

Reviving an Old Corpse

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Layne Martin in 10-Bottle Bar, Classic Cocktails, Cocchi Americano, Gin, Lemon, Orange Curacao

As you can see from my [library page](#), I am a big fan of pre-Prohibition cocktails. Many of the books that I have used to develop my love of libations are from the era, so many of the cocktails from that era really speak to me.



Ah, and what a lovely corpse it is! One of the cocktails that has always intrigued me has been the Corpse Reviver No. 2. Different versions of the so-called Corpse Reviver cocktails began appearing in the cocktail world perhaps as far back as the 1800s, but I came across the Corpse Reviver No. 2 in Harry Craddock's *Savoy Cocktail Book* some years ago. The drink boasted a great combination of flavors - gin, orange liqueur, lemon juice and Kina Lillet.

At first glance this recipe looked quite easy to make. After all - I had plenty of gin, orange curacao and lemon on hand. And in a past life Mrs. The Ace lived in France and habitually keeps a bottle of Lillet Blanc in the fridge. I ran over to the liquor cabinet to whip up my supposed newest masterpiece.

The only problem - Harry Craddock's original recipe calls for *Kina Lillet*, not Lillet Blanc. As you can read [on this page](#), Kina Lillet and Lillet Blanc are unfortunately very different ingredients (for those too impatient to click through - Lillet Blanc is what was left once quinine was removed from Kina Lillet's recipe in the 1980s to suit modern American tastes). With Lillet Blanc, this is still a nice cocktail. But the drink did still leave me a bit empty. I filed it away in The Ace's vault as a "try again some other day" recipe.

Fast forward to this past month, when I found a bottle of **Cocchi Americano** on the shelves at my local liquor store. I had just read about Cocchi Americano in **Jason Wilson's** fine new book *Boozehound* so you can imagine my excitement to break out a Corpse Reviver once again with this new toy!

Corpse Reviver No. 2

Adapted from *Savoy Cocktail Book* by Harry Craddock (1930)

- 3/4 oz. gin
- 3/4 oz. Combier (or other orange-flavored liqueur)
- 3/4 oz. fresh-squeezed lemon juice
- 3/4 oz. Kina Lillet (use Cocchi Americano)
- Absinthe

Place a coupe glass or other up glass in the freezer to chill - give 5 minutes for the glass to frost over. Combine all ingredients (except the absinthe) in a shaker with lots of ice and shake for at least 10 seconds. Pour absinthe into the chilled up glass and roll the absinthe around the glass as a rinse, then throw out the excess absinthe. Strain the drink into the glass

and serve.

As you may have guessed - given that I am writing this post - the Cocchi Americano absolutely knocks this cocktail out of the park! It adds that slight bitterness to the drink that makes this little gin beauty a complex, rich cocktail to savor.

So yes, consider the old corpse revived - and enjoy the results! Keep in mind that the drink was designed and thus named by Mr. Craddock as a drink to be taken in the morning or "whenever steam and energy are needed." And of course no exercise in dragging Mr. Craddock's timeless quotes around like this is complete without the reminder that you must be careful: "Four of these taken in quick succession will unrevive the corpse once again."

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