





樱桃熟了

CHERRY POPPER

拨开笼罩在樱桃烈酒身上的层层迷雾，探讨这一品类如何走向未来。金琳翔撰文。

**WADING THROUGH THE MURKY
WATERS OF CHERRY-BASED SPIRITS,
AND HOW THE CATEGORY CAN MOVE
FORWARD. BY JETHRO KANG.**

白兰地，利口酒，还是白兰地利口酒？

提到樱桃酿制的烈酒，或许大部分人都会不约而同地想到某种血红色液体：闻起来有甜甜的樱桃香气，有时还有其他坚果和香料气息，最常用于新加坡司令、血与沙和难忘缅因州这样的经典鸡尾酒。不过相同点仅限于此。对有些人来说，它是樱桃白兰地，对其他人来说，它是樱桃利口酒。或者最有趣的：樱桃白兰地利口酒。尽管这几个术语的含义并不总是相同，它们还是经常被互换使用，这进一步加重了人们的迷惑。那么，你怎样才能把它们区分开呢？

法律规定是一个不错的切入点。在美国，樱桃白兰地被定义为一种水果白兰地，必须“由完整、生长健康、成熟的水果的发酵果汁或果浆，或符合标准的果酒蒸馏而成”。而欧洲人根本不把它称之为白兰地。这对他们来说是一种烈酒且必须“由肉质水果或这类水果的果渣（带或不带果核均可）的酒精发酵汁或蒸馏液制成”。从根本上说，樱桃白兰地这个术语名不副实；它里面根本一点葡萄白兰地都没有，这只是一只完全以樱桃的果肉、果皮、果核和果汁为原料的水果烈酒。

然而，利口酒的定义要更加明确。它是甜的——美国规定含糖量至少为2.5%，而欧洲至少为每升100克——在美国基酒可以是“任何级别或类型的烈酒”，而在欧洲基酒必须是“一种来自农业原料的乙醇酒精或一种来自农业原料的蒸馏液或一种或多种烈酒”。在现实生活中，这通常指的是用樱桃或樱桃风味来增甜的中性谷物烈酒或甜菜烈酒。

然后是白兰地利口酒。只有美国才有这个分类——欧洲的法律中不存在这个定义——并且它必须“具有白兰地的主要风味特质，用白兰地作为唯一的基础烈酒，装瓶酒精度不低于30度”。本质上讲，这种酒才终于和白兰地扯上了关系。它和樱桃利口酒的制造方法类似，只不过以白兰地为基酒，酒精度不得低于30度。

所以说，樱桃白兰地、樱桃利口酒和樱桃白兰地利口酒并不是一回事，但是就本文而言，我们统一将它们称作樱桃利口酒——这或许是最接近真实含义的一个叫法了。

哪个品种的樱桃？

Amy Stewart在《醉醺醺的植物学家：造就了世界伟大酒饮的植物》一书中提到，全世界“至少有120种樱桃树，其中很多都不是用它们的果实来种植的”。那么，哪些种类的樱桃最终变成了你最爱的樱桃烈酒呢？最常用的是甜樱桃。它们“原产于亚洲或中亚”，Stewart写道，而且“这两个地区得到了早期考古学的佐证。到了罗马时代，人们种植的樱桃已经至少有十个不同品种”。排在第二位的是酸樱桃，它在欧洲有着至少两千年的种植历史。或许最常见的是马拉斯加酸樱桃，大部分人是通过冰激凌最上面的那颗鲜红水果认识这种樱桃的。这是一种“硬实、色深、味酸的樱桃”，源自克罗地亚扎达尔。当地的流行做法是将酸樱桃加糖发酵成一种无色烈酒，也就是现在我们熟知的黑樱桃利口酒，路萨朵更是将这种酒带到了世界的每一个角落。

第二天早上让人念念不忘的是甜味的东西**IT'S THE SWEET STUFF THAT IS SO MEMORABLE THE NEXT MORNING****BRANDY, LIQUEUR, OR BRANDY LIQUEUR?**

Most of us probably nod to the same beat when someone mentions a cherry-based spirit: some type of blood red liquid, smelling sweetly of cherry and sometimes other nuts and spices, most commonly used in classic cocktails like the Singapore Sling, Blood and Sand and Remember the Maine. But the similarities stop there. To some, it's a cherry brandy, to others, it's a cherry liqueur. Or the kicker: a cherry brandy liqueur. To add to the confusion, the terms are used interchangeably, even though they don't always mean the same thing. So how do you dissect what is which?

