



I decided it was important and fun to help young adults emerge into the adulting space with confidence about how to make, serve, and order a grown-up sophisticated drink (whether containing alcohol or not). So, I asked my friend Luke Taylor to work with me to develop a tutorial on the subject. To my delight, he agreed, and in August 2021 we hosted a Zoom tutorial on how to make a cocktail/mocktail. A good time was had by all.

Read on for Luke's introduction to the subject, including the things you need to have on hand in order to pull this off at home, and why all of this relates to adulting in the first place. Please also check out the [90 minute Zoom recording](#), our [IG Live chat](#) on the subject, [this ingredients list](#), and [these recipes](#)! Happy mixing! Oh, and you can find a short bio on the amazing Luke Taylor at the end of this document.

JULIE

Intro

Part of being an adult means learning to lean into your sense of joy. As a social species, humans take particular joy in being with one another through community and celebration. Throughout history, beverages have played a special role in celebration, through toasts that mark a special moment to holidays that signal the turning of the seasons.

In the contemporary era, mixology has emerged as a creative practice in and of itself, with bartenders across the world serving up delicious and unexpected libations that delight the palate. Never before has this creative practice been more accessible, and I hope that this section will help you develop your own home workshop from which you too can craft tasty liquid treats.

We begin with the fundamentals, hoping that an understanding of the tools and principles of cocktail making will make the process more inviting. We then move a little more in depth, recommending certain bottles and types of spirits that might be useful in designing a home bar. You should feel free to customize as you please!

Don't forget that you can also view the cocktail/mocktail-making workshop that Julie and I hosted in August 2021. The link can be found <here>.

N.B. Much has already been written about wine and beer so I've focused this material primarily on the foundations of cocktail-making, though this is by no means an exhaustive discussion of drinks and their role in culture and society. Importantly, the world of drink-making is entirely open to those who don't drink alcohol - from shrubs and tepache to home-made syrups for sodas, the world of delicious non-alcoholic beverages is wide. Broadly, the principles of making Non-Alcoholic or Low-ABV (Low-Alcohol By Volume) beverages remain the same, so even if you're not of the spirit-drinking persuasion, learning about proportions, syrups, and balancing tastes and temperature will equip you with a useful set of tools to craft equally enticing non-alcoholic beverages.

Gear

The at-home bartender leverages a few tools to make their tasty libations. Below, I have a "recommendation for building your first home bar," but before we discuss the optimal setup, let's talk about the basics.

Fundamentally, you'll need five things:

1. A thing to measure:

Cocktail making is an art of ratios. Because we're dealing with relatively small volumes of liquid, tiny changes make a big difference in taste. The go-to tool of choice is **the jigger**, a double-sided pseudo-measuring cup ergonomically designed to rest comfortably between a bartender's fingers. There are many varieties but they look like this:



Jiggers are convenient because the two sides correspond to a ratio of 2:1, and each cylinder often has an interior set of markings that correspond to .5 and .25. This is ideal as most recipes conform to these ratios.

However, if you don't have a jigger, fear not! Anything that can reliably measure volume will do. Usually measuring spoons are too small, but a shot glass (1.5 oz standard) could work in a pinch. A quarter cup measuring cup is 2oz and could also work well. Whatever you work with, you'll find happier results with tools that can measure accurately!

2. A thing to shake:

Most delicious cocktails are icy cold (with some notable exceptions). Cold is achieved by bringing your ingredients into contact with the surface of ice cubes. Because of the First Law of Thermodynamics, as you shake the beverage with ice, the ice melts to bring the temperature of the liquid into equilibrium. Water is thus added into the cocktail at the same time that energy is transferred in the form of heat from the liquid to the ice. Mad Scientist Dave Arnold puts it succinctly: when shaking a cocktail, dilution and cooling take place in proportion to one another. In most recipes, this is desirable.

The act of shaking, therefore, is intended to constantly "mix" the diluting water into the cocktail while bringing the rest of the liquid into contact with newly exposed surface area of the ice. Shake, mix, shake, dilute, shake cool - this all happens fairly rapidly.

At the same time, you're also introducing air into the cocktail through agitation. This changes the "texture" of the cocktail in addition to changing the temperature. This is why you'll see bartenders give their beverages a good, hard, long shake: to integrate air into the cocktail and change the texture as it hits your mouth. A good rule of thumb is about 10 seconds of vigorous shaking, though sometimes longer or shorter shakes are appropriate, depending on your dilution goals. Experiment and see what works for you!

