Creative cooking at the Caf (and UC)

So maybe you don’t believe that the UC and the Caf qualify as fine dining. And though I adore the Caf, I see your point. But with a few simple “recipes” for Caf Cocktails (UC Coolers?); it’s easy to transform your dining experience.

Campus dining, or trendy gourmet coffee shop? You’ll never taste the difference.

For your sampling convenience, the following drinks are divided into categories:

Coffee Beverages

The Frappuccino — everyone’s favorite Starbucks creation. Why spend five dollars on a four-pack of these at Target when you can easily create them in unlimited supply for free on campus?

Basic Frappuccino: take a standard dining services glass, fill one-third with ice, one-third with coffee and one-third with milk.

Strong Frappuccino: fill your glass a little less than halfway with ice, about an inch and a half from the top with coffee and an inch of milk. You can doctor the percentages to your taste, but the trick is to keep the same proportion of coffee and ice so that your frappuccino is actually cold when you drink it.

Mocha Frappuccino: follow all of the above instructions, for either basic or strong, but substitute chocolate milk for regular milk.

Peppermint Espresso Frappuccino: this one only works if you’re fortunate enough to be dining at the Caf. On your way in, grab a few peppermints from the bowl under the comment cards. Drop the mints in the bottom of the cup, insert ice and coffee and milk to your chosen basic proportions and enjoy.

Mocha Latte: in a mug, one-half coffee and one-half chocolate milk (skip the ice here) will do the trick. Add peppermints first for a minty zing!

To make your coffee creation extra-special, try rimming the glass with sugar, or adding a splash of whipped cream and sprinkles to the top.

Cream sodas

If you lived in a bygone era (or a very small town) with an actual soda fountain, these drinks will bring you back to the good ol’ days.

Root Beer Float: fill your glass one-third of the way with ice, and then about one-eight or less (depending on your preferred creaminess) with milk. Fill the rest with root beer.

Coke Float: fill your glass one-third of the way with ice, and then about one-eighth or less (depending on your preferred creaminess) with milk. Fill the rest with Coke.

Cherry Coke Float: fill your glass one-third of the way with ice, and then about one-eighth or less (depending on your preferred creaminess) with milk. Fill the rest with Cherry Coke.

Lemon Creme: fill your glass one-third of the way with ice, and one-eighth or less (depending on your preferred creaminess) with milk. Fill the rest with Sprite.

Note: all float beverages can substitute frozen yogurt for milk for a more authentic taste. Try the Hershey’s ice cream at the Caf.

Italian sodas

Italian sodas, a coffeehouse staple, are easily created by mixing Sprite with any fruit beverage.

Shirley Temple: the “fancy” restaurant drink for kids, this one is sure to bring back memories. Start with a base of ice and fill a little over halfway with the Minute Maid cranberry juice cocktail. Add a shot of either kiwi strawberry or apple berry (your choice, they both taste the same to me) and fill the rest with Sprite.

Orangina: sadly minus the gorgeous pear-shaped bottle, but it still tastes practically the same. Start with a base of ice, add three-fourths a glass of Minute Maid’s premium orange blend, and top it off with Sprite. You can even add a kick (and some pulp) to your Orangina if the Caf has grapefruit — just squeeze a little in, stir and you’ve got a citrus cocktail.

Diet drinks

Excellent for those trying to stave off the “Freshman 15.”

Italian sodas can easily be mixed with Diet Sprite instead of Sprite for a “healthier” alternative, if you prefer cancer-causing chemicals to carbohydrates.

Coke floats can become Diet Coke floats, too.

Diet Ginger Ale is easy too — with just a shot (like half an inch) of Diet Coke, and the rest Diet Sprite, you’ve got a homemade brew. Just a warning though, this tastes a little more convincing with regular Sprite.

So next time your dinner choices are looking a little blah, remember that even on baked cod day, dining services always has something to offer. Fix yourself a tasty treat, and drink your sorrows away.

— Natalie Ronollo

Sure, the dessert options at the dining halls are often tasty, but don’t rule out making your own Rice Krispies treats. The most important ingredient is the marshmallows. These are found next to the hot chocolate machine in the Caf. Fill a bowl with some and add a bit of butter. Stick the bowl in the microwave and make it until melted (beware of making a mess) and then stir in the Rice Krispies.

