

EXCLUSIVE  
AND

# Drinks Classic Cocktails

NOSTALGIC COCKTAILS CREATE A LASTING IMPRESSION THAT GOES BEYOND HAPPY HOUR.

By Brenda Silva

**FACT:** The classics never go out of style, and are never considered gauche when ordered or purchased. Such an assertion is true whether the classic is Shakespeare or Chanel, Bentley or Botticelli. The same applies to classic cocktails, the latest trend in the media, as well as in some of the finest restaurants and bars around the world.

As the spirits industry continues to develop new products and flavors, prime time advertisements are evidencing a sense of classicism. Reminiscent of when cocktail hour required suit coats, current commercials feature an air of sophistication via Hugh Hefner (Stolichnaya vodka), four dapper-dressed friends playing cards (Ketel One vodka), and "the most interesting man in the world" (Dos Equis beer), who reminds viewers to "stay thirsty, my friends."

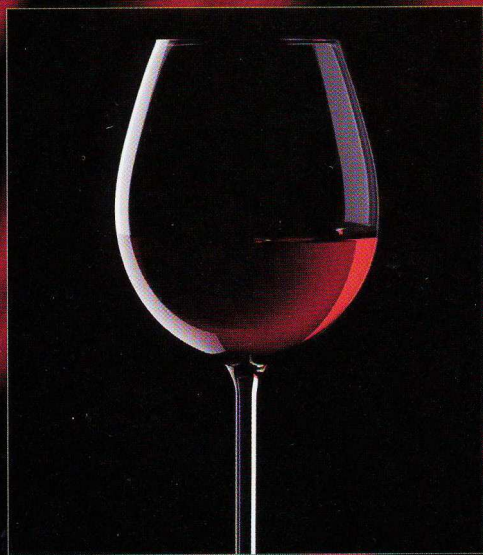


The classics are also revisited with Carrie and friends in "Sex and the City," where a love of Cosmopolitans is only equaled by the gentlemen of "Mad Men," in which a 1960's-era happy hour includes anything from Manhattans to Martinis. However, as nostalgic as the latest media offerings may be, when considering classic drinks accompanied by the label of "exclusive," the list is much shorter, and much more expensive.

One of the best-known brands is Dom Perignon, who's Vintage 2000 is the focus of the "Seven Sensualities" private food and wine tasting – available for up to 12 people in a private home, art gallery, yacht, or other intimate space. The dinner is typically served on special china designed by Dom Perignon, and is only used for this event. During the course of the evening, a wine specialist personally introduces each champagne and dish, and explains each pairing. Typically, for those who attend, cost is not an issue.

Another exclusive offering from France is from the Chateau Lafite Rothschild estate, where vintages are some of the most expensive wines in the world. However, if you can afford it, this wine is something definitely worthy of a financial consideration. Statistics show as recently as 2009, investors saw a return on their investment of over 100 percent.

If cognac is more your style, there is Louis XIII de Remy Martin, blended from Eaux-de-vie (a colorless, fruit brandy) and offered in bottles costing up to \$3,000 each. Among flavored cognacs,



Grand Marnier with its bitter orange subtlety consistently ranks high in taste, even if its modest cost was historically under \$300 per bottle for special editions. The similarly orange-flavored Cointreau liqueur has also developed a reputation for its premium flavor in a variety of cocktails, along with its heightened 40% alcohol content.

If you fancy something a bit more unique, perhaps a trip to Bar Hemingway in the Paris Ritz is in order. Once there, the Ritz Side Car – made with the 1830 Ritz Reserve store of cognac – will set you back a mere \$515. For those with a bit more to gamble, plan a visit to Foxwoods Resort Casino in Connecticut, where a \$3,000 Sapphire Martini is presented with a garnish of a sterling-silver pick holding a pair of platinum-mounted, diamond and sapphire earrings. No olive necessary.

When it comes to classic cocktails, taste and budget always vary by individual, with most of us unable to afford exclusive cocktails. However, no matter whether you are drinking a Martini that costs three dollars or \$3,000, it's more about sharing the experience of being with good friends or family, something else that never goes out of style.

