

From AM New York

The Imbiber: Pisco Sours

Dan Dunn | Special to amNewYork

My buddy Domingo is a Manhattan bartender who hails from Peru and swears by a viscous elixir he calls "aguardiente," or "firewater," better known as pisco.

Domingo proudly proclaims his native country to be the rightful home of the pisco denomination, though there are plenty of folks from Chile who would no doubt emphatically disagree with that assessment.

For as far as back as anyone can remember, these neighboring South American countries have argued over the origin of pisco, a delicate spirit distilled from Muscat-style grapes. Most Americans, however, could hardly care less -- they simply don't know pisco from Picchu (as in Machu, Peru's famed Lost City of the Incas).

That wasn't always the case. From the late 1800s to the early 20th Century, the Pisco Sour and Pisco Punch were popular libations stateside, particularly in San Francisco, where South American miners settled during the Gold Rush.

When the gold disappeared so, for all intents and purposes, did the South American hootch. But now, thanks to the efforts of innovative barkeeps like Domingo, pisco is making a comeback at high-end watering holes on both coasts.

Pisco Sour

3oz Inca Gold Pisco
1oz fresh lime juice / 1oz simple syrup (sugar) / 1 egg white / ice / bitters

Place ice, pisco, lime juice, simple syrup, and egg white in a cocktail shaker. Shake and strain into a glass. Garnish with two 2 drops of Angostura Bitters on top of the foam.

Pisco Punch

3oz Inca Gold Pisco
1oz fresh lime juice / 1oz simple syrup (sugar) / 2 parts pineapple juice / ice
Cherry for garnish

Place pisco, lime juice, simple syrup and pineapple juice in a cocktail shaker. Fill with cold water, stir. Serve in a highball glass and garnish with cherry.



Pisco sour (Katya Pronin)

Dan Dunn is the author of the book "Nobody Likes a Quitter (and other reasons to avoid rehab)," available at Amazon.com. He talks wine and spirits every Friday from noon to 1 pm on Channel 108 on Sirius Satellite Radio.