

Cocktail Recipes for Pairing Dinner at Bacco, New Orleans, USA

While restaurants frequently have wine pairing dinners, cocktail pairing dinners are rather a new concept. For a ***Spirited Dinner*** at ***Bacco*** in ***New Orleans, Louisiana***, as part of ***Tales of the Cocktail 2009***, ***Debra C. Argen*** and ***Edward F. Nesta*** aka ***The Spirited Travelers*** of ***Luxury Experience Company*** threw caution to the wind to create creative cocktails with ingredients that included Creole mustard, cucumbers, and dill simple syrup to pair with ***Executive Chef Chris Montero's*** exciting menu.

People often ask us how we pair cocktails with cuisine; our answer is that we approach cocktail pairing the way that a sommelier would approach a wine pairing. When you pair wine, you want to complement the course by selecting a wine that has similar components or flavors that will enhance the course, which is also true for pairing cocktails.



Bar Chefs Debra Argen and Edward Nesta

When we received Executive Chef Chris Montero's menu in February 2009 for the Spirited Dinner at Bacco that would be held on July 9, 2009, we began to think about the ingredients that he used in each of his recipes and then we began thinking about the ingredients that we would use in the cocktails. We even made Chef Chris' recipes to sample with the cocktails to see how they would pair together, and then how the flow of the cocktails would pair over the course of the evening.

Although the cocktails that we created for the Spirited Dinner at Bacco were designed to accompany food, with savory cocktails on the rise, they are also perfect to drink by themselves.

Bacco Spirited Dinner and Cocktail Menu 2009

By Executive Chef Chris Montero of Bacco

and

Guest Bar Chefs Debra C. Argen and Edward F. Nesta of

Luxury Experience

Welcome Cocktail

Luxury Experience's Spirit of Summer

(Prosecco, Casoni Limoncello, Fresh Lemon Juice,

Fee Brothers Pomegranate Cordial Syrup, Lemon Strip Garnish)

1
st
Course

**Panko Crusted Boudin and Seared Scallop with
Wheat Beer Mustard and Louisiana Popcorn Rice Cake**

Paired with
Luxury Experience's Smoke and Mirrors Cocktail
(Scorpion Mezcal 1-year old, Lime Juice, Partida Agave Nectar,
Fee Brothers Whiskey Barrel Aged Bitters Limited Edition 2008,
Creole Mustard, and Lime Wheel Garnish)

2
nd
Course

**Creole Tomatoes, Fresh Basil and Verbena Oil with
Toasted Pinenuts and Ryals Farm Goat Cheese**

Paired with
Luxury Experience's Green with Envy Cocktail
(Plymouth Gin, Cucumber Juice, Dill Simple Syrup,
Sliced Cucumber Curl Garnish)

Palate Cleanser

Luxury Experience's Grapefruit and St. Germaine Sorbet
(Grapefruit Zest, Grapefruit Juice, Sugar, Water,
St. Germaine, Fee Brothers Grapefruit Bitters)

3
rd
Course

**Bulgogi Wagu Hanger Steak with Kim Chee and
Herbed Polenta Cake**

Paired with
Luxury Experience's Modern Fashion Cocktail
(Bulleit Bourbon, Sweet Vermouth, Club Soda,
Fee Brothers West Indian Orange Bitters,
Stemmed Cherry Garnish)

4
th
Course

**Louisiana
Berry Semifreddo Crisp**

Paired with

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Luxury Experience's Rhythm and Blues Cocktail

(St. Germaine, Leblon Cacha
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a,

Fee Brothers Blueberry Cordial Syrup,

Half and Half, Blueberries, and Blueberries Garnish)

Bacco Spirited Dinner Cocktail Recipes

For the Welcome Cocktail, we wanted a celebratory cocktail that would set the tone for the dinner and awaken the senses. We created Luxury Experience's Spirit of Summer using Prosecco, Casoni Limoncello, Fresh Lemon Juice, Fee Brothers Pomegranate Cordial Syrup, and a long spiral lemon peel for the garnish. The result was a cocktail with a refreshing lemony nose that was the color of a summer sunset and was low in alcohol to begin the evening.



