

The Benito

Original: Invented by myself

The Benito is my attempt to combine two of the most iconic cocktails of all time, the Margarita, and the Martini, into one perfect concoction. Essentially, this came down to answering one simple question: What would a Martini recipe look like if instead of Gin/Vodka for the base, we used Tequila. I also wanted to keep some of the characteristics that make the Margarita so great, so I wanted to make the Benito somewhat tropical and more approachable than a Martini while still maintaining some of its elegance. Hopefully, you'll see how the recipe achieves all of this.

You might be wondering why I call it the Benito. No, it is not named after Mussolini, bahahahaha. If you look at the ingredients list, two countries will come to mind, that is France and Mexico (also Denmark and the Carribean, but shhh). So I decided to do some quick historically educational Googling and I found an important man I had never heard of: **Benito Pablo Juarez Garcia**. What a mouthful, eh? Let's just go with *Benito*.

So why him?

The French and Mexico actually have a fair bit of history, by which I mean France attacked Mexico alot. One of the most famous of the battles between them was one in which Mexico totally pulled an underdog moment against the aggressively encroaching French, and it is called *The Battle of Puebla*. Doesn't sound familiar? Well it should. Maybe this will help. The date of the battle... was *May 5th of 1862*. That's right, the holiday that is synonymous with quote unquote "Mexican Culture" and Margarita drinking is actually a commemoration of that victory of Mexico over the French. And guess who was President at the time? It's our boy Benito! He was actually the 26th President of Mexico, the first and only Native American (Oaxacan Zapotec to be precise) to hold the title. Yah, Oaxaca is that city where that amazing Mexcal comes from, and much else. And his accomplishments were far from few. He may be the most celebrated public figures in Mexican History, revered in Mexico as a preeminent symbol of Mexican nationalism and resistance to foreign intervention. And if that wasn't enough to convince me, his wife's name was literally Margarita!

Scores

- Personal Taste: *****
- Cost: \$\$\$__
- Perceived Alcoholic Strength: !!!__
- Real Alcoholic Strength: %%%__

Ingredients

- **Tequila Reposado (2oz)**

I like to use Cabrito or Cazadores

- **Strong Orange Liqueur (1oz)**

I highly recommend Pierre Ferrand's Dry Curacao, but Cointreau or whatever triple sec you have handy will do in a pinch. Avoid Grand Marnier, of course.

Be careful, this stuff can really oversweaten your drink. Make adjustments accordingly

- **Lillet (Just a splash)**

The idea is to treat it like vermouth in a (Vesper) Martini

I really do think Lillet is necessary, I don't recommend other aromatized wine

- Ice
- Orange
- (Optional) Blonde Mexican Beer

I prefer Corona or Mariachi when it was available

Directions

1. (Optional) If you want to add beer, make sure it is ice-cold
2. Pour some ice into a shaker
3. Pour the Tequila, Orange Liqueur, and Lillet in
4. Stir gently, don't shake. Don't water it down too much. We want it cool and refreshing, but otherwise as strong as possible. Just a bit of melting I think really helps the orange liqueur open up.
5. Strain the drink into a Martini glass
6. Peel some zest off the orange and express the oils over the drink. Drop the zest in afterwards as garnish if you like, or do what I prefer to do which is cut a zest spiral out and drop that in instead.
7. (Optional) if you are using beer, add just a few ounces to top the drink off. Don't overdo it with the beer, we are aiming for a cocktail, not a highball.

Tips and Tricks

- Avoid oversweatening, and the key player here will be the orange liqueur. Adjust the amount to your needs, since every bottle of orange liqueur, and every person's tongue is different.
- Don't overdo it with the Lillet, but don't be all super conservative with it like a snobby Martini expert either. Just enough to add some complexity to the overall drink. I think 'splash' is the appropriate term.
- Don't overdo it with the beer either, if you are using some. We still want this to mainly feel like a cocktail, not a highball. Just a splash is good. The beer is mainly there to make the drink more crisp and add some of

that blonde beer flavor in.