

# Main squeeze

Carpaccio to cocktails, Italy's limoncello is both mixer & maestro

By **JULIE BESONEN**

**L**et's face it: The best way to enjoy limoncello is straight and chilled after a memorable meal in an outdoor trattoria in Italy when you don't want the evening to end. But if you haven't been able to make it to Italy this year, there is no reason to deny yourself the pleasure of imagining a piazza in Sorrento while drinking this fun, aromatic, sunny yellow liqueur.

Lemon trees flourish along the hillsides of the Amalfi Coast and records show that since the 17th century, when life dealt Italians lemons, they made limoncello. Not until 1995, however, was limoncello sold commercially instead of existing solely as a home or restaurant brew.

Limoncello is thicker, richer and definitely more potent



ROBERT SABO

than lemonade. So many travelers have enjoyed this sweet *digestivo* in Italy — but it is rapidly becoming more in demand in the States. A tangy, intense brand crafted in Trieste — Limoncé by Stock (\$18.99 for a liter) — has recently become available here.

Buying a bottle is easy, but making it at home isn't that difficult, as long as you have a week or two for the fermentation process. There are thousands of variations, but the ingredients are generally organic lemon peels, neutral alcohol like vodka, water and sugar. Try it mixed with Champagne, splashed in pasta, atop desserts like panna cotta, or drizzled over ice cream and berries. The following recipes require a few more specifics. You'll see that sweet and tart really do go together.



MINTY FRESH: Southern Twist



READY TO RUM-BLE: Sicilian Sunset



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JUICED UP: Julie Reiner's Limonata

## LIMONATA

Created by Julie Reiner, Flatiron Lounge

**2 ounces Belvedere Citrus vodka or Absolut Citron**

**1/2 ounce Limoncé Limoncello**

**1 ounce fresh lemon juice**

**3/4 ounce simple syrup**

Add ingredients sequentially into a mixing glass with ice. Shake vigorously and strain into a martini glass. Garnish with fresh lemon and/or a lemon twist.

## SOUTHERN TWIST

By Julie Reiner

**1/2 ounce mint simple syrup**

**1/2 ounce Limoncé Limoncello**

**1 1/2 ounces Plymouth gin**

**1/2 ounce fresh lemon juice**

**1/2 ounce fresh grapefruit juice**

Muddle a few sprigs of fresh mint in a mixing glass. Shake liquid ingredients with

ice and strain over fresh ice into a highball glass. Garnish with a sprig of mint.

## SICILIAN SUNSET

By Julie Reiner

**3 ounces Bacardi Limon**

**1/2 ounce Limoncé Limoncello**

**1 ounce cranberry juice**

**1/2 ounce fresh lemon juice**

Shake with ice and strain into a martini glass. Garnish with a lemon slice or twist.

## WILD STRIPED SEA BASS CARPACCIO WITH LIMONCELLO VINAIGRETTE

Serves 4

Created by Executive Chef Michael White, Fiamma Osteria

FOR VINAIGRETTE:

**6 ounces extra-virgin olive oil**

**1 lemon, juiced**

**3 tablespoons limoncello**

**2 sprigs fresh thyme, minced**  
**Salt and pepper to taste**

FOR CARPACCIO:

**12 ounces wild striped sea bass, thinly sliced**

**Salt and pepper to taste**

**2 beefsteak tomatoes, peeled, seeded and diced**

**1/4 cup black Ligurian olives, pitted and chopped**

**1 bulb fennel, thinly sliced**

**4 ounces arugula**

For the vinaigrette, combine all ingredients in a bowl and whisk until emulsified. Reserve.

Distribute sea bass equally among four plates. Season the carpaccio with salt and pepper. Brush on half the vinaigrette. Place the tomatoes, black olives, fennel and arugula into a bowl and toss with the remaining vinaigrette. Place a round handful of this salad atop each carpaccio and serve.