

Italian Spirits from Aperitivo to Digestivo

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Just like coffee and wine are an important part of the Italian daily ritual, so too are spirits. Categorized as aperitivi and digestivi, Italian cocktails and alcoholic beverages are enjoyed as a way to round out each meal and aid in proper digestion.

APERITIVI

An aperitivo, or "aperitif," is an alcoholic drink meant to be enjoyed before your meal in order to stimulate your appetite. In fact, the word is derived from aperire, which means "to open" in Italian. In Italy, an aperitivo is almost always enjoyed with small savory bites and nibbles, such as salumi, cheese, olives, or focaccia.

Below are some of our most beloved aperitifs, perfect for enjoying on their own or mixed in cocktails.

Aperol



Aperol was born in Padova in Italy's northern Veneto, a region renowned for its spritz cocktails. A perfect infusion of bitter and sweet oranges, Aperol's balanced flavor makes it a great aperitivo.

How to drink: The most classic way to use Aperol is in a spritz, but you can also create a Negroni using a dry vermouth or enjoy it with club soda and a lemon twist.

Bianco Borgogno Vermouth

Hailing from Barolo, Piemonte, this sweet white vermouth is made with a base of Cortese wine and an infusion of 37 herbs and plants. It boasts citrusy notes of orange, lemon, and grapefruit.

How to Drink: This refreshing drink is ideal as an aperitivo or a base for cocktails. It also pairs well with chocolate.

Malfy Gin

Distilled in the historic Torino Distillati just outside of Torino (Eataly's birthplace!), Malfy Gin is made with the best quality wild juniper berries grown across Italy.

How to Drink: This versatile spirit is a key ingredient in many Italian classics, like the Negroni and Italian Martini.

Ramazzotti Aperitivo Rosato

Hailing from Milano, Ramazzotti has been producing Italian aperitivi and digestivi since 1815. This Aperitivo Rosato is delightfully floral and fresh. It boasts seductive notes of hibiscus and orange blossoms alongside hints of basil.

How to Drink: We suggest mixing it with Prosecco, ice, and garnish of fresh basil leaves for a light and refreshing summer cocktail.

DIGESTIVI

A digestivo, or "digestif," is meant to be enjoyed after dinner to help you digest. This category of Italian spirits includes what is known as amari, or "bitters – alcoholic infusions of medicinal herbs, spices, roots, barks, flowers, berries, and citrus peels. Most Italians enjoy digestivi on their own, in poured in small shots and sipped slowly, but they also make great cocktail additions.

Check out some of our favorite Italian digestivi below!

Amaro Montenegro

Born in Bologna, Amaro Montenegro is made from a secret blend of 40 botanicals. It's a dark amaro that is initially sweet. As you sip, it turns slightly bitter with notes of orange peel, cherry, and rose petal.

How to drink: Enjoy straight or on the rocks as a digestivo, or try a spin on your favorite citrus-based cocktail, like a Paloma or French 75.

Braulio

Braulio comes from the Alps, specifically a city called Bormio in Lombardia. This true Alpine-style amaro is made with over 20 mountain herbs and botanicals and has forest, piney, and floral notes.

How to Drink: Typically served on its own or with a splash of soda as a digestivo, this amaro makes a great conclusion to a satisfying meal.

Fernet-Branca



A world-renowned favorite from Milano, this traditional digestivo is made from a secret mix of herbs, including myrrh, saffron, and chamomile.

How to Drink: Enjoy this herbaceous spirit on the rocks as an after-dinner drink, or mix it in a vintage cocktail, like a Hanky Panky or Toronto.

To learn more, then don't miss Spirits of Eataly from June 1 to 30, 2019. This month-long celebration will feature some of the finest Italian spirits through cocktails in our restaurants and bars, plus bottles in our wine shops.

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