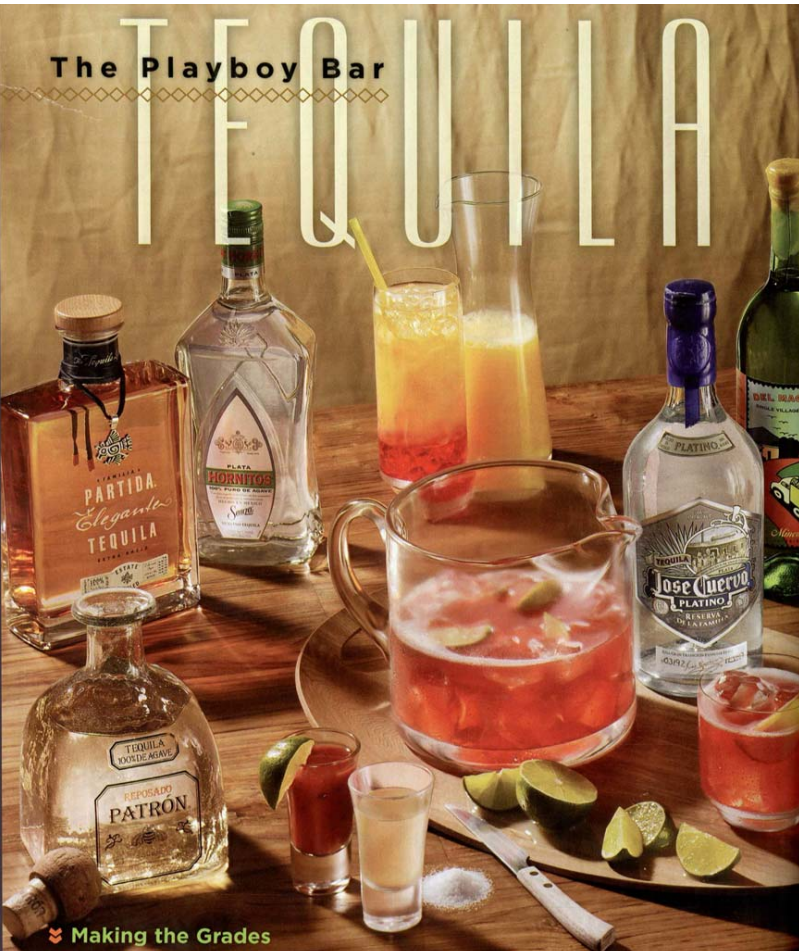


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PLAYBOY



The Playboy Bar TEQUILA

Making the Grades

Blanco
 Blanco tequila is aged in oak barrels for less than 30 days. It offers pure distilled agave flavor, earthy and sweet. Cuervo's Platino (\$60) or Sauza's Hornitos Plata (\$30) works in any tequila cocktail, or just put 'em over rocks with lime.

Reposado
 A reposado (literally "rested") is aged two to 12 months in charred oak barrels and is mellower than a blanco. No need for a mixer. We like Patrón Reposado (\$50) on ice or with a sangrita chaser (see recipe opposite page).

Añejo
 Aged for at least 12 months, an añejo ("aged") is the richest and darkest of tequilas, built for sipping like cognac. Flavors and prices vary like single-malt scotches'. We'll take a bottle of Partida Elegante Extra Añejo (\$350).

PHOTOGRAPHY BY JAMES SAMBOURNO

'One tequila,
 two tequila,
 three tequila,
 floor.'

—George Carlin

The Juice on the Juice

Tequila is the bar's wild child. Beautiful but troubled, it has a bad rap and is utterly misunderstood. It's made from a cactus-like plant that resembles the top of a pineapple, only it grows to more than eight feet high, primarily in the sunbaked highlands of Jalisco in central Mexico. Millennia ago the Aztecs made a ceremonial drink called pulque from the plant. When the Spanish looted the place in the 16th century, they brought pot stills and turned pulque into North America's first indigenous liquor. Tequila earned its wild reputation early on, making soldiers trigger-happy and loosening chaste women's legs. The Europeans named the plant from which it's made *agave* ("illustrious" in Latin). Today a town called Tequila sits in the heart of Jalisco and is dotted with old distilleries named after their founders: Cuervo, Sauza, Patrón.... Two rules of thumb when drinking tequila: Make sure the bottle is labeled 100 PERCENT AGAVE (by law it can be 49 percent flavored grain alcohol—ouch), and leave your six-shooter at home.

For Him

Reposado With Sangrita
 Sip tequila in a Mexican home and chances are your host will serve sangrita. It's a ritual: a shot of booze next to a shot of sangrita. Slip slowly—what's the hurry? Sangrita recipe courtesy of Moisés Guindi, co-owner of the Milagro Tequila distillery. Makes six shots.

- 8 oz. tomato juice
 - 1 oz. orange juice
 - 1 oz. grapefruit juice
 - 1 oz. lime juice
 - 4 to 6 drops Tabasco sauce
- Mix all ingredients, chill, then serve tequila and sangrita in separate shot glasses.

For Her

Tequila Sunrise
 A never-fail cocktail at any time of day.
 •3 oz. blanco tequila
 •3 oz. orange juice
 •Splash of grenadine
 Loosely layer orange juice over tequila in an ice-filled Collins glass, then pour grenadine over the top.

For the Party

Pitchers of Pomegranate Margaritas
 Recipe adapted from Rosa Mexicano's. Makes one pitcher.
 •12 oz. blanco tequila
 •3 oz. Triple Sec
 •6 oz. lime juice
 •6 tablespoons fresh pomegranate juice
 •36 to 40 ice cubes
 Mix all ingredients in a pitcher and stir well. Garnish glasses with lime wheel or wedge.

» The Worm Debunked

You'll never find a worm in a bottle of tequila, but you may find one in a bottle of mescal. The "worm" is usually the larva of the moth *Hypopta agavis*, found around the root of the agave plant. Some say it wards off evil spirits. Truth is, it's a marketing gimmick aimed at people foolish enough to eat moth larvae.

» The Ultimate Body Shot

A pile of salt between her breasts, her belly button filled with tequila, a lime wedge in her mouth. Have at it.

Mescal Versus Tequila

Mescal is made from roasted agave hearts; tequila is from steamed agave. Mescal is distilled once, tequila twice. Though it has a sketchy reputation, mescal can be great. We like anything from Del Maguey.

» On Cheap Tequila

The whole salt-tequila-lime shooter ritual works fine if you're drinking cheap swill. In such circumstances—sometimes, we admit, unavoidable—we prefer the prairie fire: one shot of tequila with three drops of Tabasco at the bottom. If you need it, pour a Mylanta chaser.