There are three standard shakers that fulfill a similar purpose: a **boston shaker**, which is a two-piece set of metal "tins" that fit together and form a seal for shaking; **the cobbler**, which is a three piece shaker with a metal top connected to a built-in strainer; and a **parisian shaker** which is also two pieces and functions similar to a boston shaker but may be slightly easier to open.

The one thing to keep in mind about any shaker is that as the beverage cools, most metals will contract. This helps form the seal so the liquid can't escape while shaking - it also means the shaker is sometimes challenging to open if you're not used to it. Practice makes perfect!

As long as there have been home-cocktail makers, however, people have sought out makeshift shakers. Here are some you might consider if you don't have a set of shaker tins on hand: a bell/ kern jar or a to-go coffee mug might work nicely. As long as it has a tight seal and your hand can wrap mostly around the circumference, you should be in good shape.

3. A thing to strain:

When you shake it ("shake shake it, shake it, shake shake it"), ice chips will inevitably float into your drink. These are not tasty. Once shaking is complete, the penultimate move is to strain the beverage into your glass to remove any fine particulate matter - not just the ice chips but any pulp from fruit juices you may be using in the beverage. The go-to tool here is the **hawthorne strainer**, which is designed to fit snugly over a **boston shaker**. You can also double strain using a fine mesh strainer for an extra-clear final product.

4. A thing to stir and a thing to stir in:

Many drinks are not shaken at all, but stirred, the opposite of how James Bond wants his martinis. This method achieves the same dilution/cooling without clouding the drink with agitation. Pyrex beakers have become popular for this purpose since they're cheap and heat-tempered. Fancy bar-specific cocktail stirring glasses can be more aesthetic but can run a pretty penny and aren't strictly necessary. In any case, what you're looking for here is a broad base glass you can fill with ice and swirl with a spoon - a bar spoon *cum* **swizzle stick** is ideal for this purpose. Most home pint glasses won't be wide enough to get a good swirl but a large (2-cup) measuring cup could do the trick in a pinch. You can get away with any spoon that has a relatively small or narrow bowl. (Soup spoons aren't your friend for this task.) You could also probably use a chopstick!

5. A Citrus Squeezer

Fresh citrus juice is the backbone of many modern cocktails. Because these flavors degrade quickly, most bartenders will recommend you juice your lemons and limes as you need them rather than using store-bought canned or bottled juice. The difference is night and day.

The industry standard looks something like this:



Other Gear

A host of other tools will make your cocktail-making forays incrementally more exciting, but aren't absolutely vital.

If you're looking to level-up you might consider the following:

A muddler to smash berries and herbs.

A peeler to...well, peel. I recommend a Y-Peeler.

Droppers for the judicious addition of bitters and solutions.

Speed pourers for targeting streams of spirit into your jiggers.

Matches for fire.

Lewis bag for smashing ice into the ideal size for moscow mules and mai tais.

A zester or microplane for tiny bits of aromatic garnish.

A sharp paring knife for shaping lovely garnishes.

Glass bottle with swing top for homemade syrups and cordials.

Glasses and Stemware

Much can be said about the vessel into which you pour your beverage, but we'll keep it simple. The philosophy to live by is: **cold beverage, cold glass**. However you drink your beverage, put it in a glass that's cold as this will, unsurprisingly, keep your beverage colder - and therefore more delicious - longer. This is primarily noteworthy with stemware when the heat from your hand threatens to warm a drink served "up" more quickly that is desirable. Pop your cocktail

stemware into the fridge or freezer a few minutes before assembling your cocktail and you'll notice a world of difference.

For those looking to level up, there are a handful of glasses you may want to purchase.

- Tumblers** for drinks on the rocks
- Nick and Noras** for stirred drinks served up
- Coupes** for shaken drinks served up
- Copas** for gin and tonics as well as spritzes
- Collins glasses** for highballs
- Snifters** for aged spirits consumed neat

Myriad variations on the above exist and the main value is often aesthetic, but there is a certain joy in serving a beverage in a glass that both keeps it cold and allows the beauty of the final product to shine. That being said, as long as the glass is cold, you're half way to greatness.

