって抜けやすくなります。目元にも保湿のケアをすることが大事になります。投稿まつげとTBCと黒炭について

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