The law provides a good place to start. For the US, cherry brandy is defined as a fruit brandy and has to be “distilled solely from the fermented juice or mash of whole, sound, ripe fruit or from standard fruit wine”. Europe, however, doesn't call it a brandy at all. It's a spirit to them and has to be “produced exclusively by the alcoholic fermentation and distillation of fleshy fruit or the must of such fruit, with or without stones”. Essentially, the term cherry brandy is a misnomer; there's no grape brandy involved, only a fruit spirit that's made completely from the flesh, skins, seeds and juice of the cherry fruit.

Liqueur, on the other hand, is clearer. It's sweet – America dictates that two-and-a-half per cent of its weight has to come from sugar, while it's 100g per litre for Europe – with a base of “any class or type of spirits” for the US or an “ethyl alcohol of agricultural origin or a distillate of agricultural origin or one or more spirit” for Europe. In real life, this usually means a neutral grain or beet spirit that is heavily sweetened with real cherries or cherry flavour.

And then we have brandy liqueur. It's a category only in the US – European law has no definition of it – and it has to have “the predominant characteristic flavour of brandy made with brandy as the exclusive distilled spirits base, bottled at not less than 30 per cent alcohol by volume”. This is where brandy finally comes into play. It's made like a cherry liqueur but with brandy as the base, and has to be at least 30 per cent abv.

So, cherry brandy, cherry liqueur and cherry brandy liqueur: not the same thing, but for the purpose of this story, we'll call it all cherry liqueur, which is probably the closest to its true meaning.

WHAT KIND OF CHERRY?

In Amy Stewart's book *The Drunken Botanist: The Plants That Create The World's Great Drinks*, she notes that there are “at least 120 species of cherry tree, many of which are not grown for their fruit”. So which types are turned into your favourite cherry spirit? The most common is the sweet cherry. They are “native to either Asia or central Europe,” Stewart writes, and “early archaeological evidence points to both locations. By Roman times, at least ten varieties were in cultivation”. Sour cherries are next, and have been grown in Europe for at least 2,000 years. Perhaps the most familiar is the marasca cherry, which most of us know as the bright red fruit that tops off our ice cream. It's a “dense, dark, sour cherry” that originates from Zadar, Croatia, and the region popularised the practice of fermenting it with some sugar to produce a clear spirit that we know today as maraschino liqueur, made ubiquitous by Luxardo.



给我一点糖。

樱桃利口酒的另一个共同特征是什么？糖分。亚特兰大圣路易斯血与沙餐吧联合创始人Adam Frager说，他在用它调酒的时候首先考虑的就是甜度。“它们都有甜味，”他说，“只不过各个产品的甜度有所不同，能够对鸡尾酒造成显著影响。”所以，他会用黑麦威士忌来平衡它，因为黑麦威士忌“酒体极干，辛辣的胡椒味十分浓烈”，或用柑橘水果风味明显的伦敦干金酒来“中和甜味”。或许这就是为什么樱桃利口酒在以黑麦威士忌为基酒的难忘缅因州中表现如此出色，或是跟新加坡司令中的金酒如此合拍。新加坡调酒师、Singapore Beverages（喜龄樱桃酒代理商）品类经理Din Hassan另辟蹊径，选用了梅斯卡尔、调和型威士忌、巧克力苦精甚或辣椒仔来搭配它。不过，他选择的这些原料有着异曲同工之处：辛辣、柑橘水果或烟熏特质能够驯服樱桃利口酒的甜腻特性。

