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Ward Eight

Written by Liquor.com | Updated 12/17/20

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Image: Liquor.com / Tim Nusog

The Ward Eight, a turn-of-the-20th century concoction, is one of Boston's major contributions to craft cocktails. The cocktail was reportedly created in 1898 in Boston to celebrate the election of one Martin M. Lomasney to the state legislature. Lomasney was a politician who wielded considerable power in Boston for forty years, serving as a state senator and representative, as well as a political "boss" in the city's eight ward.

The drink, by all accounts, was created at the Locke-Ober Café in Boston's eighth ward. Already nearly 20 years old when the drink was created there, the venerable French restaurant and bar survived until 2012, when it finally closed. As with any drink that old that wasn't written down at the time, there are different approaches to crafting it, but the most popular is a mix of rye whiskey, lemon and orange juice, and grenadine, which is how author and cocktail historian [David Wondrich](#), makes it here.

Some stories describe the creation of the Ward Eight as happening before Lomasney officially won his election, so sure was the bar staff that he would do so. Many stories abound about the questionable nature as to his victory, including tales of him handing out pre-filled ballots to voters entering the polls. Regardless of any shifty dealings, the man was a popular politician, so much so that his drink survives today.

Essentially a riff on a rye Whiskey Sour, the Ward Eight sees some of the lemon juice substituted with orange, and simple syrup is replaced by grenadine. For decades, Rose's Grenadine dominated the market, with most people associating the pomegranate-flavored bar syrup with a cloying concoction of corn syrup and artificial flavors and colors. Today, like in much of the bar world, there are options, including a number of grenadine brands made with real fruit juice. However, for those who can't find a favorite bottle on the shelves, or who just want to try their hand at making their own, it is possible to [make your own homemade grenadine](#), either with freshly juiced pomegranates or store-bought juice.

The Ward Eight only calls for two teaspoons of the sweet-tart pomegranate syrup. Adding vodka to the batch keeps it shelf stable for much longer than not, but for those who want to use it up quickly, there's always the **Jack Rose**, the **Tequila Sunrise**, and the **Sherry Temple**. Just be sure not to use a vodka-infused version if making a Sherry Temple or one of its **non-alcoholic variations**.

Ingredients

- ♦ 2 ounces rye whiskey
- ♦ 1/2 ounce lemon juice
- ♦ 1/2 ounce orange juice
- ♦ 2 teaspoons **grenadine**
- ♦ Garnish: 2 speared cherries

Steps

1. Add all ingredients to a shaker with ice and shake until well-chilled.
2. Strain into a chilled cocktail glass.
3. Garnish with 2 speared cherries.

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