

# Five Seasonal Sips

BY THEODORA TSEVAS

From Athens to Boston, bartenders are reimagining holiday flavors with creative twists that honor both tradition and innovation. These five cocktails weave together cultural heritage and seasonal ingredients: Greek honey and melomakarono cordial meet New England cranberries and rosemary, while tropical rum mingles with festive spices, and cold brew gets a gingerbread embrace. Each drink transforms cherished holiday tastes into sophisticated libations perfect for winter celebrations, proving that the best seasonal cocktails are the ones that tell a story in every sip.



**Melomakarona Old-Fashioned**  
**A Greek Christmas Classic Reimagined**  
 Presented by Stavros & Angelos Petropulos, owners  
 Kosmos, 944 Main St, Walpole, MA 02081  
[kosmoswma.com](http://kosmoswma.com)

## Inspiration

Every December in Greece, families gather around trays of melomakarona—the honey-soaked cookies rich with orange, cinnamon, and walnut that symbolize warmth, hospitality, and celebration. At Kosmos in Walpole, brothers Stavros and Angelos Petropulos transform that cherished flavor into a sophisticated holiday cocktail. The Melomakarona Old-Fashioned merges bourbon’s caramel depth with Greek honey, walnut liqueur, and aromatic spices—a toast to tradition, family, and the spirit of filoxenia.

## Ingredients (1 serving)

- 2 oz bourbon (smooth, vanilla-forward bourbon like Woodford Reserve or Basil Hayden)
- ¼ oz honey syrup (see below)
- ¼ oz walnut liqueur (Karydaki or Nocino)
- 2 dashes aromatic bitters (Angostura or walnut bitters)
- 1 dash cinnamon bitters
- Orange peel (for oils and garnish)
- Melomakarona cookie crumbs, finely crushed (for rim)

## For the Honey Syrup

In a small saucepan, combine:

- ½ cup Greek thyme honey
- ¼ cup hot water
- 1 small piece of orange peel
- 1 clove and 1 cinnamon stick (optional for infusion)

Simmer gently for 2–3 minutes, remove from heat, cool, strain, and store chilled for up to one week.

## Glassware

Rocks glass

## Method

1. Prepare your melomakarona rim by lightly brushing the rim of a chilled rocks glass with honey.
2. Dip the rim into crushed melomakarona crumbs, coating evenly.
3. In a mixing glass, combine bourbon, honey syrup, walnut liqueur, and bitters.

4. Add ice and stir for 20–30 seconds until chilled and balanced.

5. Strain into the prepared rocks glass over a large ice cube.

6. Express an orange peel over the top to release its oils, drop it in.

## Garnish & Presentation

- Rim of melomakarona cookie crumble
- Orange peel twist
- Optional: a small piece of melomakarona cookie skewered on top of the glass.

**Style:** Rich, aromatic, nostalgic

## Perfect Pairing

Enjoy alongside karydopita, bougatsa, or baklava—each echoing the drink’s honey, nut, and spice profile.

**The Gingerbread Espresso Martini**  
**Holiday Comfort Meets Caffeinated Cheer**  
 Presented by Full Circle Diner  
 136 Newbury St., Peabody, Massachusetts 01960  
[fullcirclediner.com](http://fullcirclediner.com)

**Inspiration**

Some cocktails are made for lingering—for that moment when dessert and conversation blur together, when you want something indulgent but energizing, cozy yet spirited. At Full Circle Diner, the Gingerbread Espresso Martini was born from the desire to bottle up holiday comfort with a little caffeinated cheer. Spiced rum brings warmth, Baileys adds velvet richness, and Disaronno weaves in that subtle almond-amaretto sweetness. Cold brew keeps things sharp and sophisticated. Finished with a golden graham cracker rim, a cloud of whipped cream dusted with cinnamon, this cocktail feels like dessert at the North Pole—spirited, cozy, and just a little mischievous.