Welcome Cocktail - Luxury Experience's Spirit of Summer

Yield:1 Cocktail

Glass Used:Champagne Glass

3.5

Ounces

Prosecco

0.5

Ounce

Casoni Limoncello

0.25

Ounce

Fresh Lemon Juice

0.25

Ounce

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Fee Brothers Pomegranate Cordial Syrup

Long strip of Lemon Peel as garnish inside glass

Method: Chill champagne glass and then add Prosecco, Casoni Limoncello, fresh lemon juice, and Fee Brothers Pomegranate Cordial Syrup. Twist a long lemon peel and place inside the glass as garnish.

For the first course of Panko Crusted Boudin and Seared Scallop with Wheat Beer Mustard and Louisiana Popcorn Rice Cake we created **Luxury Experience's Smoke and Mirrors** made with Scorpion Mezcal 1-year old, Fresh Lime Juice, Partida Agave Nectar, Creole Mustard, Fee Brothers Whiskey Barrel Aged Bitters Limited Edition 2008, and garnished with a lime wheel.

Boudin is a Creole sausage with a slightly smoky and spicy flavor, which is why we used Scorpion Mezcal as it has similar smoky notes, used the Creole mustard to mirror the mustard used, and added lime juice, agave nectar, and Fee Brothers Whiskey Barrel Aged Bitters to round out the flavors and bring balance to the cocktail.



First Course - Luxury Experience's Smoke and Mirrors

Yield: 1 Cocktail

Glass Used: Rocks Glass

2.0

Ounce

Scorpion Mezcal Añejo One Year

0.75

Ounce

Fresh Lime Juice

1

Teaspoon

Partida Agave Nectar

1/8

Teaspoon

Creole Mustard

1

Dash

Fee Brothers Whiskey Barrel Aged Bitters Limited Edition 2008

Lime Wheel for garnish

Method: Add all ingredients to a large mixing glass, add 4 ice cubes. Shake to combine and strain over fresh ice into a rocks glass. Garnish with a lime wheel.

For the second course of Creole Tomatoes, Fresh Basil and Verbena Oil with Toasted Pinenuts and Ryals Farm Goat Cheese, we created **Luxury Experience's Green with Envy** made with Plymouth Gin, Cucumber Juice, Dill Simple Syrup, and garnished with a cucumber curl.

For this course, we wanted to contrast flavors with complementary ingredients, and made the cocktail with gin, extra dry vermouth, fresh lime juice, and cucumbers, which are often paired with tomatoes. The dill simple syrup adds great flavor to the cocktail and incidentally, the herb dill signifies lust, which perhaps is why the cocktail was such a huge success at the dinner.



Second Course - Luxury Experience's Green with Envy

Yield:1 Cocktail

Glass Used:Martini Glass

1.0

Ounce

Tiny, diced cucumber (fill a 1-ounce jigger with diced cucumber)

0.5

Ounce

Dill Simple Syrup (housemade, add fresh dill to simple syrup and steep for a few hours at room temperature, then store in refrigerator)

0.5

Ounce

Fresh lime juice

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2.0

Ounces

Plymouth Gin

0.5

Ounce

Extra Dry Vermouth

Cucumber Strip for garnish

Method: In a blender, process all ingredients until cucumber is liquefied; add 4 ice cubes, blend and strain into chilled martini glass. Garnish with thin cucumber curl on a skewer.

When you are mixing different spirits over the course of an evening, it is always nice to serve a palate cleanser, and since this was a Spirited Dinner, there is alcohol in **Luxury Experience's Grapefruit and St. Germaine Sorbet**. The grapefruit used in this recipe combines beautifully with the St. Germaine liqueur for an elegant interlude or to serve as a dessert with accompanying berries.



Palate Cleanser - Luxury Experience's Grapefruit and St. Germaine Sorbet

Glass Used: Demitasse or small liqueur glass

1

Grapefruit, remove zest with micro-plane

0.25

Cup

Sugar

6

Ounces

Water

0.25

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Cup

Sugar

1

Ounce

Grapefruit Juice, freshly squeezed

9

Ounces

Water

4

Ounces

St. Germaine

1

Teaspoon

Fee Brothers Grapefruit Bitters

Candied Grapefruit Strips for garnish

Method: In a blender, pulverize the grapefruit zest and ¼ cup sugar until zest is very fine (will take around 3 minutes). Add 6 ounces water and liquefy the zest and sugar mixture. Strain mixture through a fine sieve into a saucepan, and discard the zest.

