



Mix Shake Stir: Recipes from Danny Meyer's Acclaimed New York City Restaurants

From Little, Brown and Company

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The bartenders at Danny Meyer's wildly popular restaurants are known for their creative concoctions. Guests at Union Square Café or Gramercy Tavern expect not only the finest cuisine but also Meyer's special brand of hospitality that often begins with a Venetian Spritz or a Cranberry Daiquiri. In MIX SHAKE STIR, Meyer offers all the tips and tools needed to become a masterful mixologist and supplements the cocktail recipes with gourmet takes on bar snacks. There are over 100 recipes of bar classics, signature favorites, and original, refreshing libations--from the Modern's elegant mojito made with champagne and rose water to Tabla's Pomegranate Gimlet. Shaken or stirred, straight up or on the rocks, these cocktails make this collection an invaluable resource for elegant entertaining.

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Editorial Review

Amazon.com Review

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Straight Up: Talking Cocktails with Danny Meyer

As the owner of some of New York's most acclaimed restaurants (with 19 James Beard Awards between them), restaurateur Danny Meyer has been raising the bar on hospitality for a generation of diners. In *Mix Shake Stir*, a gorgeous collection of creative cocktails, mixology tips, and gourmet nibbles, Meyer extends his legendary level of service behind the bar, offering readers the ultimate resource for elegant entertaining at home. Amazon.com senior editor Brad Thomas Parsons checked in with Meyer to talk about cocktail culture, signature drinks and spirits, and entertaining at home.



Amazon.com: So I imagine you and your staff had a grand time testing the recipes for *Mix Shake Stir*. What are some of your favorite drinks in the book?

Danny Meyer: I'm fond of anything that does not include Tequila or Gin. There. Now you know the two spirits I just can't stomach. Seriously, one of my top favorites is the Dirty Pete [recipe follows]--so named because it's a dirty martini juiced up with Texas Pete hot sauce. There's a fun story behind its creation. It fits perfectly at Blue Smoke.

Amazon.com: In the introduction to the book you ruminate on the "ritual of cocktail hour" your parents and their friends observed when you were growing up in St. Louis. There's even a drink in the book, the Mortoni, in honor of your father. Do you think the at-home cocktail hour will ever regain its *Mad Men*-era popularity?

Meyer: Every now and then, one or two--or more--people find themselves tempted by the idea of a cocktail--even though it had been the furthest thing from their mind when they arrived. When entertaining at home I sometimes begin by saying, "I'm having a cocktail--but we also have wine and beer if you'd prefer." Cocktails will probably not regain their early dominance--mostly because there weren't as many really good wines back in the Mad Men era. But they'll always have a place at the table.

Amazon.com: What are some of your tips, regarding cocktails, for successful entertaining at home?

Meyer: Always have plenty of ice on hand, and make sure to have a bottle of each major spirit--vodka, gin, white and dark rum, scotch, and bourbon. It helps to have vermouth in case someone might want a martini, and it can't hurt to have lemon, lime, and green olives.

Amazon.com: I'm a firm believer that every man should have a go-to drink at the ready when he steps up to order at the bar. What's yours?

Meyer: The Mortoni. Equal parts Campari, vodka, and tonic; over lots of ice and garnished with a lime. I named it for my late father, Morton Meyer, whose go-to drink was a Negroni (which is classically gin or vodka mixed with Campari and vermouth). I'd drink a Mortoni over a Negroni any day.

Amazon.com: Do you have a favorite signature drink at each of your restaurants?

Meyer: I love the Dark and Stormy at Blue Smoke. And the Martini at Eleven Madison Park (have it mixed tableside!) is peerless. At Tabla, I'd order the Tablatini, and at Union Square Cafe, I tend to drink wine.

Amazon.com: I would think that, after the reservationist and the host or hostess, the bartender plays a pivotal customer-service role in your organization. What special touches do the bartenders working for your Union Square Hospitality Group bring to your bars?

Meyer: They are hosts, listeners, and guides--long before they're mixologists! They need to understand our food, our service style, and important details about our guests.

Amazon.com: Whether I'm alone or even with a friend, I often prefer sitting and eating at the bar rather than a table. What's your take on dining at the bar? Should it be reserved for drinking?

Meyer: No! Going all the way back to 1985 when Union Square Cafe first opened, we've never even contemplated building a bar without imagining it full of diners as well as drinkers.

Amazon.com: With a return to vintage recipes like fizzes, smashes, swizzles, and slings and housemade infusions, syrups, sodas, and bitters, many bars and restaurants are displaying a renewed interest the pre-Prohibition Golden Age of the American cocktail. Do you think this is a trend that's here to stay?

Meyer: I think for a number of years, peoples' interest in wine leapfrogged their passion for cocktails. But now cocktails are enjoying a renaissance in terms of the interest they're generating among inquisitive hedonists. There will always be adventuresome and aspirational types who seek what's new, and what is good. For that reason, there's no going back!

Amazon.com: You also touch upon the importance of ice in the book, an increasingly popular topic among drink aficionados. Have you installed Kold-Draft ice machines (the ones that crank out those slow-melting, perfect 1.25 x 1.25 cubes of nearly impurity-free ice) in any of your restaurants?

Meyer: Yes. Eleven Madison Park and Gramercy Tavern take their ice especially seriously. And regardless of the ice machine at our places, we filter the water before it becomes ice.