The do-it-yourself belgian waffles at the Caf and the UC are not only a satisfying meal in themselves, but they can also be a decadent dessert. Using a half or full waffle as your base, top it off with some soft serve. Add strawberries or fruit from the salad bar to complete the sundae.

Another tasty dessert is a recreation of the Sno-to-Go stuffed snoball. Using a styrofoam cup, fill it about halfway with the frozen slush of your choice, add a layer of vanilla soft serve, fill the remainder of the cup with more slush and top it all off with a dollop of soft serve. It’s not quite the same consistency, but it can tide you over until Sno-to-Go opens in the spring.

Make a milkshake by filling a styrofoam cup with regular ice cream or soft serve, adding some milk and stirring vigorously with a spoon. It makes a great on-the-go snack to take to class.

For days when you don’t have time to sit down for a full breakfast, make a breakfast parfait. Using either the styrofoam coffee cups or the larger to-go cups, start with a layer of yogurt from the salad bar. Then add a layer of crunchy cereal and a layer of fruit. Continue with these layers until you fill the cup. Pop on a lid, grab a spoon and you’re ready to go.

If you can’t hold out for the sporadic taco nights at the dining halls, you can whip up your own nachos fairly easily.

The Caf usually has a container of tortilla chips. Pile a bunch of these on your plate as the base. Next stop by the salad bar for your toppings. Cheese is a must. Also consider tomatoes, bell peppers, onions, kidney beans and black olives. Pop the plate in the microwave to melt the cheese, throw on some hot sauce and enjoy.

When the hot food at the dining halls looks suspect and you can’t face a regular old salad, put together a little makeshift stir-fry. Fill a bowl at the salad bar with tofu and veggies such as broccoli, onions, tomatoes, peppers, sprouts, etc. Flavor with soy sauce, salt, pepper or some of the other seasonings available. Cover dish with another bowl, upside down and microwave for a minute and a half. Add some rice if there is any available for a complete meal.

— Whitney Wun
Beloved campus administrators divulge their guilty culinary pleasures

President:
Gene Nichol

Favorite food: good chili
Favorite home cooked meal: good chili
Favorite Williamsburg Restaurant: Pierce’s
Favorite on-campus dining establishment: The Caf
Who cooks at home: me, or my daughter Jenny, or Ukrop’s
Favorite drink: Fosters Beer

Ever wonder what everybody’s favorite campus administrators like to eat? Well the secret’s out, kids. President Gene Nichol and Vice President Sam Sadler have divulged their favorite drinks, meals, dining halls, restaurants and more. My knee is telling me this is going to be good.

Vice President for Student Affairs:
Sam Sadler

Favorite food: Seafood of almost any kind, but especially crab — but I do like to eat so it would be easier to list my least favorite food than my most.
Favorite home-cooked meal: My wife’s rock fish, I think. It’s amazing. Then again, home cooked meals at my house are pretty special so it isn’t easy to pick out a favorite.
Favorite Williamsburg restaurant: The Fat Canary
Favorite on-campus dining establishment: The Marketplace because of the people who work there. Their friendliness makes my day.
Who normally cooks at home: My wife does. Earlier she had her own catering business and is a fantastic cook! Ask any student who has eaten at our house.
Favorite drink: My wife’s peach milk shakes. Now, mind you, they require fresh peaches so there is only one time of the year when they are available. But when they are, it’s something special.

For light dinners or lunches, these easily-prepared foods are great for those short on time, cookware

Let’s face it. College students are low on money, short on gourmet cookware and always on the run. If you need a fast lunch in the mad dash between classes or between your sociology group project meeting and your intramural soccer game, these quick and easy foods have come to save you.

Looking for breakfast or a midnight snack on the go? Chocolate Chip Eggo waffles are the perfect choice. These heat up quickly in the microwave and in the toaster, even without defrosting. The chocolate chips give an extra kick to the traditional plain waffle, but if chocolate chips aren’t your thing, they are also available in blueberry and apple cinnamon.

Chef Boyardee is not just for five-year-olds. The master of gourmet canned ravioli is great for college kids, too. And since it’s available usually for between $1 and $1.50, it fits student budgets as well. If you’re in the mood to cook, just put it in a small saucer on your stove, but you can also microwave it, saving yourself cooking time, and cleaning time. Also for your convenience, the ravioli is available at the Student Exchange and the Marketplace.

