



Claude R. Scicluna

Apéritif & Digestive

Apéritif

- ✓ An aperitif is an alcoholic beverage usually served before a meal to stimulate the appetite, and is therefore usually dry
- ✓ These concoctions, which are called 'aperitifs'-presumably open a way to the stomach for the vast meal which is to follow
- ✓ "Aperitif" is a French word derived from the Latin verb 'aperire', which means "to open"



Apéritif

- ✓ There is no single alcoholic drink that is always served as an aperitif
- ✓ Fortified wine, liqueur, and dry champagne are probably the most common choices
- ✓ Because it is served before a meal, the emphasis is usually on dry rather than sweet, as a general guideline



Apéritif

- ✓ The aperitif was introduced in France in 1846 by a French chemist, Joseph Dubonnet
- ✓ Created a wine-based drink as a means of delivering malaria-fighting quinine
- ✓ The medicine was a bitter brew, so he developed a formula of herbs and spices to mask quinine's sharp flavour, and it worked so well that the recipe has remained well-guarded ever since



Apéritif

- ✓ French Foreign Legion soldiers made use of it in mosquito-infested Northern Africa
- ✓ Joseph's wife was so fond of the drink that she had all her friends try it, and its popularity spread

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Choices for an Apéritif

Dry Vermouth

- ✓ An aromatized wine, a type of fortified wine flavoured with various botanicals (roots, barks, flowers, seeds, herbs, spices)
- ✓ Dry ingredients often used in vermouths include cloves, cinnamon, quinine, citrus peel, cardamom, marjoram, chamomile, coriander, juniper, hyssop, and ginger

Choices for an Apéritif

- ✓ The modern versions of vermouth were first produced in the mid to late 18th century in Turin, Italy
- ✓ While vermouth was traditionally used for medicinal purposes, its true claim to fame is as an aperitif, with fashionable cafes in Turin serving it to guests around the clock



Choices for an Apéritif

- ✓ Martini & Rossi
- ✓ Cinzano
- ✓ Gancia
- ✓ Punt e Mes
- ✓ Noilly Prat
- ✓ Dubonnet



Choices for an Apéritif

Champagne or Sparkling Wine

- ✓ these are on the dry side, they could easily be served before a meal, thus preparing the taste-buds for the following meal
- ✓ Cassar-de-Malte
- ✓ Moët & Chandon
- ✓ Bollinger Brut
- ✓ Veuve Clicquot Ponsardin
- ✓ Krug
- ✓ Cava



Choices for an Apéritif

Dry White Wine

- ✓ any dry table wine, which, because of its dryness helps to stimulate the appetite

Ex: Local Chardonnay
Chablis
Riesling
Sauvignon Blanc



Choices for an Apéritif

Pastis

- ✓ An anise flavoured spirit and aperitif from France
- ✓ The popularity of pastis may be attributable to an old tradition of Mediterranean anise liquors that includes sambuca, ouzo, and other similar flavoured spirits
- ✓ Ricard or Pernod



Choices for an Apéritif

Sherry

Dry Sherry like Fino or Amontillado, is a fortified wine made from white grapes that are grown near the town of Jerez de la Frontera in Andalusia, Spain

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Gulf of Cadiz

Sherry bodegas

- 1 Fernando de Castilla
- 2 Bodegas Tradición
- 3 Gonzáles Byass
- 4 Lustau
- 5 Diéz Mérito
- 6 El Maestro Sierra



Sanlúcar de Barrameda

Guadalquivir

Trebujena

SEVILLE

Lebrija

To Seville

Boundary of Jerez DO

CADIZ

Jerez de la Frontera

Puerto de Santa María

Guadalete

Cadiz

Puerto Real

Boundary of Jerez DO

Chiclana de la Frontera

Vineyards

0 5 10
kilometres

Choices for an Apéritif

Aperol

An Italian aperitif made of bitter orange, gentian (a genus of flowering plants), rhubarb (species of plant in the family Polygonaceae), and cinchona (a genus of flowering plants in the family Rubiaceae) among other ingredients



Choices for an Apéritif

- ✓ Aperol was originally produced by the Barbieri company, based in Padua, but is now produced by the Campari company
- ✓ While Aperol was originally created in 1919, it did not become successful until after World War II
- ✓ Although it tastes and smells much like Campari, Aperol has an alcohol content of 11% — less than half that of Campari
- ✓ Aperol and Campari have the same sugar content



Choices for an Apéritif

Campari

- ✓ An alcoholic liqueur, considered an aperitif (20.5%, 21%, 24%, 25%, or 28.5% ABV, depending on the country in which it is sold), obtained from the infusion of herbs and fruit (including chinotto and cascrilla) in alcohol and water
- ✓ It is a bitter drink characterised by its dark red colour



