

EDITORS' PICK

25 Brilliant Variations On The Negroni

Aly Walansky Contributor 

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A Negroni is among the most classic of cocktails. Its build is simple and perfect. That's not to say though that we can't have a bit of fun with that perfection.

"When we talk about the Negroni, I feel that it is important to discuss the build in general. One ounce of gin, one ounce of Campari, and one ounce of sweet vermouth marry to create a Negroni," said Conrad Helms, Beverage Director at [Lazy Betty](#) in Atlanta.

Over the years, the Negroni, originally invented in Florence in the early 1900's, has really cemented itself in cocktail history as one of the most prolific and famous classics. "From the build of an Americano, the Negroni has famously led the way to cocktails such as the Boulevardier and the Old Pal by substituting certain ingredients for other spirits or influences. Bartenders nowadays have exploded the possibilities of what a Negroni can really be through their creativity," said Helms.

Most riffs on a Negroni are going to change the sweet vermouth element first. "Because vermouths have a lower alcohol content, and as a category can be pretty dynamic in presentation and flavor, they can impart a multitude of different characteristics onto the cocktail," said Helms. "I believe in using hand harvested, small

production botanically driven vermouths in this application, so I tend to lean towards Piolo and Max Vermut Woman in Red for a classic swap on a Negroni. Using a Bianco, or even a dry vermouth can be fun as well. I like Bordiga Bianco as a substitute for a lighter, more approachable summer Negroni. The Bianco is less tannic and has a little weighted "butter" element to it, which carries the light stone fruit and herbal tones to the front."

The next element bartenders like to change is the gin component. "Like vermouth, gin is massively dynamic, and has a ton of different subcategories," said Helms. "Using a high proof Navy Strength gin, instead of a London dry style, will massively affect the astringency of the cocktail when there are only three elements. So, playing with the gin makes a big difference. I like to play on the citrus notes that lie within the gin, so something like Land of Muses by Matchbook in New York really plays the part well. Beautiful and elegant, it allows the citrus notes of the cocktail to really come alive, which in a lot of ways is the main flavor action cutting the overall burn of the spirits assembled. In addition, the shochu element in the gin inherently works well with fortified wine, i.e. vermouth," said Helms.

Of course, here comes the hot take. "Most bartenders will say that it isn't technically a Negroni without the introduction of Campari, and that if Campari is subbed out for another Amaro or bitter element, then it can't be considered in the same vein," said Helms, but he shares he disagrees wholeheartedly. "Campari has long been overdue for some seriously good competition, and while it is an absolute staple at any bar (and should be), there are other spirits that serve the purpose well. I personally love the Contratto Bitter. Using beetroot and carrot to achieve the color organically, and joined with 22 other aromatics and roots, this spirit is more complex and a little more giving and malleable than Campari," said Helms.

A Negroni these days are like shoes; you have different ones for different occasions. “In the cooler days of fall and winter, Negronis that have massive bitter tones, and unique driving depth are generally more applicable. Think big, bold, spice-driven gins, and tannic big vermouths for the modifications. Likewise, in the spring and summer, paired with lighter and leaner fare, a more subtle, gentle, approachable Negroni can be achieved with lighter vermouths, and more floral Gins,” said Helms.

So, if you are trying to find your perfect Negroni for whatever the occasion may be, these options offer some great directions to go.

Mezcal Negroni



Mezcal Negroni at Amalfi by Bobby Flay. CAESARS ENTERTAINMENT LAS VEGAS

“Negroni cocktails have become my personal go-to at my favorite swanky bars — especially my place at Caesars Palace, [Amalfi](#),” said celebrity chef Bobby Flay. “I love the classic with gin, and I also like plays on the classic like a Sbagliato which substitutes Prosecco for the gin. I’m also a fan of one of our most popular libations, the Mezcal Negroni, when I’m looking for a smokey accent with my aperitivo.” The Amalfi Mezcal Negroni is made with Del Maguey Mezcal, Cocchi Dopo Teatro, and Cappelletti Aperitivo.

Lazy Betty Negroni



Lazy Betty Negroni at Lazy Betty in Atlanta. LAZY BETTY

At [Lazy Betty](#) in Atlanta, this cocktail is made with Land of Muses Gin, Contratto Bitter, Piolo and Max Vermut Woman in Red, Orange Bitter. "I like a unique balance of approachable, and bitter, and believe in using organic and hand harvested methods when at all possible. For me, the ideal Negroni is an ounce of Piolo and Max Vermut Woman in Red, an ounce of Contratto Bitter, and an ounce (and a quarter) of Land of Muses Gin by Matchbook. The lemongrass from the Muses lands on the finish and having an added quarter ounce lengthens the botanical presence of the gin. The Contratto Bitter provides the depth and bitter element of the Negroni, while the Vermut Rosso marries all the botanicals together and allows for the aromats to exist throughout the palate. Adding a dash of an orange bitter before stirring allows those beautiful citrus notes to really come alive," said Conrad Helms, beverage director.