Like Quesadillas? Like egg rolls? Then this is the snack for you. Although a little on the pricey side, T.G.I. Friday’s provides the best of both worlds: cheesy quesadillas in the convenience of an egg roll package. Just pop them in the microwave for just over one minute, and you’re done. Also be sure to try out T.G.I. Friday’s potato skins. Both work as great party food.
Venturing into the wine world can be a formidable task. If most of the wine you’ve tasted came out of a box, how are you going to know a Merlot from a Cabernet Sauvignon? Even if you have a more slightly refined palate, choosing something from a wine list at a restaurant or from the racks at the Wine Seller is still daunting.

Since most students at the College do not have the cash to spend on a $25 bottle of wine, let alone one that runs upward of $100, it’s not as important to know the distinctions between vintages and soil types. A little basic information about the wine making process, the types of grapes used and the wine production regions is enough to get the beginner started.

### The wine making process

On the most basic level, wine is fermented grape juice. The making of wine, though, is more complicated than that, as vintners have been refining the process for hundreds of years. Grapes are picked from the vine when ripe and then crushed. Solid bits and other contaminants are removed before the remaining liquid, the must, is left to ferment in large steel or wooden vats. After fermentation process, the wine is transferred to smaller barrels and left to age for anywhere from three months to several years. The wine is then bottled and ready for distribution.

### Wine names

Wines are named either for the type of grape used, the region in which they are produced, a combination of these or are given an invented name by the particular vineyard. For wines produced outside Europe, using the name of the primary grape used is most common. A Merlot, for example, is a red wine made from merlot grapes. European especially Italian ones, often named region of origin comes Champagne France, but is some combination of Chardonnay, and Pinot grapes.

### Wine production regions

Although wine originates in the Mediterranean region, there are now vineyards on six continents. Wine grapes almost exclusively grow between the 30th and the 50th degree north and between the 30th and 40th degree south. In 2002 the top three wine producing countries are still the traditional European ones: Italy, France and Spain. However, the United States and Australia round out the top five. In the United States, California is the leading wine producer, producing about 90 percent of the country’s wine.

### White versus red:

The color of the wine is not necessarily the same as the color of the grape. Red wine gets its color because the skins are left in during fermentation. The skins also contain tannins that give red wines their distinctive flavor. Many white wines, including champagne, are made from red grapes.

The traditional advice to pair red wine with red meat and white wine with white meat is a good place to start, but by no means is it a hard and fast rule. Both wines and foods have complex flavors and it is more important to find a combination you find pleasing than to follow outdated information. The only way to find something you like is to taste and experiment with different food and wine pairings and stay open minded about new flavors. — W.W.

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### Decipher a wine label

- **name of the winery**
- **year grapes were picked**
- **wine name** (Chianti refers to the region, it’s made primarily from Sangiovese grapes)
- **alcoholic content** (most wine is between 10 and 14 percent alcohol by volume)

### Major Wine Varietals

**Red**
- Merlot
- Cabernet Sauvignon
- Sangiovese
- Pinot Noir
- Shiraz

**White**
- Sauvignon Blanc
- Chardonnay
- Riesling
- Pinot Grigio
Cocktails: the fine art of mixing

Everyone loves the Beast, but in the unpredictable life of the college socialite, this fine Milwaukee product is not appropriate for every situation. Suppose one evening after a few hours of dancing, you and your lady (or gentleman) find your way back to your room for some romancing. Glenn Miller might find his way onto the stereo, cigarette smoke might hang thickly in the air, giving the hard world a soft edge, and you might find yourself thinking, “OK, this is the perfect time for a cocktail. If only I knew how to make something more subtle, something more impressive, something ... classier than Sex on the Beach.” Fear not, friend. You may not dress as well as Jake Gittes, but by the end of this page, you’ll be making a cocktail just as mean.

In this modern world of ours, definitions can be quite fluid — in the right context, a word can mean whatever you want it to. (All puns, by the way, are intended.) It will be useful, then, to discuss briefly exactly what “cocktail” means, in the context of this article. When you dump a slug of Morgan’s into a glass of Coke or make a Sex on the Beach, you’re concocting what is variously known as a mixed drink, highball or long drink. The point is, most of the drink is not alcohol; it is a flavorful beverage that has been spiked with a complementary liquor.

