

Liqueurs and other Alcoholic Beverages

I had not investigated liqueurs and some of the more uncommon alcoholic beverages, so I had no idea as to how they tasted. I therefore acquired as many small sampler bottles as I easily could and tasted them. Although what I gathered are obviously not all the liqueurs that are available, they do represent the majority of those commonly found on most liquor store shelves. After drinking them Neat at room temperature, I tried to group them by major flavor, and made comments as to how they tasted, their texture, and etceteras. Those in the group that I especially liked I marked with a plus (+) symbol.

CAUTION: Opened liqueurs last only a year or two. Bottles with only a little liquid remaining should be finished-off first, because of the larger oxygen-filled space that was created through emptying.

Anise Flavor:

Absente Absinthe Refined Liqueur (france) =

Some burn due to high proof. Medium texture. Bitter alcohol flavor with an anise infusion. Absinthe should always be diluted before drinking. When you add water, the liquid becomes cloudy. Absinthe is naturally slightly bitter, so to add sweetness, the water is typically dripped over a sugar cube suspended in a slotted holder above the serving glass. Absente includes wormwood and other herbs, so when diluted you smell an aroma like an alpine meadow. After the preparation ritual, absinthe should be sipped. Note that contrary to the false mythology, Absinthe is NOT, and never has been, a psychedelic.

+ Romana Classico Sambuca Liqueur (italy) =

Sambuca is a regional Italian drink flavored with anise. Romana Sambuca is the most commonly available brand of Sambuca. It has a thick texture like pancake syrup, and tastes like a strong licorice drop. Mild, it is typically drunk Neat as an Ammazzacaffè (bitter coffee aftertaste counteractive), or poured in a coffee instead of sugar.

Berry Flavor:

+ Chambord Natural Black Raspberry Liqueur (france) =

Mild. Thinner texture. Moderate semi-sweet boysenberry taste with an undercurrent of cognac. Drinkable Neat, but may lead to the same mild stomach queasiness that one gets from eating an excessive amount of sweet berries. Can be poured over a desert.

Citrus Flavor:

+ Cointreau Orange-Peel Liqueur (france) =

Tangy, and a bit refreshing. Thin texture. Tastes like tangerine peels. Flavor really hits you, being both noticeably bitter, yet sweet at the same time. Cointreau is a brand of Triple Sec, which is an orange-flavored liqueur made from the dried peels of bitter and sweet oranges. It is used as an orange flavoring ingredient in several mixed drinks. Sipable Neat in a small glass as a cloying Desert Liqueur.

Cuarenta Y Tres Licor 43 (spain) =

Very slight burn makes you are aware that it is an alcohol. Very thin texture. Tastes like a dash of lemon, and some spiced (43 spices to be specific) rum-like base alcohol. Definite taste of sugar makes it drinkable Neat.

Grand Marnier Cordon Rouge Orange & Cognac Liqueur (france) =

Mild, but you are aware that it is an alcohol. Thin texture. Tastes like bitter oranges with an undertone of cognac. Grand Marnier is supposedly made from a blend of Cognac brandy, distilled essence of bitter orange, and sugar. It is an ingredient in Crepe Suzette, as well as a bitter orange flavoring for mixed drinks. A tad too bitter Neat.

Landucci Lemon Liqueur (italy) =

Extremely mild. Just a hint of dry lemon flavor, without any lemon bitterness. Can easily be drunk Neat, but the taste is so watery as to make you wonder "what's the point"?

Coffee Flavor:

+ Cafe Granita Coffee Liqueur =

Smooth. Medium texture. Tastes like a full-bodied coffee, without any harshness or bitterness. Has a moderate taste of very sweet cherry flavoring on top of it, with the slightest hint of peach. Drinkable Neat. It is recommended for a *White Russian* cocktail.

Kahlua Rum & Coffee Liqueur (mexico) =

Mild. Thin texture. Tastes like carmelly rum with a very slightly bitter coffee mixed in. Sweet, with a subtle undertone of vanilla. It is considered best when served chilled. An average coffee liqueur that neither offends or excites. I don't care for it.

Dairy Flavor:

Horchata:

Caruva Horchata Rum, Cream, & Cinnamon Liqueur =

Mild. Thinner texture. Tastes like low-fat milk mixed with cinnamon donut sugar. An average rum horchata. Can be drunk Neat or used as a suitable cinnamon flavor mixer.

+ Rum Chata Horchata Con Ron Caribbean Rum & Real Dairy Cream =

Mild. Medium texture. Tastes like creamy milk on good cinnamon breakfast cereal. A good rum horchata. Can be drunk Neat or used as a suitable cinnamon flavor mixer.

