

Chocolate-Covered Cherry Old Fashioned – Comfort du Jour

This riff on a classic rocks drink combines the sweetness of cherry and the romance of chocolate with the spirit of bourbon. At our house, we love the accent of almond with cherry and chocolate, so there's a little splash of amaretto in the mix as well. Whether you're staying home to celebrate Valentine's Day with a loved one, or simply to enjoy the pleasure of your own company (as you absolutely should), I hope you'll enjoy this special sweetheart of a cocktail.

INGREDIENTS

Makes one cocktail; double ingredients if making for two.

1.5 oz. bourbon (Elijah Craig Small Batch is on my bar right now)
0.5 oz. (1 Tbsp.) Godiva dark chocolate liqueur
0.5 oz. cherry juice (I used Trader Joe's, but any brand is fine)
0.25 oz. (1 1/2 tsp.) amaretto
1 bar spoon (about 1/2 tsp.) syrup from Luxardo cocktail cherries* (see notes)
3 drops chocolate cocktail bitters*

For garnish:

1 Tbsp. cocoa powder (for rimming the glass)
Luxardo cocktail cherry

*NOTES

Luxardo cherries are imported from Italy. They are real Marasca cherries, macerated in Luxardo maraschino liqueur and packed in the resulting syrup. They are expensive at roughly \$20 a jar, but completely worth it for the luxurious finishing touch they provide a cocktail. Find them at Total Wine, gourmet stores or online.

My chocolate bitters are produced by Woodford Reserve (the bourbon maker), and they add depth, not bitterness, to a cocktail. Find them in a gourmet shop or online.

INSTRUCTIONS

Prepare a double rocks cocktail glass by wetting the rim with a small amount of chocolate liqueur. Hold the glass upside down while doing this so that the liqueur doesn't run down the sides of the glass. Next, roll only the outside edge of the cocktail glass along a line of cocoa powder on a paper towel. Do this a bit ahead of time so that the cocoa rim has time to set up on the glass. You will not use all of the cocoa powder, but you need a fair amount on the towel to rim your glasses.

At cocktail time, combine bourbon, chocolate liqueur, amaretto, cherry juice, syrup and bitters in a cocktail mixing glass. Add a cup of ice and stir about 20 seconds to chill down the cocktail mixture. Strain into the cocoa-rimmed glass over a giant ice cube. Garnish with a Luxardo cocktail cherry, or a skewered chocolate-covered cherry if you're so inclined.