

Hypnotic cocktails for the winter

As the winter approaches, experienced front of house and drinks expert Nikos Matsikas of Brasserie Ecosse in Dundee, offers his rundown on some of the nation's favourite winter cocktails.

Known for offering cocktails that are a little bit different, showcasing more unusual spirits such as Haroosh and Hpnotiq, Nikos references global influences in his drink selections, having worked in five star hospitality across the Globe, including the States and in Greece.



Hypnotic Harmony at Brasserie Ecosse, Dundee

Here, he looks at the Pink Margarita and the Hypnotic Harmony. Nikos said: "We offer a fabulous Pink Margarita at Brasserie Ecosse, with the pink elements coming from Blood Orange juice and Aperol. Our Pink Margarita is made with Patron silver tequila, Aperol, lemon juice, and Blood orange juice served in a mini Patron glass bottle which is handmade. It looks really beautiful. Presentation is everything with our premium cocktail selection.

"But where did this popular cocktail originate? Some believe it originates from the Mexican drink, the Daisy (*margarita* is Spanish for "daisy"), remade with tequila instead of brandy. It became popular during prohibition as US residents travelled to Mexico for alcohol. It's certainly always been associated with glamorous ladies, with Dallas socialite Margarita Sames reputed to have concocted the drink for her guests at her Acapulco holiday home in 1948.

"Tommy Hilton reportedly attended, bringing the drink back to the Hilton chain of hotels. However, José Cuervo was already

running ad campaigns for the margarita three years earlier, in 1945, with the slogan, “Margarita: It’s more than a girl’s name.” According to Jose Cuervo, the cocktail was invented in 1938 by a bartender in honour of Mexican showgirl Rita de la Rosa.

“I’ve heard another common origin tale – involving yet another glamorous female,” added Nikos. “Some say the cocktail’s history begins at the legendary Balinese Room in Galveston, Texas where, in 1948, head bartender Santos Cruz created the margarita for singer Peggy (Margaret) Lee. He supposedly named it after the Spanish version of her name, Margarita!

“Whatever story is true, there is no doubt that the Margarita is an appealing, sexy cocktail, known for its attractive salt rim. The salt is not just for decoration though, as the salty flavour is an essential part of the overall drink, complimenting the lime.

“If making your Margarita pink why not add something like Himalayan Pink Salt around the rim? It goes perfectly with margaritas as well as so many other dishes.

“Finally, I’d like to mention our Hpnotiq Harmony cocktail,” said Nikos. “Hpnotiq is another spirit you may not have tried. We have had great feedback on this glamorous Champagne cocktail. A blend of premium French vodka, exotic juices, and a touch of cognac, the Hynotiq is topped with Champagne foam, and instead of a traditional garnish, I use a mini rubber ducky! It has a vibrant violet colour which not only looks beautiful, but makes it ideal for layering. It also mixes well with white wine, champagne, or enjoy it simply over ice!”

Further details on all of Brasserie Ecosse’s current cocktail choice [here](#).



Nikos of Brasserie Ecosse