Ophelia’s Negroni



Ophelia’s Negroni at Ophelia’s Pizza + Bar in Nashville. NASHVILLE GURU

At [Ophelia’s Pizza + Bar](#) in Nashville, this cocktail is made with Whitley Neil Blood Orange gin, Campari and Cocchi di Torino Rosso Vermouth, topped with orange cream bitters. “The Ophelia's Negroni is a cocktail that leaves a lasting impression with every sip. The tantalizing blend of Whitley Neil Blood Orange gin, Campari and Cocchi di Torino Rosso Vermouth paints a vivid picture of citrusy elegance, while the orange cream bitters add the finishing touch,” said Will Farquharson, Director of Bar Operations.

Agavevardier



Agavevardier at 1 Hotel Nashville’s 1 Kitchen Nashville. 1 HOTEL NASHVILLE)

At 1 Hotel Nashville’s [1 Kitchen Nashville](#), this cocktail is made up of sage-infused cincoro reposado, Campari, and blackberry antica sweet vermouth. This signature 1 Kitchen cocktail offers a sustainable spin on a Negroni. All blackberries are locally sourced from 1 Kitchen’s farm partners, and blackberries from the infusion are reused in the ice cubes to minimize food waste.

The Light Sleeper



The Light Sleeper At Bar Collins at Loews Miami Beach Hotel. LOEWS MIAMI BEACH HOTEL

At Bar Collins at [Loews Miami Beach Hotel](#), house made clarified milk, cardamom, cinnamon, star anise and apple blend beautifully to enhance the Hendrick’s gin used in this elevated version of the traditional Negroni. Director of Bars & Restaurants for Loews Miami Beach Hotel, Lucas Scudeler, says: “A complex twist to the classic Negroni, this cocktail is the result of a three-day process where we add milk and spices to the drink, then clarify it, taking out any bitterness and leaving only a clean Negroni with a kick for guests to enjoy. We garnish with star anise and orange peel to further activate the fragrant cocktail notes.”

Crystal Signature Negroni



Crystal Signature Negroni at Avenue Saloon onboard the newly-relaunched Crystal (formerly Crystal ... [+] CRYSTAL

At [Avenue Saloon](#) onboard the newly-relaunched Crystal (formerly Crystal Cruises), there’s Negroni Collection menu. The Crystal Signature Negroni Cocktail features Thomas Dakin Gin, coffeeinfused Campari Bitter, Cocchi Vermouth and a dash of chocolate bitter. Vice President of Food & Beverage Operations, Günter Lorenz says: “The Crystal Signature Negroni cocktail is both bittersweet and complex. As the name suggests, it is based on a classic Negroni, but with coffee infused complexity and a dash of chocolate bitter. It is perfect for an Aperitif or Digestif.”

The Negroni's Elixir



The Negroni's Elixir at The Ben West Palm, Autograph Collection. THE BEN WEST PALM, AUTOGRAPH COLLECTION

At [The Ben West Palm, Autograph Collection](#), the Negroni's Elixir features Cucumber & Mint-infused Monkey 47 Gin, Carpano Bianco Vermouth, St-Germain, Green Chartreuse and mint bitters.

Mixologist Randy Castillo says: "Presenting the Negroni's Elixir: a refreshing alternative to the surplus of traditional Negronis around the world. This lighter, more herbaceous cocktail pays homage to the classic recipe, while introducing a modern and floral twist. The cucumber and mint infusion harmonizes perfectly with the new age gin, and this relationship is further elevated with the elderflower liqueur. The complexity of this cocktail is wrapped up aromatically with the Chartreuse glass rinse, that is experienced with every subsequent sip."

1868 Negroni



1868 Negroni at Powder at Waldorf Astoria Park City. WALDORF ASTORIA PARK CITY

At [Powder at Waldorf Astoria Park City](#), the 1868 Negroni features barrel-aged Beehive Gin, Uncle Val's Botanical Gin, Notom Toadstool Amaro, Averna Amaro, Cappelletti and a dash of orange bitters (+ lemon peel swathe for garnish). Food & Beverage Manager Sara Martel says: "This exquisite libation blends Utah's native botanicals and flavors, providing a sophisticated twist to a timeless cocktail."

