

# SCOUT MAGAZINE

(<http://scoutmagazine.ca>)

Explore

## DRINKER | On Wild Kentucky Pilgrimages And Making The Classic Seelbach Cocktail

---



(<http://scoutmagazine.ca/category/gluttony/>)

**MARCH 5, 2014.**

<https://www.facebook.com/sharer.php?u=http://scoutmagazine.ca/2014/03/05/drinker-on-wild-kentucky-pilgrimages-and-making-the-classic-seelbach-cocktail/&t=DRINKER+%7C+On+Wild+Kentucky+Pilgrimages+And+Making+The+Classic+Seelbach+Cocktail>

<https://twitter.com/share?url=http://scoutmagazine.ca/2014/03/05/drinker-on-wild-kentucky-pilgrimages-and-making-the-classic-seelbach-cocktail/&text=DRINKER+%7C+On+Wild+Kentucky+Pilgrimages+And+Making+The+Classic+Seelbach+Cocktail&via=napsugar>



(<http://media.scoutmagazine.ca/2014/03/seelbach.jpg>)

by **Shaun Layton** (<http://scoutmagazine.ca/2012/07/07/about-scout-who-we-are-what-we-do/>) | When most of the people I know are asked if they like bourbon and Champagne, I know that their answer is going to include a mention of the Seelbach cocktail. The legendary **Kentucky hotel** (<http://www.seelbachhilton.com/>) that gave the drink its name has a special place in my heart. I've been fortunate enough to visit the historic beauty a few times in the past, one of which was with Scout's editor and some fellow barkeeps four years ago (**watch the evidence** (<http://vimeo.com/4219449>)). My head nearly exploded when I first saw the selection of American rye and bourbon inside the main floor bar!

The hotel itself is a lot more famous than the cocktail. The Seelbach was opened in 1905 by brothers Otto and Louis Seelbach. They had a vision of old world European hotels, importing materials from all over; marbles from France, linens from Ireland, and rugs from Turkey. The hotel sits on Muhammad Ali Way, about a block from the museum honouring the pugilist hero from Louisville.

Many notables frequented the hotel, including American writer F. Scott Fitzgerald. He adored the place, not to mention its bourbon and selection of cigars. His experiences and run-ins with prohibition bootleggers like Cincinnati mobster George Remus inspired characters and scenes for his masterpiece, "The Great Gatsby".

The Seelbach has a network of hidden tunnels and rooms, and it was a major hangout for Al Capone and his crew during Prohibition. A cool story on the hotel's **website** (<http://www.seelbachhilton.com/>) claims Capone had a large mirror from Chicago sent in so he could watch his back during high stakes poker games.

Until 1995, when a hotel manager rediscovered the recipe, The Seelbach cocktail was all but forgotten. It was created in 1917, and lost some time during Prohibition. The hotel was reluctant to release the recipe until bar legend Gary Regan convinced them to let him publish it in his book, **New Classic Cocktails** (<http://www.amazon.com/New-Classic-Cocktails-Gary-Regan/dp/B008SLTTFU>).

### **The Seelbach**

1 oz Bourbon (I use Buffalo Trace)  
1/2 oz Triple Sec (I use Pierre Ferrand Dry Curacao)  
7 Dashes Angostura Bitters  
7 Dashes Peychaud's Bitters  
5 oz Champagne  
orange twist garnish

**Method** | Briefly chill the first four ingredients by stirring on ice, add to a chilled champagne flute, top with Champagne (or a dry sparkling wine), garnish with an orange twist.

The recipe doesn't call for chilling the ingredients, but I think this is necessary for a cold and balanced cocktail. I really enjoy serving this as a "gateway" cocktail for drinkers who claim they don't like bourbon. It works like a charm every time. Don't be alarmed (as I first was) at the amount of bitters; somehow everything magically comes together. Although Peychaud's can be hard to find, there is no substitute (Bitter Truth Creole is close), so get some while travelling in the US or at **The Modern Bartender** (<http://scoutmagazine.ca/2013/11/01/the-modern-bartender/>) in Chinatown.



## RELATED POSTS



(<http://scoutmagazine.ca/2014/05/08/drinker-how-to-build-an-excellent-home-bar-one-drink-and-five-bottles-at-a-time/>)

**DRINKER | How To Build An Excellent Home Bar, One Drink (And Five Bottles) At A Time**

(<http://scoutmagazine.ca/2014/05/08/drinker-how-to-build-an-excellent-home-bar-one-drink-and-five-bottles-at-a-time/>)



(<http://scoutmagazine.ca/2014/03/20/drinker-on-delicious-maraschino-the-adriatic-liqueur-not-the-freaky-garnish/>)

**DRINKER | On Delicious Maraschino (The Adriatic Liqueur, Not The Freaky Garnish)**

(<http://scoutmagazine.ca/2014/03/20/drinker-on-delicious-maraschino-the-adriatic-liqueur-not-the-freaky-garnish/>)



(<http://scoutmagazine.ca/2014/10/06/drinker-on-eating-fried-cheese-curds-picking-juniper-for-gin-in-football-heaven/>)

**DRINKER | On Eating Fried Cheese Curds & Picking Juniper For Gin In Football Heaven**

(<http://scoutmagazine.ca/2014/10/06/drinker-on-eating-fried-cheese-curds-picking-juniper-for-gin-in-football-heaven/>)