Choices for an Apéritif

- ✓ Chinotto are small oranges which are sour or bitter and are commonly called by their Italian name, chinotto
- ✓ Cascarilla is a plant species of the genus Croton, that is native to the Caribbean, and medicine from the bark of this plant is used as a tonic and stimulant, and a fever reducer
- ✓ Cascarilla bark is also used to flavour the liqueurs Campari and Vermouth)



Digestives

A digestive is an alcoholic beverage served after a meal, in theory to aid digestion

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Digestives

- ✓ Bitter digestives typically contain carminative herbs, which are thought to aid digestion
- ✓ A bitter is traditionally an alcoholic preparation flavoured with botanical matter such that the end result is characterized by a bitter, sour, or bittersweet flavour
- ✓ Numerous longstanding brands of bitters were originally developed as patent medicines, but are now sold as digestives and cocktail flavourings



Choice of Digestives

Angostura bitters

A concentrated bitters, or botanically infused alcoholic mixture, made of water, 44.7% alcohol, herbs and spices, by 'House of Angostura' in Trinidad and Tobago

Typically used for flavouring beverages The bitters were first produced in the town of Angostura (Ciudad Bolívar, Venezuela) and do not contain angostura bark

The bottle is easily recognisable by its distinctive over-sized label



Choice of Digestives

Angostura bitters

Originally used to help with upset stomachs of the soldiers in the Simón Bolívar army, it later became popular in soda water

Angostura bitters are alleged to have restorative properties

It was reported to be a remedy for hiccups, and also can be used as a cure for an upset stomach



Choice of Digestives

Amaro Montenegro

- ✓ a traditional amaro distilled in Bologna, Italy
- ✓ It is made using over 40 herbs, including vanilla and orange peels, bottled at 23%vol
- ✓ First produced by Stanislao Cobianchi in the late 19th century and is named after Princess Elena of Montenegro



Choice of Digestives

Amaro Averna

- ✓ An Italian liqueur in the Amaro category produced in Caltanissetta, Sicily
- ✓ It is named after its inventor, Salvatore Averna, who invented the recipe in 1868
- ✓ This drink is produced on the Island of Sicily and is considered a traditional drink
- ✓ The herbs, roots and citrus rinds are allowed to soak in the base liquor before caramel is added



Choice of Digestives

Cynar

- ✓ Italian bitter liqueur made from 13 herbs and plants
- ✓ Predominant amongst these is the artichoke (*Cynara scolymus*), from which the drink derives its name
- ✓ Cynar is dark brown in colour, has a bittersweet flavour, and its strength is 16.5% ABV
- ✓ It comes within the Italian category of alcoholic beverage known as Amaro



Choice of Digestives

Fernet-Branca

is a brand of fernet, which is a type of amaro or bitter herbal liqueur

Bernardino Branca invented the Fernet-Branca bitter in Milan, Italy in 1845

The brand soon thereafter gained popularity, leading to the founding of the Fratelli Branca Distillery

Intensely bitter since its inception in 1845, Fernet-Branca has been produced according to the original recipe that has been handed down from generation to generation



Choice of Digestives

Ramazzotti

- ✓ A medium style Amaro (Italian potable bitters), bottled at 30% alcohol by volume. Bottled in Milan by Pernod Ricard
- ✓ Ausano Ramazzotti created the formula for Ramazzotti in his small Milan laboratory in 1815
- ✓ His creation, a sweet, plant-based liqueur, proved an immediate success



Choice of Digestives

Ramazzotti

- ✓ The recipe contains neither colouring nor artificial additives and is still secret today
- ✓ Its most distinctive flavours are the Sicilian sweet oranges, bitter oranges from Curaçao, star anise and cardamom



Choice of Digestives

Vecchio Amaro del Capo

- ✓ The aroma of unique ingredients in a secret recipe from the heart of Calabria
- ✓ A mix of twenty-nine herbs, flowers, fruits and roots from Calabria
- ✓ should always be served chilled at a temperature of -20°C , the mint, aniseed and liquorice emerge in all their strength



Choice of Digestives

Leila – Maltese digestive

An all-natural blend of Mediterranean carobs and aromatic herbs, Leila uniquely combines the digestive attributes of carobs with the subtly sweet aftertaste of traditional liqueurs.

The carob has been cultivated in the Mediterranean basin for over 4,000 years and is historically associated with health-enhancing and digestive properties.



Choice of Digestives

Leila – Maltese digestive

The naturally sweet, almost honey-like carob is rich in essential minerals and salts and is inherently free from addictive or allergenic stimulants

In a nutshell, the carob soothes both our stomach and taste-buds with no undesirable side-effects

