Sour Grapes Shrub Cocktail

Preservation nation. Steeping fruit, especially fruit that's on its way out, with vinegar and sugar isn't just about thrift. The result is a slightly fizzy, incredibly refreshing elixir that gained popularity during Colonial American times as a way to cool off workers in the field, though people had been sipping sweetened vinegar in hot climates for centuries before that. We like the unique flavor it lends to cocktails, savory and sweet at the same time. Try it with any fruit in season to create your own array of funk.

Ingredients

grape shrub

1/2 pound red globe grapes
1/2 cup white wine vinegar
1/3 cup sugar
1 teaspoon fresh rosemary leaves

cocktail

2 fresh rosemary sprigs
3 ounces gin
4 ounces grape shrub
2 ounces sweet vermouth

special equipment

cocktail shaker and strainer

Directions

for the shrub

Put the grapes, vinegar, sugar and rosemary leaves in a medium saucepan. Bring to a simmer over medium-high heat. Gently smoosh the grapes with a potato masher. Simmer for 5 minutes. Cool slightly and then strain into a heatproof jar, pushing on the solids. Chill. Makes about 1 cup.

for the cocktail

Light each sprig of rosemary so it smolders and put each one under an overturned rocks glass so they fill with rosemary smoke.

Fill a shaker with ice. Pour in the gin, grape shrub and vermouth and shake to chill. Turn over the rocks glasses, fill halfway with ice and strain half of the cocktail into each glass. Garnish with the charred rosemary.

total time: 15 minutes, plus chilling time
active prep: 15 minutes
serves: 2
difficulty: *easy*