

“Tom & Jerry” Tutorial - 12.15.20

A Hot, Comforting, Old-World Delight Made With
Milk, Raw Eggs, Rum, Cognac & Christmas Spices, and lots of love

By Audrey Saunders

I've been making Tom & Jerry's for over 20yrs now- when I worked with Dale DeGroff at Blackbird back in 1999, he listed the Tom & Jerry on our menu that Christmas. He placed a beautiful porcelain bowl on the back bar, and I can distinctly remember asking him about what a Tom & Jerry was. The rest is history. I've served it at every bar I've managed ever since then.

TIPS:

Everyone is so worried about messing the recipe up, whipping the egg whites just so, maintaining the loft of the batter, adding cream of tartar to help stabilize it, etc. *Forget the cream of tartar- what I've come to discover is that the batter doesn't need to be stable at all—it turns out the batter is infinitely easier to work with once it collapses 😊*

When T&J batter is freshly made, sugar & spices are suspended throughout the batter... *but only for a fairly short period of time.* Then gravity kicks in, and the sugar & spices sink to the bottom. At that point, you then need to whisk up the sugar & spices that have settled to the bottom after the batter has been prepared— **the most labor intensive part of this drink is that the batter pretty much needs to be whisked for almost every, single drink if you want to do it right.** There is so much fluffy volume in a fresh batch of batter, and unless you've got an extra-long handle on your whisk to be able to dive down to the bottom of the container with, or are storing the batter in a fairly large, widespread container where the depth of the overall batter is shallow (which is not practical in service), it's a messy pain to have to cut through the depth of the batter with a standard-length whisk handle in order to whip everything back together again.

But once this batter deflates, it makes everything so much easier to whisk back up again in order to reincorporate the sugar & spices. Another enlightening point is that even in its deflated state, the batter comes back to life even after 24 hours and fluffs up again once you prepare an individual drink. Think about fluffy pancakes from dense pancake batter, so much easier to dole out onto the griddle because there's no aeration in the batter-- it's pretty much the exact same premise here. I look forward to the collapse of

the batter, because I can see the batter in its actual state, and it makes preparation a breeze. Also, much like a soup or stew, the flavor of the batter is much enhanced after collapsing and resting for a few hours. Another great benefit of allowing the batter to rest is that the sugar loses that distinctive raw "edge". It melds with the other ingredients and all flavors have a chance to come together.

Regarding storage:

I currently utilize mason jars for storage . They are practical in service, they are easily sanitized, they store well in the fridge without taking up much room. **I use a 2 oz (4 tablespoons) ladle to dole it out.**

Here is how quickly you can make a batch of batter: again- it's not about stability, it's more about logistics. Your food processor is your best friend here.

- 2 minutes: Assemble mise en place: food processor, sterile mason jar, spatula, sugar, spices, rum, angostura, vanilla, eggs
- 2 minutes: Crack & separate eggs into 2 separate bowls. Whites need a larger bowl.
- 2.5 minutes: Run egg whites in food processor, then transfer back to bowl. No need to rinse food processor bowl, just leave any residual egg white meringue that's clinging to the bowl there (because why waste it?).
- 1 minute: Dump egg yolks into food processor without any other ingredients and run approximately 1 minute until yolks become thin, runny and pale lemon in color.
- 2.5 minutes: Continue to run eggs yolks and incorporate sugar, spices, rum, vanilla and angostura. Alternate between adding 1/2 cup of sugar at a time, and some of the liquid ingredients.
- Whisk yolk mixture back into egg whites, Xfer to mason jar. Date & refrigerate.

The classic base spirits are rum & brandy. I use cognac in addition to rum, and this combination works well as they are both rich flavors which become harmonic in unison, and meld beautifully together with the batter. I did a lot of tinkering to the recipe- the original does not utilize angostura bitters, vanilla or nutmeg (within the batter, as opposed to acting as garnish). I added the vanilla for a comforting note, in addition to the other spices I added nutmeg into the batter for extra depth & warmth, reduced the sugar in original recipe from 5 lbs down to 2 lbs.

The original recipe also calls for boiling water instead of milk, but the milk provides a more pleasurable and cohesive mouthfeel to the overall structure of the drink.

But my favorite addition to the batter overall was utilizing angostura bitters-- I have always thought of Angostura as the ultimate Christmas bitters and flavor-wise that profile totally delivers. But beyond that, I found that Angostura also dries down the milk on the palate and helps to cut through the fat. It also provides needed structure so the addition makes a big difference- I feel the batter is downright cloying without it.

Batch yield:

This recipe has been scaled down for home use, and will produce a 32 oz batch when freshly made, but will eventually deflate by 8 oz or so. So approx. 24 oz altogether (which translates into 12 drinks utilizing 2 oz of batter each). That said, this recipe is easily scaled up or down if necessary.

About maintaining a sanitary environment:

Where I'm a real stickler is in the handling of the eggs, and maintaining strict sanitary conditions on all levels. I only use organic eggs, and I think that helps to greatly reduce any potential of contamination prior to arrival. Once the eggs arrive in-house, they are dated, and they don't leave the refrigerator until they are just about to be processed. Once the batter is processed, it immediately goes back into the fridge. Batter is never left out, even during service. Once a whisk or a ladle is used, it goes straight into boiling water until it can get sanitized in the dishwasher. I also have designated sheet pans to process T&J's on, which also go into the dishwasher at any given moment.

Safety label- As we are utilizing raw eggs here, it is of the utmost importance to note that eggs should always be refrigerated, the batter should be refrigerated immediately after preparation, and never be allowed to sit out at room temp. Proper refrigerator storage should be no higher than 41 degrees. All cylinders & surface counters utilized for any raw egg batter should be sanitized immediately after use."

More safety: Please note that the consumption of raw eggs can be hazardous.

Audrey's Recipe: TOM & JERRY

For Batter: (no cream of tartar)

- 6 Eggs (yolks & whites separated)
- 1 lb. Sugar (superfine is best, simply pre-process regular sugar in food processor)
- 1 oz. of Anejo Rum
- 3 tbsp (1.5 oz). Vanilla Extract
- 3/4 tsp. Ground cinnamon
- 1/4 tsp. Ground allspice
- 1/4 tsp Ground nutmeg
- 1/8 tsp. Ground cloves
- 2 dashes Angostura Bitters

Method:

- Run egg whites through a food processor until stiff. Transfer to a bowl.
- Run egg yolks until through a food processor until they are thin as water.
- Then add sugar, spices, rum & vanilla to egg yolks (while food processor is running).
- Add egg whites back into egg yolk mixture and whisk together. Store inside a sterilized container in refrigerator.

To Serve:

- Add 2 oz. of batter in a preheated, (10 oz) Irish coffee mug.
- Add 1 oz añejo rum + 1 oz cognac.
- Fill with 6 oz boiling milk, briskly stirring with a short whisk (optimal) or spoon while adding milk,,, so that the two ingredients are beaten together..
- Dust with freshly grated nutmeg.
- Happy Holidays to you & yours !

♥♥♥ ~ Audrey