用于调制提基。

尽管在最近的鸡尾酒复兴风潮中，许多原本被束之高阁的小众烈酒重又回到了人们的视野中，但严格来说樱桃利口酒并未从中受益。“你会发现它们更多地出现在经典配方中”，Frager说，“这很可惜，因为像喜龄和路萨朵这样的产品能够很好地将浓郁天然的樱桃风味注入现代鸡尾酒。”Frager曾在自己的酒吧创作了十款改编版的血与沙，用的全都是喜龄。但是随着提基文化日益流行，樱桃利口酒的甜腻风味逐渐再度受到青睐。“如同所有提基风格的鸡尾酒一样，我使用了大量的烈酒、糖、柑橘水果和香料，营造出一种热带风情，”Frager补充说，“我发现，路萨朵和喜龄的浓郁樱桃味可以很好地搭配和替代杏仁、多香果和热情果糖浆。”《药师鸡尾酒：古今养生酒饮》一书的作者Warren Bobrow也指出说，提基鸡尾酒的甜味特质为樱桃利口酒提供了用武之地。“我在制作提基时喜欢用干型、甚至有时是超烈朗姆酒，而不是甜型、焦糖色和高糖的朗姆酒，”他说，“第二天早上让人念念不忘的是甜味的东西。”于是，他在杯底倒上一层樱桃利口酒，附上一根吸管，这样客人就可以“将甜美的利口酒从杯底穿过较干的朗姆酒吸入口中。”

樱桃利口酒的未来。

或许让樱桃利口酒跟上时代脚步的最好方式是最简单的方式：教育。“我认为，能够认识到喜龄和路萨朵此类烈酒真正品质的调酒师不够多，”Frager说，“能够与那种品质和手工技艺相媲美的利口酒也不多。”Hassan补充说：“应该举办更多大师班，让调酒师有机会品鉴樱桃烈酒和其他烈酒及苦精的搭配效果，还要举办有影响力的赛事，让调酒师学会如何为比赛做准备。”他还说，要是能“把他们培训成为品牌大使并邀请他们去酒厂参观”就更好了。那样的话，调酒师在未来很多年内都会把樱桃白兰地、樱桃利口酒和樱桃白兰地利口酒挂在嘴上。

GIVE ME SOME SUGAR.

Another thing that's always associated with cherry liqueur? Sugar. Adam Frager, co-founder of restaurant and bar Blood and Sand in St Louis, Atlanta, says it's the first thing he thinks about when mixing with it. "They all have a sweetness to them," he says, "but they vary from one product to the next and can significantly alter a cocktail." So he balances it out with rye, which "has a great dry body with tons of spicy pepper notes", he says, or a citrusy London dry gin that to "help cut through the sweetness". This is probably why cherry liqueur works so well in the rye-based Remember the Maine, or sings with gin in the Singapore Sling. Din Hassan, the Singaporean bartender and category manager at Singapore Beverages (they sell Cherry Heering), takes a different approach, choosing mezcal, blended whisky, chocolate bitters or even Tabasco. But these choices are made in the same vein - spicy, citrusy or smoky elements that tame down the saccharine nature of cherry liqueur.

TURN IT TIKI.

Despite the latest cocktail renaissance highlighting many obscure spirits that formerly gathered dust on the back bar, cherry liqueurs haven't exactly benefitted from this attention. "You see them more frequently in classic recipes," Frager says. "It's unfortunate because products like

Heering and Luxardo are great ways to import rich natural cherry flavours into modern cocktails." At his bar, Frager used to do ten variations of Blood and Sand, all using Cherry Heering. But with tiki culture becoming popular, the cloying flavours of cherry liqueurs are slowly finding their way back in. "As with all tiki-style cocktails, there's heavy use of booze, sugar, citrus and spice, all with a tropical feel," Frager adds. "I've found that the deep cherry notes of both Luxardo and Heering are a great complement and substitute for almond, allspice and passionfruit syrups." Warren Bobrow, author of books such as *Apothecary Cocktails: Restorative Drinks from Yesterday and Today*, also points to the sweet nature of tiki cocktails as working in cherry liqueur's favour. "I'm from the mindset of dry, and sometimes overproof rum over sweet, caramel coloured and heavily sugared rum in a tiki drink," he says. "It's the sweet stuff that is so memorable the next morning." So he layers cherry flavours at the bottom of the glass and serves it with a straw for guests to "pull the sweet liqueur up from the bottom through the drier elements of the rum".

A CHERRY-SOAKED FUTURE.

Maybe the best way to update cherry liqueurs for the future is the simplest way: education. "I don't think enough bartenders appreciate the true quality of spirits like Heering and Luxardo," says Frager. "There aren't many liqueurs that match that kind of quality and craftsmanship." Hassan adds: "More masterclasses that allow bartenders to taste cherry spirits with other spirits and bitters and a great competition that educate bartender how to prepare for a competition." Better yet, he says, to "teach them to be ambassadors and invite them to the distillery". That way, bartenders will still be term-swapping cherry brandy, liqueur and brandy-liqueur interchangeably for many years to come. ■