A cocktail is nearly the opposite: it’s mostly liquor that’s accented with other ingredients. In general (and there are no hard and fast rules in the world of booze), a cocktail is about five ounces, two or three of which are the base liquor; the rest is some kind of flavoring. The possible accents for a cocktail run the gamut from fruit juices to sweet syrups to other liquors or liqueurs. Of course, these are just blanket statements; there are many drinks that, through tradition or the indomitable goodwill of the happily drunk, are good-naturedly included in the mix of the cocktail world.

Gin

Opting for something better than Seagram’s is particularly important for gin; you will mark the difference in taste between the $10 and $30 bottles far more readily than with vodka, rum or tequila.

Martini: the classic proportions are 1/2 oz. dry vermouth, two oz. gin. A dry martini has a higher proportion of gin to vodka, rum or tequila. It’s important for gin; you will mark the difference in taste between the $10 and $30 bottles far more readily than with vodka, rum or tequila. A dry martini is a classy way of ordering a shot of gin. Martinis are traditionally stirred, but after extensive research, I have found that shaking them, contrary to popular belief, does not bruise the gin and does make you feel like taking on an army of Russians with your trusty Walther PPK.

Tom Collins: more of a long drink, but whatever. Shake two oz. gin, one oz. lemon juice and a spoonful of sugar. Strain into a glass filled with ice and top with soda water.

White Lady: another very old cocktail. One oz. gin, one oz. triple sec (or Cointreau), one oz. lemon juice. There are approximately 1001 variations on the gin-liqueur-citrus juice formula, all going by different names. Another particularly good one is two oz. gin, 1/2 oz. Cointreau, 1/2 lime juice.

Tequila

Unfortunately, most tequila-based cocktails call for unusual liquors or other ingredients. Fortunately, there are a few very tasty ones that don’t require anything exotic, and tequila shots will never go out of style.

Margarita: it seems like everyone loves the frozen variety, but in its classic form, a margarita is 1.5 oz. tequila, 3/4 oz. triple sec (or Cointreau), 1/2 lemon juice, 1/2 oz. lime juice, shaken and served in a salt-rimmed wine goblet.

Tequila Sunrise: shake 1.5 oz. tequila, two oz. orange juice and a glass grenadine the grenadine nice color

You will notice that we’ve suspiciously avoided cocktails made with vodka. This is because vodka has no particular flavor of its own; bad vodka tastes like rough alcohol and good vodka tastes like water. In theory, you could make any cocktail by substituting vodka for the base liquor to create a drink that is flatter and less interesting than its other alcoholic alternatives, or you could just save it for when your morning orange juice needs that extra pick-me-up.

We also skipped over drinks made with brandy or scotch or bourbon. There are, however, many excellent cocktails to be made with these liquors, and you are encouraged to give them a shot. The shelves of your average bookstore certainly do not suffer from a dearth of books on alcohol. One of the most encyclopedic and handy is “The Bartender’s Black Book” by Stephen Cunningham. “Mr. Boston: Official Bartender’s and Party Guide,” edited by Renee Cooper, is a perennial if biased favorite, and Paul Harrington has written an excellent book called “Cocktail,” which is sadly out of print but worth buying if you ever run across a copy. If you would rather spend your money on alcohol than on books about it, the Webtender (www.webtender.com) is useful, extensive and easily searchable.

Everyone at this college is a sharp cookie, so you all don’t need me to remind you to drink responsibly and, in particular, not to drive while drunk. It’s a dumb thing to do. Go out and enjoy your Friday night. If you have more questions about the fine art of mixing, you will find the answers at the bottom of a cocktail glass.

— Daniel Grady
Beer basics

You drink it. You love it. It is your best friend come Friday and Saturday night. Oh, and Mug Night. Hell, for some of us at the College (I’m sadly not one of them), it’s our best friend every night of the week. Beer. It’s what Homer Simpson would kill everyone in this room for, according to the shirts the bartenders at the Leafe wear. Sadly, beer is a friend most of us enjoy spending time with but never really get to know. While the following information, taken from the Professional Bartender Mixology Manual, won’t turn you into a beer aficionado, it will give you a means to understanding that other nectar of the gods.