The Lingo

Presentation is a central component to cocktail-making, not simply because it emphasizes the fact that *this* beverage has been crafted *especially for you*, but often to serve a function in how the beverage is meant to be consumed. "Up" refers to a cocktail served in some type of stemware like a coupe or martini glass. Cocktails served "up" are cold and a stemmed glass keeps the liquid away from your hands while you drink it, preventing it from warming too quickly. "Neat" refers to a pure spirit - no other ingredients - served directly into a glass. Drinks served "neat" are meant to highlight the quality spirit without adjusting for sweetness or temperature. Spirits will often be served "on the rocks" or over ice. Like "neat" drinks, spirits served "on the rocks" have no other ingredients - the ice *is* the ingredient, and it adds gradual dilution as you sip your beverage.

"Ice as an ingredient" is a conceptual way of thinking about temperature's impact on your taste buds. Specific taste receptors on your tongue - like those that control sweet, bitter, and umami - are affected by temperature and send weaker signals to the brain when your cocktail is cold. Practically, this means that very cold drinks will taste "less strong" than room temperature drinks. Mixologists use this to their advantage when designing cocktails and adjust their recipes (also called "specs") in order to deliver a precise taste experience. You can run an experiment by serving the same spirit side by side in neat and on-the-rocks presentations and trying to sense the difference.

Even the way you dilute or chill a beverage can impact taste. Remember James Bond's preference for a martini "shaken, not stirred"? A shaken beverage dilutes by "throwing" ice back and forth through the liquid in a shaker tin. This rapidly chills a drink by exposing the liquid to lots of ice surface area. At the same time, the ice "aerates" the drink, adding texture. Stirred drinks, by contrast, chill the beverage with minimal disturbance to the liquid - but the recipe is often the same. Think about it this way: a bartender wants you to enjoy your drink and has a wide variety of tools at their disposal that can adjust the cocktail precisely to your liking.

Add sweet (from syrups), sour (from citrus), and bitter or floral (from aperitifs and liqueurs) to your recipes and now you have a set of different levers you can pull to design a wide range of drinking experiences!

Example Home Barware Setups

Below, I make some recommendations for what a home setup might look like if you're looking to jump right in without too much decision-making. The levels are meant to be tongue-in-cheek, so please don't take them as gospel!

Recommended Elder Gen Z Level

Gear:

- Boston shaker
- Jigger (2oz/1oz)
- Hawthorne Strainer
- Bar Spoon/Swizzle stick
- Citrus Squeezer
- Y - Peeler
- Tumbler 4x
- Coupe 4x

Bar kits go for <\$40 on Amazon and are a great way to get started. Tumblers and coupes will run you another ~\$20 each for a set but can go up in price depending on the material.

Recommended Millennial Level

To the above list, add:

- Round glass bottles with swing tops x4 (these are quite cheap and can be re-used infinitely)
- Mixing glass or beaker

Muddler
Wine key
Matches (for effect)
Channel Zester
Dropper x4
Dasher x2
Speed pouring spouts x 4
Nick and Nora glass x4
Copper mugs x4

The primary additional cost with this set comes from the glasses. Nick and Nora glasses are generally more specialty items but they look great for martinis and manhattans. If you're a moscow mule or mint julep fan, you'll want to have copper mugs on hand for that traditional feel, but these can also double for dark and stormys and even pearl divers.

Droppers and dashers are key for adding aromatics in small quantities while glass bottles can hold home-made syrups like grenadine or herb-infused simple syrups. Once you go down the syrup-making rabbit hole, your cocktail game will reach a whole new level and you'll find yourself with an entire kitchen shelf devoted to your concoctions.

Recommended Gen X Level

In addition to the above list, we're going to round out your glass and stemware:

Collins glasses x4
Copas x4
Snifters x4
Champagne flutes x4

Each of these glasses have a broad range of versatility and can really open up your cocktail universe. Collins glasses can be used for homemade sodas and highballs, and because they're clear, they can display lovely garnishes like cut fruit and herbs. Copas are the traditional glass for Spanish Gin and Tonics but they also double as great for summer-time Aperol and Campari Spritzes, though Bordeaux glasses are often used. Similarly, champagne flutes can be used for drinks like the French 75, Bellinis, and the perennial brunch staple: the Mimosa.

Additional tools you may wish to add to your arsenal as your home bar develops:

Metal straws to save the environment.

Lewis bag and Mallet for when you start becoming persnickety about ice.

Silicone ice molds for the same reason.

Ice bucket, tongs, and scoop so you're not using your hands like a heathen.

Absinthe spoons for the brief period when you think you'll get into absinthe.

iSi whipper for when you want to make Ramos Gin Fizzes or rapid infusions.