Irish Cream:

Baileys Original Irish Cream Liqueur (ireland) =

Mild. Thicker texture. Tastes like cheap almond-vanilla coffee creamer. An average irish cream liqueur. Can be drunk Neat or used in a suitable mixed drink.

Saint Brendan's Irish Cream Liqueur (ireland) =

Mild. Thick texture. Mostly cream taste, with a subtle underlayer of mild whiskey. A good irish cream liqueur. Can be drunk Neat or used in a suitable mixed drink.

+ Triibe =

Very smooth, clear liquid. Contains NO dairy, so it can be drunk by those who are lactose intolerant, and it will not curdle if mixed. Light toffee, vanilla, and honey, with a hint of fudge taste, mix to produce an almost coconut-rice-like flavor. Tasty Neat.

Flower Flavor:

HpnotiQ Harmonie Vodka, Fruit, & Cognac Liqueur (france) =

Strong, very bitter, over-ripe exotic-fruit flavor. It is said to be made with violets, lavender, and berries. Avoid drinking this awful stuff Neat.

+ St-Germain Elderflower (france) =

Strong, sweet flavor. Thin texture. Initially a bit cloying, like an overly-intense berry taste, but then it mellows down to what I can only describe as a flower petal taste. It is claimed that the fragile elderflowers are immediately bicycled down the alps after hand-picking. A tad too intense as a Neat drink, so better used as a flavoring ingredient.

Herbal Flavor:

+ Jagermeister Herbal Liqueur (germany) =

Mild, but you are aware that it is an alcohol. Thinner texture. Tastes like a mixture of semi-sweet herbs (56 to be specific), including some licorice. It is recommended to be served ice-cold, and can be drunk Neat as a Digestif (after heavy-meal digestive aid). It is infamous as an ingredient in the Jagerbomb energy drink cocktail.

Rumple Minze Peppermint Schnapps (canada) =

Strong, due to high proof, but not harsh. Medium texture. Powerful (to the point of becoming bitter) peppermint-oil taste, with an undercurrent of a clear alcohol. Intended to be chilled, it can be drunk Neat, but due to its intensity it works better as a mixer. Because it contains peppermint, it can act as a Digestif (after heavy-meal digestive aid).

Schwartzhog Herb Liqueur (germany) =

Slight burn. Medium texture. Tastes of an alcohol infused with non-bitter herbs, including some ginger. It supposedly is a medieval recipe which includes wormwood, ginger, pomegranates, and a secret ingredient called "hog root". It is recommended to always be served ice-cold, and drunk either Neat, or as a "bomb" in an energy drink cocktail.

Underberg Natural Digestive Herb Bitters (germany) =

Strong flavor, thin texture, with a bitter aftertaste. Underberg is a true Digestif (after heavy-meal digestive aid) bitter produced in Germany, and made from aromatic herbs from 43 countries. It is essentially a medieval style bitter herbal medicine (by tradition, the bitterness was required for healing), and is in fact sold in small potion bottles, which are portioned as a single after meal dose. The manufacturer even offers a special Underberg glass, which you can place in your table setting like a wine glass, and is just large enough to hold one portion. It is recommended that it be swallowed Neat, rapidly, and in its entirety. Unexpectedly, it did settle my stomach.

Nut Flavor:

+ Frangelico Liqueur (italy) =

Mild. Thinner texture. Flavor of hazelnuts and milk chocolate, which are neither bitter or sweet. Chocolate candy bar-like taste makes it easy to drink Neat.

Disaronno Originale Amaretto di Saronno (italy) =

Mild. Medium texture. Flavor of apricot and cherry-vanilla birthday-cake frosting. Taste is neither bitter or sweet, but you know you are drinking an alcohol. Can be drunk Neat, or used in a mixed drink.

Spirit Flavor:

+ Drambuie Scotch, Spice, & Honey Liqueur (scotland) =

Mild, with a warming afterglow. Medium texture. Some taste of mild honey over the top of a sharp spice. Underneath is the flavor of a smooth whiskey. Can be drunk Neat, especially on a chilly evening.

Ponche Caballero Liqueur (spain) =

Mild. Thin texture. Weak flavor of brandy mixed with orange and some other fruit. Quite watery, but the brandy taste eventually comes through somewhat as an aftertaste. Can be drunk Neat, or used in mixed drinks. Supposedly a very popular "punch" in Spain.

Southern Comfort =

Very slight burn. Thinner texture. Peach flavor stands above the base whiskey. Used in several mixed drinks. Can be drunk Neat, but may lead to the same mild stomach queasiness that one gets from overindulging in peach desert.