

the art of the apéritif

THESE LIGHT AND REFRESHING EUROPEAN-INSPIRED COCKTAILS ARE THE PERFECT BEFORE DINNER DRINKS. BY BRANDY RAND

A Tavola

The Americano is a classic Italian cocktail that was named for its popularity among thirsty American expats during Prohibition. No passport is needed to enjoy this refreshing on-the-rocks mix of Campari, sweet vermouth, a splash of soda water, and twist of lemon. 34 Church St., Winchester, 781-729-1040: atavolawinchester.com

Coppa

As Italian as it gets, the wildly popular Aperol Spritz is a bubbly orange concoction of Aperol, Prosecco, and club soda, garnished with an orange slice. At this bustling South End enoteca they're served by the pitcher to be shared with friends. 253 Shawmut Ave., 617-391-0902; coppaboston.com

Ducali Pizzeria & Bar

Owner Philip Frattaroli says the Negroni Spagliato-a bitter blend of Campari, vermouth, and Prosecco-is very popular in the town of Sulmona, located in the Abruzzo region of Italy, where his family originated. Savor one before a slice of his awardwinning authentic pizza. 289 Causeway St., 617-742-4144; ducalipizza.com

Erbaluce

At this Italian gem known for a seasonally inspired dinner menu, the cocktails take a cue from the kitchen. The herbal Isabella

(Amorati) combines the chef's house-made vermouth, green Chartreuse, lemon juice, and soda water, topped with a sprig of lovage and a slice of cucumber. 69 Church St., 617-426-6969; erbaluce-boston.com

Gaslight

Pretend you're in Paris and say oui to a Madame Lillet cocktail, made with Lillet rouge-a slightly fruity, bitter French apéritif wine-and elderflower liqueur, of course with a champagne float. 560 Harrison Ave., 617-422-0224; gaslight560.com

L'Andana

The Amarini, which translates to "the little bitter ones," is a citrusherbal mix of Hendrick's Gin, Aperol, limoncello, and a splash of fresh-squeezed orange juice, garnished with a dried orange slice and a lemon twist. Cin cin! 86 Cambridge St., Burlington, 781-270-0100; landanagrill.com

Minibar

Settle into a sleek leather banquette at this perfectly chic spot in the Copley Square Hotel and order up an ATL. The complex mix of St-Germain, Aperol, lemon cordial, and Belvedere vodka goes perfectly with people-watching. 51 Huntington Ave., 617-424-8500; minibarboston.com

Pigalle

An amalgamation of flavors will excite your palate with the first

sip of a Backwoods Reverie, made with LeCompte Calvados 5 year, Cocchi Americano, Lustau Dry Amontillado Los Arcos Sherry, Rothman & Winter Orchard Apricot liqueur, and Smoke Gets In Your Bitters. 75 Charles St. South, 617-423-4944; pigalleboston.com

Aperol Spritz cocktail at Coppa

Posto

Toast the impending arrival of autumn-perhaps even al fresco on the patio-with the Antonio, a farm-fresh blend of Lillet blanc, Honeycrisp apple-infused rum, and allspice simple syrup. 187 Elm St., Somerville, 617-625-0600; pizzeriaposto.com

Pain D'Avignon

Bar manager and sommelier Brendan Draper created a twist on the Negroni called the Holly Berry, using Ethereal Gin and Bière d'Épinette, a spruce beer, along with Campari. We promise it will make those late summer trips to the Cape and Islands even more enjoyable. 15 Hinckley Rd., Hyannis,

508-778-8588; paindavignon.com

The Salty Pig

The lively pinkish sparkler called the Colore Rosa is a simple but thirst-quenching combination of blood orange, grapefruit, sparkling wine, and orange bitters-a smart choice before diving into a savory plate of charcuterie and cheese. 130 Dartmouth St., 617-536-6200; thesaltypig.com BC

Pairing drinks and cuisine with Erbaluce Chef Chuck Draghi.



As both chef and mixologist, is it the same? Chefs are uniquely suited to this, since we spend years training our palates to create a harmony of flavors that pass over the course of a meal.

What's the role of the cocktail in dining? Apéritifs clean the palate and prepare the diner for the meal ahead. Vermouth-based drinks are perfect for this, as are drinks based on fruit, like the Bellini.

What ingredient is best suited for food and drink? The rose or rosewater is perfect for both savory and

sweet foods, and cocktails.

A table at