

Sunset Margarita – Comfort du Jour

I created this drink from memory after a getaway weekend to Asheville, North Carolina. I was intrigued by the descriptions (and the flavors) of the restaurant's specialty margaritas. This one was called "1800 Sunset," and the highlight—besides the 1800 reposado tequila that is the star spirit—was the Grand Marnier float and something the menu called a "raspberry sinker." I put my own spin on it at home, of course, adding pineapple juice and a jalapeno-spiked simple syrup. It is margarita perfection. 😊

This drink is prettiest in a clear glass that is wider at the top than the bottom. Make up to two drinks at a time in your shaker.

INGREDIENTS, PER COCKTAIL

2.0 oz. 1800 reposado tequila
1.0 oz. pineapple liqueur
0.5 oz. jalapeno-infused simple syrup (recipe below)
Juice of 1/2 lime, plus a piece of lime for rimming the glass
0.5 oz. Chambord raspberry liqueur (for sinker)
0.25 oz. Grand Marnier (for floater)
1 tablespoon pink sea salt (for rimming the glass)

INSTRUCTIONS

Prepare the glasses first by swiping a lime wedge around the rim. Pour a couple of spoonsful of pink sea salt onto a paper towel. Roll only the outside of the glass on the salted towel, so that the rim is evenly salted, but the salt will not fall into the cocktail. Place the glasses in the freezer for at least 10 minutes.

Slice thin wheels of fresh lime, one for each drink. Place them on a paper towel to absorb excess juice and sprinkle them lightly with sea salt, if desired. Measure out the Grand Marnier into a shot glass or small measuring cup. This will aid in "floating" the liqueur over the drink without overdoing it.

Here comes the "sinker" part of the recipe, and you may be surprised how easy it is. Remove the glasses from the freezer and measure the Chambord into the bottom of the glass. Add several ice cubes (or one giant one) to the glass so the Chambord cools down while you shake the rest of the drink together.

In a cocktail shaker, combine tequila, pineapple juice, jalapeno syrup and lime juice over one cup of ice cubes. Shake about 20 seconds to blend the ingredients. Strain the cocktail over the ice in the glass, pouring slowly to avoid disturbing the raspberry sinker.

Finally, turn a bar spoon or teaspoon upside-down over the drink, resting the tip of it on one of the ice cubes. Pour the Grand Marnier over the top of the drink—easy does it! Garnish the drink with a lime wheel and enjoy!

JALAPENO-INFUSED SIMPLE SYRUP

1/2 cup filtered water
1/2 cup cane sugar
1/2 red jalapeno, thinly sliced (seeds included, if you dare)

Boil water, stir in sugar until dissolved. Add jalapeno slices and steep until cool. Strain and refrigerate.