Xalapa Agave Spirits Distilled with Jalapeno

Released August 2017
40% ABV (80 Proof)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Raw Ingredient</th>
<th>Primary Botanicals</th>
<th>Maturation</th>
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<tr>
<td>100% Blue Weber Agave Nectar</td>
<td>Fresh Jalapeno</td>
<td>Unaged</td>
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There is an important distinction between infusing a spirit with flavor, and distilling a flavor into a spirit. Bars frequently infuse their own spirits with botanicals, herbs, and spices. You have no doubt seen jars of bright colored liquid seeping out of some sort of fruit, house infused gins and rum, and the ever-popular jalapeno margarita. Infusing a spirit simply involves soaking something in alcohol. The alcohol breaks down every component of the chosen substance and diffuses it through the liquid. It is a great way to add the entire flavor profile of your chosen food into your chosen spirit. Anybody can do it at home with ease. The stronger the alcohol, the more flavor you are going to get.

Distilling a substance into a spirit is a bit more technical and offers far greater control over the flavor profile one desires. Our process involves adding fresh jalapenos into the still pot immediately prior to distillation. These jalapenos soak in the fermented wash as it boils in the still. The components of the jalapeno break down and cook in the pot as they bind to alcohols.

Put simply, distillation is the process of separating all aspects of a fermented wash by their boiling points. This means that different aspects of the jalapeno flavor come out of the still at different times based on the temperature we are distilling. Therefore, we get to pick and choose which aspects of the jalapeno flavor we want to keep, and which we want to get rid of. It’s all about control. The Xalapa is fermented from 100% Blue Weber Agave (organic), which is the same ingredient that makes tequila (see Il Keyote for more info on that). We ferment the agave with something similar to Champagne yeast to produce a clean, crisp alcohol that allows the honey-like flavors of the agave come through. We distill this fermented wash over fresh, deseeded jalapenos at a very high purity to maintain control over the flavor we extract. Xalapa is unaged.

The finished product has a more subtle and balanced character than its infused counterparts. We do not extract the capsaicin from the jalapeno, so we avoid the spicy, hot tone you get from eating a pepper. You will smell the jalapeno immediately. The flavor we keep is of the fresh green jalapeno that has a slightly ‘cooked’ quality. The finish lingers long and clean, with a nice texture that makes it easy to sip.

The sky is the limit with this spirit and cocktails. Use it in margaritas. It is an excellent pair with tart fruit juices. It will bump up the savory aspect of a Bloody Mary, and put a delightful tone into your hot cocoa. Experiment with abandon.

Mike Selberg
Head Distiller