The Martini with Salame Stuffed Olives

The martini, for all its simplicity, fuels more arguments than just about any cocktail. Vermouth or no? Shake or stir? What type of gin? Bitters? Lemon? Olive? Just give me a martini already. But as with everything worthwhile, your cocktail isn't going to be any better than what you put into it. But with good ingredients and thoughtful preparation, you can't go wrong. With the martini, it comes down to preference. The best way to make it is the way *you* like it. Some gins are mellow, some floral, some savory. Try a few and pick your favorite. We like Bombay Dry because of its earthiness and its affinity for the fennel in the salame. And we use vermouth. None of this "wave the bottle over the top" nonsense. Add it in. It smooths out the drink and adds a definitive flavor.

Ingredients
Ice
1 round of Finocchiona, 1½-inch in diameter, cut 1/4-inch thick
10 large green olives, pitted, with no stuffing
2 teaspoons dry vermouth
2 ounces London Dry gin (Bombay Dry Gin – not Sapphire)

Directions

Fill a martini glass with ice and cold water to chill.

Cut 5 planks, 1/4-inch each, from the flat surface of the salame. Then cut each plank in half. You're trying to get little salami plugs, roughly 1/4-inch by 1/2-inch, to fill the olives. But don't get obsessive about it. Just eyeball the salame (they come in all shapes and sizes, you just want to get a nice Italian fennel one) and cut it to fit in the olive. There's a strict "no ruler" policy at cocktail time. Stuff each olive with one of the salame plugs. Spear two on a toothpick, and pop the rest in the fridge to have on hand when the urge hits. (Which could be as soon as you finish this martini. Which is fine.)

Dump the ice and water. Put your olive spear in the glass. Fill a shaker about one-third of the way with fresh ice. Pour in the vermouth and the gin and stir to get it good and cold, at least a minute.

Strain into the martini glass. Shake it to get out every drop.

Dim the lights and sip and nibble your cares away.

total time: 10 minutes
active prep: 10 minutes
serves: 1
difficulty: easy