Amazon.com: *Mix Shake Stir* features many drinks inspired by greenmarkets, and more bartenders seem to be taking cues from kitchen (and vice versa) when creating their cocktails. Your Heirloom Bloody Mary is a

great example. How have your bartenders surprised you with their renewed attention to using seasonal ingredients?

Meyer: It's really not a surprise, because many of our bartenders were once either waiters or even cooks. They're around good food and ingredients all day, and they want to use those same quality ingredients they see elsewhere in the restaurant behind their bars.

Amazon.com: I really admired the use of spirits like Aperol, Chartreuse, Punt e Mes, and Cherry Heering in the book. What do you think is an underrated spirit that more people need to pay more attention to?

Meyer: The one you like the best! Not that it is underrated, but I am an avowed nut for Campari.

Amazon.com: I like to see a bartender dip a cocktail straw into a mixed drink to sample it to make sure it's achieved its proper balance. You mention in the book it's like a chef tasting a dish before sending out. Do you think enough bartenders are doing this?

Meyer: It's important that bar patrons understand what's going on with that straw dip... I can imagine that for many people it's like, "get your straw out of my cocktail!" In any case, we owe it to our guests to make sure that food and drinks taste as good as they're supposed to. Tasting helps.

Amazon.com: You even include many nibbles and bar snacks to complement the drinks in *Mix Shake Stir* but I have to ask how Blue Smoke's BBQ potato chips and blue cheese dip didn't make the final cut? If I ask really nicely could you share the recipe?

Meyer: I'm sorry that I haven't been able to get Chef Kenny Callaghan to share it. It is mighty good, though!

Amazon.com: It's been a tough time for many restaurants, but here in Seattle, with every restaurant that closes there's another big-buzz debut in the works and many downtown joints are seem to have a "what recession?" vibe as they're SRO at 9PM on a weeknight. Hospitality seems more important than ever. What are some keys for a restaurateur to attract and maintain loyal customers in this economic time?

Meyer: The same as always: good food, deft service, and a warm, genuine welcome. The recession has been humbling for everyone. But it's not hard to show humility when you know that it is harder than ever for people to part with hard-earned dollars in your restaurant. Extra appreciation goes a long way. I will say that our hospitality industry never ceases to amaze with can-do entrepreneurs. Behind every fallen leaf lies a fresh, green bud.

Amazon.com: With Shake Shack, Blue Smoke, El Verano Taqueria, Box Frites, and the Delta Sky360 Club you're a big part of the much buzzed-about culinary scene at Citi Field, the Mets' new ballpark. How has the experience been so far?

Meyer: We have learned an enormous amount. The team we've fielded there has been remarkable, and I'd reckon they've created as much fan pleasure with their food and hospitality as the Mets have on the field! None of us can wait until next year to apply all we've learned to keep improving even further.

Amazon.com: And speaking of Shake Shack, how does the new Upper West Side outpost compare to the original Madison Park location?

Meyer: Our Upper West Side Shake Shack--unbelievably--is just as busy as the original in Madison Square

Park. But because we had more space to work with, we were able to increase the size of our kitchen, and so the line moves quickly. What I'm proudest of is the incredible level of consistency both in terms of the food and our team's service and hospitality.

From Publishers Weekly

Meyer has long been a hero to New York City restaurant goers via his eclectic and acclaimed eateries—the upscale Gramercy Tavern, exotic Tabla and low-down Blue Smoke and Shake Shack. Now, perhaps in a nod to the economic climate, Meyer befriends the stay-at-home crowd with an excellent guide to the affordable luxury known as the artisanal cocktail. Resisting the capitalistic impulse to crank out a book representing each of his establishments, he instead pulls recipes from all of them, 140 in toto, providing enough martinis, highballs and infused liquor to withstand any recession. He stacks the drinks into five different categories. Favorite Classics (old-fashioned, Negroni and such); New Classics like a Pomegranate gimlet and a modern martini with cilantro-infused gin; Inspired Flavors such as the Kachumber Cooler (a favorite at Tabla made with muddled cucumber, cilantro and chili pepper); Elegant Sips, where Champagne and sherry make their presence known; and Casual Libations for the beach, the backyard or the mojito-fueled dance party. And because no one should have too many blood orange margaritas on an empty stomach, Meyer concludes with a chapter of Bar Fare. The kick from his five-spice cashews, Thai trail mix and hot garlic potato chips all require that a tall glass of ice water be added to the evening's drink list. (*May*)

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Review

"MIX SHAKE STIR is the best thing that's happened to cocktail lovers since Kingsley Amis's *Everyday Drinking*. This indispensable guide will make you a very popular host. Danny Meyer proves once again that he knows more about hospitality than anyone since Escoffier and Ritz." **Jay McInerney**

"...an excellent guide to the affordable luxury known as the artisanal cocktail." **Publishers Weekly**

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Frances Savage:

Why don't make it to be your habit? Right now, try to prepare your time to do the important act, like looking for your favorite guide and reading a book. Beside you can solve your short lived problem; you can add your knowledge by the guide entitled Mix Shake Stir: Recipes from Danny Meyer's Acclaimed New York City Restaurants. Try to face the book Mix Shake Stir: Recipes from Danny Meyer's Acclaimed New York City Restaurants as your pal. It means that it can be your friend when you really feel alone and beside that course make you smarter than ever before. Yeah, it is very fortunated in your case. The book makes you much more confidence because you can know everything by the book. So , let's make new experience and knowledge with this book.

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