Making the brew: the ingredients and the 12, um, we mean, three step process

Main ingredients: water, malt (usually barley malt), hops and yeast. Sometimes a malt or grain adjunct is also used.

1. Mashing: Mashing is the process of converting starches and malt into sugar using enzymes. The residue from the process, called wort, is strained out of the remaining liquid.

2. Brewing: During the brewing step, the wort is boiled with hops. Hops is the ingredient from which beer gets its bitter taste.

3. Fermenting: during fermentation yeast is added to the mix, turning the sugars into alcohol and carbon dioxide. Lagers are fermented at the bottom of a cold fermentation tank and then stored in tanks at close to freezing temperatures for several weeks. Ales are fermented at the top of a warm fermentation tank, followed by a relatively short maturing period at warmer temperatures.

Know your type: lager and ale variations

Lagers:
- Pilsner: mild, dry, light, three to five percent alcohol by volume.
  Examples: Miller, Coors, Corona, Heineken
- Light Beer: like pilsner, but contains less alcohol (usually two to three percent alcohol by volume) and fewer calories
  Examples: Bud Light, Amstel Light, Miller Lite
- Ice Beer: brewed at a cooler temperature and chilled below freezing to form crystals which are later filtered out. Ice beer is said to taste smoother than other beer and contains more alcohol by volume.
  Examples: Bud Ice, Molson Ice
- Malt Liquor: fermented at a higher temperature, leading to higher alcohol content (five and a half to six percent alcohol by volume)
  Examples: Colt 45, Old English 800
- Bock Beer: a dark lager with higher alcohol content, varies in color
  Example: Spaten

Ales:
- Pale ale: strong flavor, copper color
  Examples: Sierra Nevada, Old Dominion
- Porter: dark colored, bittersweet
  Examples: Red Hook, Wild Goose
- Stout: dark colored, high content
  Example: Guinness
- Wheat beer: The malt used for making this beer contains a higher amount of wheat. The resulting beer is fruity flavored.
  Example: Paulaner

Drink concoctions

Bleed Tribe Pride
— Alcohol Awareness Week mocktail competition winner, recipe by Megan Packett
Serves four.

Put one teaspoon chocolate syrup into each of four small cups. Combine cream, 1/4 teaspoon nutmeg and sugar. Whip. Stir remaining 1/2 teaspoon cinnamon into hot coffee. Pour coffee into cups. Stir to blend with syrup. Top with whipped cream. Serves four.

Cafe Speciale
Four teaspoons chocolate syrup
1/4 teaspoon nutmeg
1/2 cup heavy cream
1 tablespoon sugar
3/4 teaspoon cinnamon
1 and 1/2 cups extra-strength hot coffee

Put one teaspoon chocolate syrup into each of four small cups. Combine cream, 1/4 teaspoon cinnamon, nutmeg and sugar. Whip. Stir remaining 1/2 teaspoon cinnamon into hot coffee. Pour coffee into cups. Stir to blend with syrup. Top with whipped cream. Serves four.

Mexican coffee
Two cups water
1/4 cup coffee grounds (ground coarsely)
1 tablespoon brown sugar
1 cinnamon stick

Place all of the ingredients into a saucepan. Bring to a boil, reduce heat and bring to simmer for five minutes. Strain into mugs. Serves two.

Chocolate mint tea
6 mint tea bags
6 cups milk
6 tablespoons hot chocolate mix

In a saucepan, heat milk with tea bags until almost boiling. Steep for a couple of minutes and strain out tea bags. Pour out six mugs of milk, then stir in one tablespoon of chocolate powder in each mug. Serves six.

Peanut butter hot chocolate
8 oz. milk
3 teaspoons chocolate syrup
1 tablespoon peanut butter, smooth

Whipped cream
Heat milk in a saucepan until hot through. Add chocolate syrup and mix well. Stir in peanut butter to the concoction and stir until melted. Serve and top with whipped cream.

Simple eggnog
2 eggs, beaten well
3 tablespoons sugar
1 teaspoon vanilla
1/8 teaspoon nutmeg, ground
2 and 1/3 cups milk

Blend all ingredients together and serve chilled.