The MO Negroni



The MO Negroni At MO Bar at Mandarin Oriental, Kuala Lumpur MANDARIN ORIENTAL, KUALA LUMPUR

At [MO Bar at Mandarin Oriental, Kuala Lumpur](#), this Rosemary Negroni features Dry Gin, Antica Formula, Campari, orange bitters, and rosemary. Director of Wine & Beverage, Harin Jaganathan says: “The MO Negroni encapsulates the essence of cocktail crafting. It is a marriage of the classic Negroni components but smoked with rosemary to add elements of theater, aroma, and flavor. This unique blend of flavors pays homage to tradition while charting new territories of taste and it truly elevates the drinking experience.”

Rice-a-Groni



Rice-a-Groni from Apothecary Lounge in Albuquerque, New Mexico. APOTHECARY LOUNGE

From [Apothecary Lounge](#) in Albuquerque, New Mexico, the Rice-a-Groni features rice washed Masahiro Okinawa Japanese Gin, Umesu and Campari. Jake Larragoite, Director of Food and Beverage at Apothecary Lounge says: "On our new menu we created a rice washed Japanese style Negroni using Okinawa Gin, Campari and Umesu in place of Vermouth. The Umesu brings this bright, floral, tart plum flavor that really sets this Negroni off. We batch the cocktail with sushi rice, extracting the starch and creating a creamy silky texture and cushioning the Campari. The result is a beautifully balanced new take on a classic."

Sunset Sipper



Sunset Sipper at Capo & The Spritz located in Vancouver, BC. HAKAN BURCUOGLU

At [Capo & The Spritz](#) located in Vancouver, BC, a refreshing summer twist to a traditional Negroni, made by infusing Campari with strawberries to create a fruity twist, while ensuring the classic Negroni bitterness that we all love is still there. Aperol and Malfy Limon Gin are used for the final touches. “The inspiration behind this cocktail is the gorgeous colours of the sunset over the Pacific Ocean. We wanted to bring the essence of the sunset, along with light summery fruity notes together to the soul a bitter negroni,” said Rebecca Loat, Director of Food & Beverage at Capo & The Spritz.

White Negroni



White Negroni In Brooklyn at Sereneco. SERENECO

In Brooklyn, at [Sereneco](#), a sharp, slightly earthy and floral libation made with gin, lillet blanc, and suze aperitif, garnished with a twist of lemon. "The White Negroni puts our spin on the classic cocktail, using suze aperitif to bring an additional aromatic and floral layer to the drink, plus lillet blanc for a sweet, balanced finish," said Billy Van Dolsen, Owner and Beverage Director.

Oaxacan Negroni



Oaxacan Negroni at Paradisaea, in La Jolla. PARADISAEA

At [Paradisaea](#), La Jolla, the Oaxacan Negroni is chock full of flavors. Tamarindo and 5 chili-mezcal steals the show but plays well with rosé vermouth and bitter liqueur. There’s even some ancestral Mexican corn liquor. “Our Oaxacan Negroni is an unusual Negroni in the sense that we don’t follow the normal pattern. We use Tamarindo Mezcal, rosé vermouth, and a caramel colored butter liqueur that rivals Campari. We also sneak in a bit of ancestral corn liqueur for good measure. Sal de Gusano, worm salt, is sprinkled on top to round out the cocktail,” said Audrey Angui, Bar Manager.

Non-groni



Non-groni at Boia De in Miami. BETH RHODES

a non-alcoholic aperitif, for gin to achieve the same bitter and herbaceous flavor that the popular cocktail is known for,” said Shawn Giorgio, bartender at Boia De.

The Idol’s Eye



The Idol’s Eye In Miami at Queen. KEVIN MARTIN PHOTO

In Miami Beach, [Queen’s](#) Idol’s Eye cocktail is a regal libation that weaves together botanical intricacies, delicate sweetness, and a unique bitter-sweet symphony with its harmonious blend of premium gin, plum wine, and the exquisite depth of strawberry Campari. “The Idol’s Eye is inspired by the king of the aperitifs - the Negroni. Following the narrative behind Queen’s signature cocktail program, I took this classic cocktail and made it fit for a Queen by adding a uniquely modern take with Asian flair,” said Karol Ansaldi, Bar Manager at Queen Restaurant & Lounge.

