



Leadership... with a Twist!

The Crescent City is credited with popularizing the Ramos Gin Fizz, the Vieux Carré cocktail and the Hurricane, although the latter was not likely invented there. The "official" cocktail of New Orleans is none of these, however – by decree of the Louisiana state legislature, that distinction belongs to the **Sazerac Cocktail**.

First created in the 1850s, the **Sazerac Cocktail** is one of the oldest American drinks. The story is told that, around that time, the Merchants Exchange Coffeehouse in New Orleans was sold by owner Sewell Taylor, a businessman who wanted to focus on his liquor-importing business.

Taylor's most popular import was *Sazerac-du-Forge et fils* cognac. In honor of the cognac, the new bar owner renamed the bar the Sazerac House and featured a house specialty called the **Sazerac Cocktail**. (The Sazerac Bar and Restaurant moved to the Roosevelt Hotel in 1949, where it continues to serve thirsty patrons to this day.)

Notably, a couple of international incidents significantly changed the recipe for the **Sazerac Cocktail**. Taylor's *Sazerac-du-Forge et fils* cognac was the original base spirit for the drink. But in the late 1800s, French wine crops were devastated by a moth infestation, and wine (and cognac) supplies dried up. In New Orleans, rye whiskey was readily-available as a substitute – and the new recipe stuck.

The original Sazerac House recipe uniquely incorporated anise-flavored liquor. A popular liquor of that era was absinthe, a highly alcoholic spirit. Absinthe became very popular in the latter-19th Century for its (purported) psychoactive qualities. Although absinthe has since been shown to be no more dangerous than any other alcohol, an hysteria in European society led to the banning of absinthe in many countries -- including the United States in 1912. (In 2007, it became legal to import absinthe into this country again.)

Sazerac Cocktail

Use 3 Old-Fashioned glasses for this recipe. In one glass, muddle:

1 sugar cube

3 dashes, Peychaud's bitters

Add:

1-1/2 oz., rye whiskey

In a second Old-Fashioned glass, swirl 1/4 oz. of anise-flavored liquor to coat the glass.

Discard the excess.

Pour the rye mixture into the coated glass.

*Rim the glass with the shiny side of a lemon peel,
and twist the lemon peel over the drink to release the oils.*

Discard lemon peel.