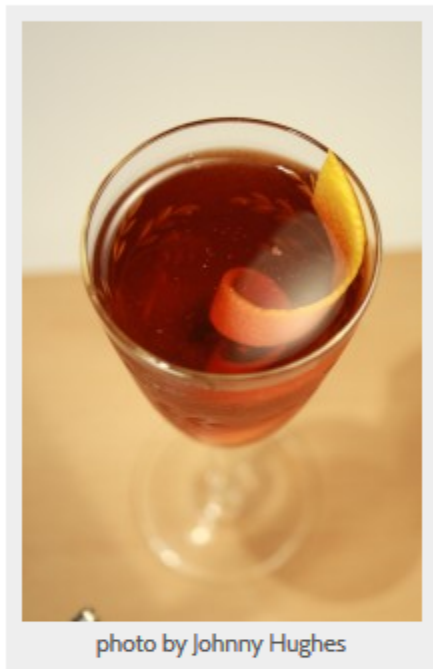


## VERMOUTH: THE SUPPORTING ACTOR IS STEALING THE SHOW

With so many new styles on the market, the aromatized wine is finally finding its audience.

Ashtin Berry | January 19, 2016 | [\\_Featured](#), [Spirits](#), [Wine](#) | [5 Comments](#)



Trends are forever changing in the beverage world, capturing the minds and tastebuds of professionals and changing the way we drink. There always seems to be an “IT” ingredient or spirit category driving creativity and market shares. In the past couple of years, sherry reigned. Before that, bitter and herbaceous tastes placed amari front and center for bartenders and consumers alike. With arms and palates wider than ever before, it’s time to talk about the ingredient that has long been critical to many of our favorite classic cocktails. It’s a staple without which there is no Manhattan, Martini or Negroni. It’s a beautiful, versatile liquid with a hint of herbaceous sweetness that can add body to a thin drink or a drying effect to a floral gin.

First, what is vermouth? Vermouth is a fortified wine that has been aromatized traditionally with wormwood, flowers, tree bark, and other regional botanicals. The aromatizing of the wine is what sets this apertif apart from other fortified wines such as sherry and port. Vermouth, like its fortified cousins, has a long history and is one of the oldest beverages. Dating back to the Greeks who infused their white wines, as well as to the Chinese of the Shang Dynasty who used vermouth for medicinal purposes. The Vermouth we know today can be credited to the modern day regions of Piemonte, Italy and the Savoy region of France. In the early 18th century, both of these regions were ruled under the sovereignty of Sardinia. The spice trade routes went directly through these regions and used cities such as Marseille and Genoa for importation of botanicals, which gave cities like Turin and Chamberly access to large amounts of botanicals. This explains the close concentration of commercial vermouth producers such as Dolin, Cinzano, Carpano, Cocchi, Martini, and Bonal, which are all located in one of the two aforementioned cities.



Some of you may be reading this and saying “ I do not like vermouth.” As a bartender it’s something I’ve heard time and time again, especially when making someone a Martini or a Manhattan. My response is always, “You haven’t had the right vermouth,” because we so often think of vermouth as its own category we forget it’s a style of wine. Like all wine there are different styles that appease different palates. With the rise of fortified wines and the introduction of new styles there are now more than a few vermouths out there to please anyone from the novice cocktail drinker to the wine aficionado. Because they tend to be lower proof, you could stand to have two or maybe three. It’s the stuff day drinking was made for!

## THE TRADITIONALIST

### Cocchi Torino

With the rise of the cocktail scene, the Giulio Cocchi family chose to release their original recipe as an ode to the vermouth that was fashionably served at the Cafés in Torino in the early 1900s. Needless to say, it’s a beautiful example of what vermouth can and should be. It’s rich, the first notes on the palate reminiscent of marmalade and caramel. It then manages to produce an elongated finish filled with notes of menthol, dandelion, and licorice. Cocchi is the perfect introduction to new vermouth drinkers as it is very balanced; less sweet than Carpano and less bitter than something like [Punt e Mes](#). This vermouth shows well in a Martinez, but it’s equally delicious slightly chilled in a wine glass with a twist of orange.

