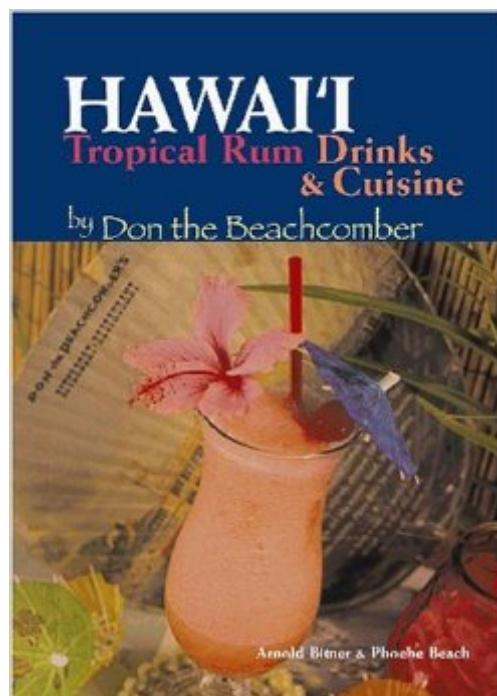


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# Hawaii Tropical Rum Drinks & Cuisine

## By Don The Beachcomber



## Synopsis

Hawaii: Tropical Rum Drinks and Cuisine is an evocation of another era: the 1950s Tiki Americana craze which swept the US after World War II. The book is crammed with memories and memorabilia of Don the Beachcomber, the guy who created the Zombie drink, and may have created the Mai Tai as well. He started his tropical themed bar in Hollywood in the 1930s. Think: full color photos of tiki drinks, vintage photos, food recipes, even a party guide.

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## Customer Reviews

Don the Beachcomber deserves, at long last, his own book of food and drink. His longtime friendly-rival and occasional plagiarist Trader Vic (Bergeron) happily pumped out a number of food and drink guides during his lifetime, while Donn Beach notoriously guarded his recipes. Unfortunately, while nice to look at and of legitimate pedigree (Donn's widow is a co-author), this book could have done with a stronger editing job and concept. The book tries to claim a a legit Hawaiian cultural affiliation even though the Beachcomber was originally a mainland Californian phenomenon later exported to Hawaii. Even the infamous Zombie recipe, the holy grail of all tiki formulas is confusing, as it calls for Pernod twice - is it a misprint? This Zombie is totally different from another recipe in Jeff Berry's excellent "Intoxica" that also came directly from the Beachcomber himself. No one is ever going to know what was REALLY in that sucker. There are also confusing rum substitution suggestions in the book. Sometimes when 3 obscure rums are called for in a drink, only 2 are given as alternates - and they may or may not be in the correct order for substitution as given in the recipe. The "original" Mai-Tai recipe is also bizarre, atypically calling for grapefruit juice

and no orgeat syrup. I'm going to have to put the classic recipe for that one in Vic's column. If this sounds like a lot of kvetching, it really isn't. Still a better book than any number of lousy nouveau cocktail guides that just blasphemously add "-tini" onto a fruit and call that an exotic cocktail. It's affordable, attractive, and is well within the ballpark of the classic tiki world. Just not the masterpiece it could have been.

I've always been a fan of the Zombie. It's just a great tropical drink. When I decided that I had had enough of paying \$7 for them at restaurants, and that I wanted my own at home, I looked up Trader Vic's recipe. It was okay, but it really was geared more for a sort of "Zombie Punch" -- where ratios were expressed in fifths (entire bottles) rather than ounces. Later, I happened upon Suzanne Matczuk's *Cocktail-o-Matic*, which had a much more approachable recipe for Zombies. I began to make those, and was happy. However, this year I spent two weeks on O'ahu. I became totally hooked on the atmosphere (one could say the entire island made a left turn at 1968, and has just sort of "lived tiki" since), the people, and the drinks and cuisine. So while I was in Hilo Hatties, I picked this book up on a whim. I was totally impressed. Where I thought I would be getting a book full of touristy BS, I got a book with authentic (one of the authors is Donn's widow, these recipes were taken from his belongings) recipes for both drinks and food. The drinks are quite palatable. Many of them (such as Beachcomber's Gold and Rum Barrel) are just classic. A couple are "out there" (such as Test Pilot), but you can really taste and feel what the author was going for. I feel I must mention the Zombie recipe from this book. Not only is it authentic -- the man invented the drink -- but we learn that it contained Absinthe! Also, that it was prepared at least a couple times with added glycerine. Wow. This explains the drink's somewhat evil reputation. If all you got in this book was the drinks, it would be worth the price. However, you gain priceless insight into the culture, and into Donn himself. Of particular interest was the conversation between Donn and Vic about the Mai Tai. Additionally, the story of his shipping gardenias from Hawaii (daily!) and his experience in the Army during WWII. Highly recommended. I'd also recommend the Suzanne Matczuk book, as it is told in the same way (plenty of culture with the drinks), and it is instructional to see the difference in the drinks as she writes them, and the way they were originally... "prescribed."

"Hawaii: Tropical Rum Drinks and Cuisine" is an evocation of another era: the 1950s "Tiki Americana" craze which swept the US after World War II. The book is crammed with memories and memorabilia of Don the Beachcomber, the guy who created the "Zombie" drink, and may have created the "Mai Tai" as well. He started his tropical-themed bar in Hollywood in the 1930s. Think:

full-color photos of tiki drinks, vintage photos, food recipes, even a party guide.

I HAVE BEEN LOOKING FOR THIS INFORMATION FOR YEARS. I GREW UP DINNING AT THE BEACHCOMERS IN HOLLYWOOD. HAD MY 21ST BIRTHDAY THERE. AND MY BACHOLER PARTY THERE. IF YOU LOVE RUM DRINKS THEN THE ZOMBIE, RUM BARREL, NAVY GROG, MAI TAI ARE FOR YOU. I DONT THINK YOU WILL FIND BETTER GUIDE TO THE BEST OF THE BEST. EVERYTHING IN THIS APPEARS AS I REMEMBER IT. ENJOY!

This book is great for the Tiki fan. Great stories about Don and some great receipt's in it as well. Great design and layout. Makes you wish you could drive to a Don the Beachcomber and have a Mai Tai and a Pu Pu platter.

all my life I have had sleazy "tiki" drinks made with mixes and high fructose corn syrup. Mostly served in Chinese restaurants. A Washington area restaurantuer went to Hawaii and was blown away by the real thing and started serving them here. the only drinks really worth \$10 each, Made with fresh hand squeezed fruit juice, quality rums and exotic ingredients, including Absinthe. WOW what a difference. This book tells how to make the real thingA copy of the original Donn Beach, aka Don the Beachcomber 1933 receipes as served to Clark Gable and Carol Lombard.the only receipe missing is the orginal (Ernest) Hemminway Daiquiri.Great book, you won't believe how complex the real drinks taste, like really expensive wines.BTW a real Zombie has 13 ingredients!the recipes list the orginal rums and liquors and also list substitutes for those no longer made.

This is a great book to have for your bar, but also a bit of nostalgia for those of us who went to Hawaii in the 50's when it truly was a paradise. I remember drinking those Vicious Virgins at the Moana in Waikiki. And who could forget Don the Beachcomer! This is a beautifully done collector's book.

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