



“Faux Salvatore's Legacy”

The Maestro orchestrates cognac, liqueurs

By Gary Regan

Updated 7:20 p.m., Friday, November 30, 2012



Faux Salvatore's legacy cocktail

Photo: Craig Lee, Special To The Chronicle / SF

[Salvatore Calabrese](#) is one of the world's finest bartenders, and I say that from dealing with the man himself - for a couple of decades - and from knowing many bartenders he has trained over the years.

The Maestro, as he's known, is larger than life, and he's a consummate showman, but that's not what makes him stand head and shoulders above most others in the bar world. His main attribute in that regard is that he truly cares about others. And it shows.

Salvatore has his own bar within London's [Playboy Club](#), and before that he held many prestigious posts at other

bars in Britain's capital, notably Salvatore at Fifty, the Lanesborough Hotel and Dukes, the hotel where the Vesper Martini, made famous by [Ian Fleming's](#) "Casino Royale," a [James Bond](#) book, was born.

One of the many things that Salvatore is known for in the bar world is his love for fine old cognac. And when I say old, I mean very old.

He's been collecting vintage bottlings of cognac for many years. One bottling, for instance, a brandy that dated back to the late 1700s, was valued at around \$80,000. Too

bad that one of his customers knocked it off his table and the bottle shattered on the floor.

Salvatore had planned to use that same cognac to make the world's oldest cocktail, something that would be recorded as such in the Guinness Book of World Records, so he had to rethink his recipe a little.

In October, he came up with a drink he calls Salvatore's Legacy. He made it with a Clos de Griffier Vieux Cognac from 1788, Kummel from 1770, an 1860 Dubb Orange Curaçao and a couple of dashes of 100-year-old angostura bitters. It cost a little under \$9,000. I wonder how much one is expected to tip on a drink like that?

I decided to make the drink with slightly less expensive bottlings of spirits and liqueurs. Result? Salvatore once again proved himself the Maestro.

Feel free to substitute whatever brands of cognac and liqueurs you have on hand - it's what I did - although it's best to go with the best bottlings you can afford.

Faux Salvatore's Legacy

Makes 1 drink

Adapted from a far more intricate recipe by Salvatore Calbrese, London.

- 1 1/2 ounces Camus VSOP Elegance or other Cognac
- 3/4 ounce kummel (caraway-seed liqueur)
- 3/4 ounce [Pierre Ferrand](#) dry or other curacao
- 2 to 3 dashes Angostura bitters

Instructions: Stir all the ingredients over ice; strain into a chilled Champagne coupe.

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