Sous vide for when you want to make infused syrups with delicate ingredients.
A centrifuge for when you've lost all reasonable perspective on reality.

Ingredients

What goes into your cocktail determines its tastiness - seems intuitive enough, right? That doesn't mean, however, that you must spend your entire life savings on a 50-year-old sherry-cask aged single malt scotch. Rather, a few select bottles of spirits plus regular access to fresh citrus can take you far. In this section, I refer to a number of standard or classic cocktails - if you want to know more about them, a quick google search will give you a range of recipes. I recommend Punch Drink and Imbibe Magazine as wonderful online resources.

Spirits

Spirits take their name from the distillation process that separates ethanol vapors from the fermentation liquid. These vapors are considered the "spirit" of the liquor and the unique origin for each spirit (ie. cane for rum, grain for whisky, grapes for brandy, etc.) determines the foundation of its character. Ingredients, craft, and aging determines the rest. There are tens of thousands of bottles to choose from and preference plays the predominant role in selection, so the following section will paint in broad strokes and I hope not to offend anyone's personal sensibilities.

Types of spirits

Broadly speaking, it's nice to have a bottle of each type of spirit on hand as this allows for the widest range of cocktail options. This is perhaps the largest investment, so you should cater to your own tastes while keeping an open mind! We'll recommend some bottles to get started at the end of the section.

Gin - Gin is essentially aromatized vodka, its primary flavor coming from the juniper berry. There are at least 4 types and styles of gin, each of which have their own application. Most people will start with a London Dry as it has the most versatility. In recent years, dozens of bottles of boutique gins have sprung up that are definitely worth giving a try. For early entrants into the world of gin, Tanqueray, Beefeater, and Bombay Sapphire are a good (and relatively cheap) place to start.

Rum/Ron/Rhum - Rum has dozens of regional varieties spanning from Guadalupe to Cuba to Puerto Rico to the D.R. and beyond. Broadly, rum is distilled from one of two cane products - molasses and cane juice, which makes rhum agricole. Each region prides itself on their centuries-old distillation and aging methods, and because of the diversity it's difficult to recommend just one bottle. To keep it simple, we'll recommend one bottle of blanco or unaged

rum and one bottle of aged rum so you can taste the difference. Flor de Cana, Barbancourt, Havana Club and Plantation make some phenomenal and very affordable rums.

Tequila and Mezcal - It's a little bit sacrilegious to put these in the same category but we'll justify it by noting that they're both made from agave and, if we're being technical about it, tequila is a variety of mezcal. The primary difference comes from the type of agave and the method used to cook the agave prior to fermentation. Notably, agave takes a very long time to mature when juxtaposed with grapes, cane, and wheat which are annual crops. As a result, many mezcals are on the more expensive side, and if your primary use is mixing, then something like Luminar Joven or Del Maguey Vida is a good place to start.

Whiskey/Whisky - Whisky is now made the world over and has hundreds of expressions from scotch to bourbon to rye and so on. Though they vary wildly, what they have in common is they are distilled from fermented grain. Common grains include wheat, corn, rye, and barley. Then comes the aging, the climate, and all manner of nuances that have defined the great whisky houses for centuries while giving room for new upstart whisky distillers. As such, it's a bit difficult to recommend only a small number of bottles, but suffice to say you'll probably want a bottle of bourbon, a bottle of rye, and a bottle of scotch. We'll not discuss whiskeys for sipping at this point, but a good rule of thumb is if you wouldn't drink it neat, why would you drink it in a cocktail? Common points of entry for bottles include Four Roses or Buffalo Trace for bourbon; Rittenhouse or Templeton for Rye; Sheep Dip or Dewars for Scotch; Bushmills or Redbreast for Irish. Our apologies to the whisky aficionados out there who found this section too reductive.

Vodka - Vodka is a bit of a broad term and refers to any unaged neutral (ie. unaromatized) grain spirit. Because it's unaged and because it's distilled from such a wide range of starches, it tends not to add a lot of character to a cocktail. It's job is kind of to live in the background and just provide a bit of alcoholic kick. The primary exception would be vodka martinis. As such, if your primary use case is mixing, you don't need to be overly concerned with which vodka you're using. Titos seems to be the vodka of choice these days and if you're thinking of getting into infusions, a liter handle isn't a bad way to go. Admittedly, entire geographies claim vodka as their national drink of choice, so I again note that this is an overly simplified take on vodka. More on that below.