Blue Negroni



Blue Negroni at Temple Bar in New York City/ TEMPLE BAR

Temple Bar in New York City offers a Blue Negroni made with Gin, Blue Kampari, and blanc vermouth. “Well, it’s blue. It’s immediately a second glance, or a head turner. They’re looking at her like, who are you? A Negroni?” says Samantha Casuga, Head Bartender at Temple Bar.

Castagne (Chestnut) Negroni



Castagne (Chestnut) Negroni at Monteverdi Tuscany. MONTEVERDI TUSCANY.

seasonal cocktail, this negroni is elevated from your basic drink with the addition of the Sollucchero di Castagne, making the Negroni a smoother experience and gives a beautiful lasting nutty Castagne flavor. Just picture yourself sitting in a library bar sipping on this sophisticated concoction. A perfect way to celebrate Negroni Week, saluti!” said Monteverdi Tuscany’s Restaurant and Bar Manager, Jan Kerkhoff.

Limoncello Negroni



Limoncello Negroni at Il Giardino Bar at Hotel Eden in Rome. ANDREA DI LORENZO /
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At [Il Giardino Bar](#) at [Hotel Eden](#) in Rome, Italy, The Limoncello Negroni is made with Tanqueray gin, limoncello, Carpano Antica Formula vermouth. "This lighter take on the classic Negroni is bursting with bright and sweet citrus flavors, letting the limoncello shine through, and evoking the feeling of sun-drenched summer days in Italy,” said Stefano Briganti, head barman.

Ilegal Mezcal Negroni



Ilegal Mezcal Negroni at Ray’s Bar in New York City. EARL GREEN

Via Cowboy "Ray" Baker at [Ray’s Bar](#) in New York City, created by Preston Aamodt, cocktail creator at Ray’s, this Mezcal Negroni, on special during Happy Hour at Ray's. “Named after the baking spices nutmeg, cinnamon, and cloves, this cocktail would be in a cowboy’s flask as they rounded up the herd, sipped slowly while they stared into the sunset,” said Kaitlin Prince, Marketing and Event Director for Authentic Hospitality.

Cruel Intentions



Cruel Intentions at Schmittys in West Hollywood. BRADLEY TUCK

At [Schmittys](#) in West Hollywood, this cocktail is made with London Dry Gin, Chambord, limoncello, hibiscus bitters. Bar Director, Catheryn Giroud says: "A nice ending to the summer and a fresh start into fall. It's inspired by the summer night sunsets. With the crispness of a dry gin mixed with subtle floral notes, and a slight citrus finish making for a refreshing cocktail to settle in with on a relaxing late summer night."

Orange Tea Spiced Negroni



Orange Tea Spiced Negroni at Bar 10 at Westin Copley Place Boston. WESTIN COPLEY PLACE

At [Bar 10](#) at Westin Copley Place Boston, a spiced Negroni with Campari infused with orange spiced tea, Aviation Gin, Amaro nonino quintessentia, and homemade lapsong souchang bitters. “It’s a modern twist on the classic Negroni. With every sip, let your senses awaken to a cocktail that transcends the ordinary,” said Victoria Hines, bartender.

Aged Coconut White Mezcal Negroni



Aged Coconut White Mezcal Negroni at Frannie & The Fox in Charleston. AMANDA PHELPS

At [Frannie & The Fox](#) in Charleston, the Coconut White Negroni is blended with coconut oil washed mezcal, a genetian aperitif that gives it slight bitterness and a touch of Kalani coconut and cocchi americano for sweetness. Amanda Phelps, Beverage Manager at Frannie & The Fox and Emeline says: “Our negroni on tap is perfect for summer sipping, with subtle hints of coconut and light smoke from the mezcal. It's also an easy drinking cocktail for those wanting to venture into mezcal or Negronis,”

Tropicale



Tropicale at The Tailor’s Son in San Francisco. MOLLY DECOUDREAUX 2021

From [The Tailor’s Son](#) in San Francisco, a Negroni with dark rum blend, pandan, and pineapple. “Even though our cocktail program uses a lot of traditional Italian ingredients, we wanted to have a little room for fun and creativity. This is the perfect tropical riff on a negroni, and in this case, we were a little ahead of the trend in terms of using pandan, which imparts a nice subtle vanilla flavor to the drink,” said Eddie Concha, Vice President of Operations. *Follow me on [Twitter](#) or [LinkedIn](#). Check out my [website](#).*



Aly Walansky

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Aly Walansky is a NY-based lifestyles writer with over a decade of experience covering travel and food.