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tastes: It's time for martinis

Silandara Bartlett

In the tumbler gently shake; splash of schnapps, and shot of vodka...

The martini: It's a potion of warmth that fights the nip in the air that tells you winter's on its way and one that even the witches of *Macbeth* might appreciate.

Martinis are most popular in the fall, says Demetrio Cavatassi, bartender and owner of Tapas 177, 177 St. Paul St.

"You drink more martinis this time of year than in the summertime," he says.

Popular martinis also change with the seasons.

Light and fruity varieties, such as Champagne and Strawberries, are the rage in the summer.

In the fall, martinis have names like Pumpkin Pie, Frosted Spice, Hot Apple Cider and Gingerbread. There also is an Eggnog martini — really just a spiked eggnog mix served in a martini glass.

They bring an aroma of spice to the nose and a welcome warmth to the belly.

And there are lots of them.

"For almost every different kind of liquor that's out there, there's a different kind of martini," says Eric Kelly, a bartender at Bar Fly, 359 East Ave.

This explosion in drink options hails a new era of martinis, says Glenda Jimenez, a bartender at LoLa Bistro, 630 Monroe Ave. Today's martinis — a retro flashback to the 1960s — have more liquor and more flavor, she says.

Gone are the martini's classic days of gin, vermouth with an olive or a twist. The new wave of martinis are fruity, spicy, taste sensations.

"For a lot of people, liquor is an acquired taste," Jimenez, 34, says. And so drinks such as the Cosmopolitan — really a margarita made with vodka instead of tequila — have become classified as a martini.

Part of the thrill of having a martini is



LISA HUGHES

Eric Kelly, 24, mixes a martini at Bar Fly on East Avenue.



LISA HUGHES

LoLa Bistro repared this Pumpkin Pie martini. (See recipe at right.)



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watching the bartender make your drink.

First the glass is chilled. Then the shots are poured into an ice-filled tumbler, chilled without bruising the booze and drained into the martini glass.

So who drinks these new brews?

Believed to have originated in the 1870s, martinis have long been the drink of choice for the sophisticated. From Winston Churchill and Ernest Hemingway to James Bond and his classic order of “shaken, not stirred,” the concoction of the classy has lured the rest of us to at least try to appear that way.

“Oftentimes it's people who aren't out as much during the summer who inquire about the new, different martinis because they've been out of the loop,” Cavatassi, 37, says. He also says women seem to be a little more open to experiment with them than men.

For the most part, the martini's flexibility of form works in its favor. Unlike most mixed drinks that stay steadfast in their simplicity, martinis are “unique in their own way. They cater to whatever people's tastes are,” says Kelly, 24.

But when some martini recipes swerve so far afield from the original, you might wonder, ‘What's the difference between a martini and a froufrou girly drink?’

It's all in the glass.



Making martinis

To make martinis, you'll need a drink tumbler, a strainer, ice, a martini glass and the drink ingredients:

1. Fill martini glass with ice and water to chill it while you're making the drink.
2. Fill the tumbler with ice and pour in drink ingredients.
3. Chill the martini by shaking gently about eight times.
4. Drain it into the martini glass.
5. Garnish, if desired.

Pumpkin Pie martini

— *LoLa Bistro*, 271-0320

1 1/2 oz. Pumpkin Smash Liqueur

1 oz. vodka

1/2 oz. Goldschlager Cinnamon Schnapps Liqueur

Splash of cream

Frosted Spice martini



LISA HUGHES

This Frosted Spice martini is a Bar Fly creation. (See recipe at right.)



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— *Bar Fly*, 232-5630

1 oz. Skyy Spiced Vodka

1 oz. Absolut Vanilla Vodka

Splash Baileys Irish Cream

Splash Kahlua

Splash Goldschlager Cinnamon Schnapps Liqueur



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