Brandy - Brandy is a spirit distilled from grapes, perhaps most famously from the Cognac region in France. However, it can be made from other fruits as well, including apples, pears, and peaches. Often, the fruit is turned into wine and then distilled and aged from there. Having a bottle of cognac on hand is handy not only for making sidecars but also for deglazing during cooking. Any VSOP like Remy Martin, Martell, or Pierre Ferand will do nicely though these bottles tend to be on the more expensive side. We've placed brandy and cognac at the end of our list because these spirits tend to have more limited application in cocktail-making, but who knows - perhaps you'll develop the next brandy-based sensation!

Syrups

Making syrups is one of the easiest ways to customize your cocktail profiles. The type of sugar you use and the flavors you add to the syrups can dramatically change your cocktail drinking experience.

To start, make a simple syrup by mixing one part refined white sugar to one part water over the stove. Bring to a quick simmer to dissolve then turn off the heat - voila, an easy way to control the sweetness of any beverage you desire. Make a bunch and keep it in the fridge; it'll keep for a while. Many bars will use something called "rich syrup" which uses a 2:1 sugar:water ratio and is shelf stable.

Play around with different types of sugars: demerara, granulated cane, coconut sugar, palm sugar, honey, or even maple syrup. Each type of syrup has its own character.

Syrups are an easy way to carry new flavors into your cocktail. You can infuse herbs like lavender and rosemary, spices like whole black pepper, and fruits like blueberries into your syrups using a similar process. Once the aroma and color is there, simply strain out the solid matter and pour the syrup into a glass bottle with a swing cap.

Anything that has high quantities of sugar in it can be turned into a syrup if you cook off the water enough. Be aware, however, that high and extended heat will break down certain compounds in more delicate flavors changing the profiles considerably. To get around this, many bars will use a *sous vide* (a tool that regulates temperature in water) to keep a constant low temperature that more gently extracts flavor. If you have one on hand, they can be fun to experiment with.

Shrubs (Drinking Vinegars) and Other Alcohol-Free or Low-ABV Approaches

The universe of non-alcoholic beverages is nearly as vast as spirit-based cocktails, and broadly centers on how one imparts flavor and texture into the glass. In place of the strength that spirits typically impart, many bartenders have looked (surprisingly) to vinegar as the vehicle for flavor. Shrubs or drinking vinegars have more in common with syrups than salad dressings and are broadly composed of fruits, herbs, sugar, and vinegar in different proportions. The result is a rich and complex textural experience that, when done well, can be delightful and refreshing quaff. Here's a delicious and easy-to-make [shrub recipe](#) that you can adjust using any kind of berry you might have around. Mix with soda water and you have a wonderful and unexpected surprise.

For those who can drink trace amounts of alcohol, the low-ABV (Alcohol By Volume) universe is even more vast. One of my favorite low-ABV drinks to make, tepache, requires a little planning,

but is an educational project that can teach us about the basics of fermentation. Tepache is made from the rinds of pineapples, cinnamon, and sugar, using the natural yeasts found on the rind to lightly ferment the mixture. After about two days, the liquid has developed a funky, warm, and slightly sweet quality with only about 2% alcohol by volume. Pop it in the fridge before serving over ice or diluting a bit with sparkling water.

Seasonings

For a lot of people, this is where the fun starts happening. From vermouths to bitters to aperitifs and liqueurs, seasonings add the *je ne sais quoi* to any cocktail. If you're given to creativity in the kitchen, this is where you'll find the most dimension in your pallet.

Bitter staples - a few dashes go a long way

Angostura bitters

Orange bitters

Peychauds

Vermouth

Vermouths are fortified wines that use a wide range of aromatics to enhance their flavors. Broadly, they fall into dry and sweet as well as *blanc* and *rouge* categories, but you'll find that each brand has staked out it's own characteristic flavor. Antica Formula, Lillet, and Dolin are quite common and affordable. Because these are wines, they should be kept in the refrigerator once opened to extend their life.

Liqueurs

This is where things begin to spiral, both in terms of uniqueness and in terms or price. To keep it simple, we'll cover just a few bottles and what they're often used for.

Campari - Campari is perhaps best known for its role in the Negroni though it also makes surprising appearances in the Jungle Bird and more simply in the Negroni Spritz. If you find yourself less disposed to the bitterness of campari, Aperol has a sweeter profile and plays well with brighter, citrus-focused cocktails rather than Campari's more spirit-forward disposition.