Add ¼ cup sugar to the mixture and simmer for 3 minutes to completely dissolve the sugar. Add 1-ounce grapefruit juice and 9 ounces of water and let mixture cool over ice water bath. When cool, add the St. Germain and bitters, and process in an ice cream maker. Can be made several days or a week in advance. Serve a small scoop of sorbet in a demitasse or small liqueur glass, add a dash of St. Germain, and garnish with candied housemade grapefruit strips.

*Alternative method: Place mixture in an airtight container and freeze until mixture is firm (will take several hours), remove from container and process in blender until mixture is light and fluffy. Return to container and freeze overnight. Can be made several days or a week in advance. Serve a small scoop of sorbet in a demitasse or small liqueur glass, add a dash of St. Germain, and garnish with candied housemade grapefruit strips.

For the third course of Bulgogi Wagu Hanger Steak with Kim Chee and Herbed Polenta Cake we created **Luxury Experience's Modern Fashion** using Bulleit Bourbon, Sweet Vermouth, Club Soda, Fee Brothers West Indian Orange Bitters, and garnished it with a stemmed maraschino cherry. The Bulleit Bourbon with its rich, spicy notes perfectly complemented the beef and kim chee course.



Third Course - Luxury Experience's Modern Fashion

Yield: 1 Cocktail

Glass Used: Rocks Glass

1.5

Ounces

Bulleit Bourbon

0.5

Ounce

Sweet Vermouth

2

Ounces

Club Soda

2

Dashes

Fee Brothers West Indian Orange Bitters

Method: In a mixing glass, stir all ingredients in a mixing glass with ice, strain into rocks glass with fresh ice. Garnish with a stemmed maraschino cherry.

For the dessert course of Louisiana Berry Semifreddo Crisp, we had fun with the name, **Luxury Experience's Rhythm and Blues**, which gives a nod to the New Orleans music scene, as well as the blueberries used in the recipe. Luxury Experience's Rhythm and Blues is made with St. Germaine, Leblon Cachaça, Fee Brothers Blueberry Cordial Syrup, Half and Half, Blueberries, and is garnished with fresh blueberries.



Fourth Course - Luxury Experience's Rhythm and Blues Cocktail

Yield: 1 Cocktail

Glass Used: Martini Glass

10

Blueberries

1.0

Ounce

St. Germain

1.0

Ounce

Leblon Cachaça

0.5

Ounce

Fee Brothers Blueberry Cordial Syrup

1.5

Ounces

Half & Half (or light cream)

4

Ice Cubes

Blueberries for garnish

Method: Chill Martini glass and set aside. Add all ingredients in a blender (except extra blueberries for garnish) and blend until smooth. Pour into chilled Martini glass and garnish with blueberries on a skewer laid on the top of the glass.

Remember that when you are pairing cocktails with a tasting menu, have some fun, let your imagination

Created by: Debra C. Argen and Edward F. Nesta

and your palate go wild; however, always keep in mind that the end result is that the recipes have to work together.

Bacco's restaurant focus is a tantalizing fusion of Creole and Italian cuisine, and is open for lunch daily from 11:30 am until 2:30 pm, and for dinner Sunday through Thursday from 6:00 pm until 9:30 pm, and on Friday and Saturday from 6:00 pm until 10:00 pm.

Read more about **Bacco** in the **Restaurants** section and in **Chefs' Recipes** where **Executive Chef Chris Montero** shares his delicious recipes for Panko Crusted Boudin and Seared Scallop with Wheat Beer Mustard and Louisiana Popcorn Rice Cake; Bulgogi Wagu Hanger Steak with Kim Chee and Herbed Polenta Cake; and Louisiana Berry Semifreddo Crisp, from the Spirited Dinner.

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Read about **Tales of the Cocktail** in the **Liquor Cabinet** section.



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