

Fabrizia Spirits Makes Its Mark with Authentic, Simple Ingredients

BY HOLLY RIDDLE

When thinking about New Hampshire-produced wines and spirits, you likely don't think limoncello. The state's climate simply isn't well-suited to growing citrus. However, this fact didn't stop Fabrizia Spirits from launching over a decade ago, with its small-batch, hand-crafted limoncello at the forefront of what would soon become a robust product line.

Philip Mastroianni co-founded the brand in 2008, a time when craft distilling was still making its way into the mainstream, and New Hampshire's business-friendly rules and guidelines for starting a small, liquor-manufacturing business drew the Massachusetts native northward. That said, while New Hampshire could provide support in other ways, it couldn't provide the lemons necessary for this relatively simple product. For that part of the equation, Fabrizia Spirits looks further afield, to Sicily.



Not only does Fabrizia Spirits set its limoncello apart by using a simple, straightforward recipe of just 100% Sicilian lemons, alcohol, sugar and water, but it's also, in Mastroianni's estimation, the only limoncello brand that can always tell you exactly where every single lemon used in every single bottle of limoncello comes from, full stop. The brand has established a unique and exclusive partnership with a family-owned, multi-generation producer in Sicily, one of the largest lemon producers in the region, and every lemon can be traced back to this grower and their groves.

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Mastroianni further explained, "Outside of knowing where our fruit comes from, our process is the same as it would be if you were to make homemade limoncello. We make 172 gallons in a batch and it's been that size since the very first day. It took us four full months to sell our first batch and now, on a standard day, we make two to three batches per day — and with only those



four ingredients. Not all limoncello [brands] can say that. Most add Yellow No. 5. I would say [that's the case] for two-thirds to three-quarters of the limoncello available in the United States."

This dedication to the purity and quality of ingredients ties in with limoncello's (and Mastroianni's) Italian roots. As Mastroianni said, "When you think about Italian cooking, they're always talking about keeping the recipe simple and the quality of ingredients making the differences. [For limoncello], you shouldn't be adding yellow, artificial coloring to something that's supposed to be yellow in the first place."

As the Fabrizia Spirits brand has grown over the years, it hasn't just brought a taste of Italy to The Granite State. Its success has lengthened its reach so that Fabrizia Spirits products can be found around the country, and it's even the limoncello of choice in Disney World's Italy Pavilion at Epcot.

"That didn't happen overnight and it goes back to the lemons," Mastroianni explained. "The buyer at the Italy Pavilion in Epcot is Italian. He peppered me with technical questions on the production of the lemons and the agriculture behind them... Because I really live it and breathe it and do it, I had all the answers... About three months later, we gained their business. It's really exciting. People come from all around the world and get to learn about and try Fabrizia limoncello."

Today, the Fabrizia Spirits brand has also branched outward and appeals to industry trends like the growing interest in canned, ready-to-drink cocktails, a decision that Mastroianni noted allows the team to take advantage of ingredients that would otherwise go to waste.

In producing limoncello, producers only use the lemon zest, not the whole lemon. Fabrizia Spirits peels about a million lemons per year potentially a lot of lemons wasted, if it were not for the line's expansion into canned, lemonade and lemon juice-based cocktails. Options combine limoncello and lemonade or lemon juice with vodka, tequila and other ingredients to produce a range of refreshing and seasonal canned cocktails. However, even with this product line expansion, Mastroianni still assures that Fabrizia Spirits continues to put natural ingredients and simple recipes at the forefront of everything the brand produces.

Planning to pick up a bottle of Fabrizia Spirits limoncello during your next trip to your local NH Liquor & Wine Outlet location? Mastroianni recommended making one of his favorites, a limoncello spritz, crafted similarly to an Aperol spritz, with three parts prosecco, two parts limoncello and one part soda water.

Check Out This Month's Recipe



Maple Old Fashioned

INGREDIENTS:

2 oz Bourbon

1/2 oz Maple syrup

2 dashes Angostura bitters

Orange twist, for garnish

PREPARATION:

- **1.** Add the bourbon, maple syrup and Angostura bitters into a mixing glass with ice and stir until well-chilled.
- **2.** Strain into a chilled cocktail glass.
- 3. Garnish with an orange twist.



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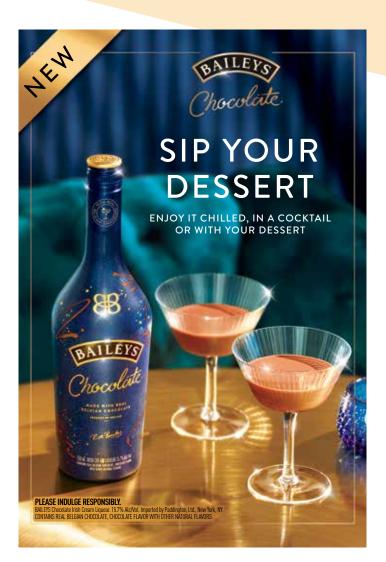




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