St. Germain - Famed potation pioneers, Death & Co, often refer to St. Germain simply as "sauce" because this elderflower liqueur makes basically anything delicious. A quarter ounce added into fizzy cocktail recipes adds a sweet lift that isn't cloying.

Green Chartreuse - The recipe for this magic emerald delight has been guarded by Carthusian monks for centuries. It's high ABV means that it's quite dry when compared to other liqueurs but it's distinctive feature comes from its bright vegetal, herbaceousness. It is the secret to one of the great classic cocktails: the Last Word.

Cointreau - cointreau is the heart of many sidecar variations including the margarita. It's a slightly sweet orange liqueur that's quite a bit drier than its cousin triple sec, which has a lower ABV and is therefore sweeter.

Without being exhaustive, here's a list of other common seasonings you may want to include in your cabinet:

Amaretto

Luxardo

Crème de Banane, crème de menthe, crème de cacao, and crème de violette

Absinthe (for absinthe rinses often used in sazeracs)

Amari such as montenegro, fernet, ramazzotti, and cynar

Other ingredients

Tonic water (Fever tree, Q, Fentimans)

Lemons and Limes

These are the primary citrus you'll use in most cocktails and they're good to have in abundance. One lime will usually give you just shy of an ounce of juice depending on the size. Citrus should be stored in the refrigerator (ideally, the crisper) to extend their life. While oranges and grapefruits are delicious fruits, they don't have the titratable acid by volume to make them good cocktail making ingredients. Cocktails that rely just on oranges or grapefruit will often feel "out of balance". If you feel strongly about using them, make citric acid and malic acid solutions to "boost" the acidic profile or consider supplementing them with a half ounce of lime juice. Experiment and see what works for you!

Herbs

Rosemary, mint, basil, and leafy herbs can serve as a lovely garnish!

Citrus peels and twists

While oranges and grapefruits don't juice well in cocktails, their peels often add a lovely zest to spirit-forward drinks

Cocktail onions (for Martinis)

Olives (for Martinis)

Maraschino cherries (For Manhattans)

Let's Do This Thing

Below, I've listed a few cocktails worth exploring, both classic and contemporary. As with many things, these are totally subjective suggestions and not representative of prospective tastiness. Rather, I've done our best to provide increasing levels of complexity and challenge as well as a representation of different preparation methods. I've also included links to specs that I think represent the drink well.

Gin

[The Classic Martini](#) - stirred, spirit-forward

[Negroni](#) - stirred, bitter but balanced, spirit-forward

[The Last Word](#) - shaken, citrusy, floral

[The Gin Fizz](#) - shaken, citrusy, frothy

Whisky

[The Classic Whisky Sour](#) - shaken, citrusy, frothy

[The Improved Whisky Cocktail](#) - built, spirit-forward, warm
(Additional [reading](#) on Improved Cocktails)

[Boulevardier](#) - stirred, bitter but balanced, spirit-forward
(Additional reading on [Boulevardiers](#))

Rum

The Classic [Daiquiri](#) - shaken, bright and citrusy
(Additional [reading](#) on the Daiquiri)

[The Jungle Bird](#) - shaken, tiki-but-not, bitter-but-not, citrusy-but-not

[Edgewater Beach](#) - shaken, heady, unexpected

Mezcal and Tequila

[Oaxacan Old Fashioned](#) - stirred, spirit-forward

[El Pepe](#) - shaken, herbaceous

[Dave Arnold's Frozen Marg](#) - blended, herbaceous, cold

Final Thoughts

Like any creative endeavor, the joy in cocktail making expands and contracts in relationship to the tools and techniques you develop. I hope this primer offers access to some of the tricks of the trade, and I encourage you to share tasty potations you whip up with your friends and family in the spirit of celebration. Cheers!

A Bit About [Luke Taylor](#)

Luke met Julie as a starry-eyed Stanford undergrad in 2006. Much has changed between then and now, and Luke is proud to have followed Julie's footsteps into the world of education. In his professional life, he works as the co-CEO for [Spark Prep](#), a holistic admissions coaching consultancy that helps students navigate their journey to college. In his spare time, he causes havoc in kitchens far and wide while regaling unsuspecting passersby with the finer points of durian horticulture. His very mercurial instagram is @lukeastaylor which you can follow for political memes and other ephemera. Julie adds: I trust Luke, consult him on pretty much everything, and hired him to support my kids on their college application journey.