

MAI APHRODITE

Created by Vasos Manoli of Risto La Piazza in Paphos, Cyprus, this combination of crisp fruit, warming brandy and spicy bitters evokes Manoli's exotic, sun-kissed island...reputed to be the birthplace of Aphrodite.



INGREDIENTS:

1½ ounces Commandaria
1 ounce Cyprus brandy
1 ounce fresh lime juice
1 ounce fresh grapefruit juice
½ ounce fresh orange juice
2 teaspoons cane sugar
2 drops Angostura bitters
Fresh pineapple slices, for garnish
Maraschino cherry, for garnish
Fresh mint sprig, for garnish

Mix all ingredients in Boston shaker with crushed ice.

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MIXOLOGIST OF THE MONTH



VASOS MANOLI

General Manager, Head Sommelier,
Risto La Piazza

As general manager and head sommelier at Risto La Piazza in the beach resort town of Paphos, Cyprus, Vasos Manoli spends a lot of time behind the bar. The Mai Aphrodite (left) is one of the many inspired creations on his cocktail list, which spans both traditional and trendsetting realms.

Manoli's strength as a mixologist is influenced by his travels throughout Greece, France, Spain, Italy, and Chile, whose distinctive flavors are found in many of his recipes. Though creative, he's emphatic about technique and order, following James Bond's adage that martinis should be shaken, not stirred. "Cocktails should be well planned and not thoughtlessly thrown together," he says, likening crafting well-balanced cocktails to creating architecture and describing the cocktail as "somewhere on the frontier between the useful arts and the fine arts."

Manoli sees a renaissance occurring in the Cypriot cocktail culture—a welcome change in a bar scene where "things remained static for too long, with old fashioned cocktails prevailing." He says the growing interest in Cypriot and Mediterranean cuisine is a driving force in the dynamic cocktail culture on the island as vacationers and locals evolve their palates and demand more. But don't expect Manoli to wax too poetic about the business of mixing spirits—he still keeps a business balance in his cocktail program. "Cocktail making is a practical matter that confers an obligation to entertain," the manager explains. "That said, I like to surprise my customers, spice up the atmosphere, and make their time at my bar a unique and memorable experience."

—MIKE DeSIMONE AND JEFF JENSSEN