**Ingredients (1 serving)**

- 1.5 oz Spiced rum (warm, holiday spices)
- 0.5 oz Disaronno (almond liqueur, sweet and nutty)
- 1.5 oz Baileys Irish Cream (rich, creamy, indulgent)
- 0.5 oz Cold brew coffee (smooth, concentrated)
- Vanilla graham cracker crumbs (for rim)
- Whipped cream (for garnish)
- Ground cinnamon or gingerbread spice (for dusting)

- Optional: Frozen cold brew gingerbread man cube (playful garnish)

**Glassware**

Coupe or martini glass

**Method**

**1. Prepare the glass:** Lightly moisten the rim of your chilled coupe or martini glass with Baileys or simple syrup, then dip generously into vanilla graham cracker crumbs to create a thick, golden, cookie-like rim.

**2. Build the cocktail:**

In a shaker filled with ice, combine spiced rum, Disaronno, Baileys, and cold brew.

**3. Shake:** Shake vigorously for 15–20 seconds until well-chilled and silky smooth.

**4. Serve:** Strain into your prepared glass.

**5. Garnish:** Top with a generous rosette of whipped cream, then dust lightly with ground cinnamon or gingerbread spice for aromatic warmth and visual contrast.

**Garnish & Presentation**

- Thick vanilla graham cracker rim (golden, crumbly, reminiscent of gingerbread houses)

- Whipped cream rosette (tall, fluffy, and elegant)

■ Dusting of cinnamon or gingerbread spice (creating a beautiful contrast and holiday aroma)

- Served in a classic coupe glass to showcase the creamy, coffee-kissed layers and dramatic garnish

**Style**

Decadent, energizing, festive, a dessert cocktail with a caffeinated kick. Perfect for after-dinner sipping, holiday parties that need a second wind, or anyone who believes the best moments happen when comfort food meets craft cocktails.



## Pearls in the Snow

### A Winter's Tale in a Glass

Presented by Liystor

Ermou 92-94, 10554 Athens, Greece

liystor.com

#### Inspiration

Athens in December is a city wrapped in warmth, sparkle, and festive aromas—cinnamon drifting from bakeries, pine twinkling under the city lights, and laughter echoing in cozy tavernas. At Liystor, we wanted to capture this fleeting magic in a cocktail. Walking in the Pearless Snow is a sip of winter wonder: deep, aromatic, and inviting, weaving the richness of rum and chocolate with tropical fruits and a whisper of Greek holiday tradition. It's the drink for quiet, reflective evenings or laughter-filled nights with friends.

#### Ingredients (1 serving)

- 1.7 oz Rum Jamaica (rich, aromatic, dark)
- 0.35 oz Falernum (spiced, sweet, tropical)
- 0.7 oz Pineapple juice (freshly pressed if possible)
- 0.35 oz Almond syrup (or orgeat)
- 0.7 oz Melomakarono cordial (homemade or high-quality Greek cordial)
- 0.7 oz Fresh lemon juice
- Fresh mint (for garnish)

#### Glassware:

Collins or highball

#### Method

1. Fill a shaker with ice and add rum, falernum, pineapple, almond syrup, melomakarono cordial, and lemon juice.
2. Shake vigorously for 15–20 seconds until the mixture is well-chilled and slightly frothy.
3. Fill a Collins glass with fresh ice and strain the cocktail into the glass.
4. Garnish with a sprig of fresh mint. Optionally, lightly express the mint over the drink for aromatic lift.

#### Garnish & Presentation

- Fresh mint sprig
- Serve in a tall, clear glass to showcase the cocktail's golden, velvety color
- Optional: a small flake of dark chocolate on the side for a wintery touch



#### Style

Rich, aromatic, exotic yet cozy, a perfect winter warmer with a nod to Greek flavors and festive indulgence.



## Slowdown Sundown

### A Sunset in a Glass

Presented by Committee

Boston

50 Northern Ave,  
Boston, MA 02210  
committeeboston.com

#### Inspiration

As the December sun dips behind Boston's skyline, the city softens into amber light, and the evening invites quiet reflection. Slowdown Sundown captures this fleeting moment, blending the herbal elegance of Mount Olympus-infused gin with the warmth and spice of rakomelo. Bright lemon juice and gentle effervescence

from soda and Paleokerisio sparkling wine combine to create a cocktail that is both reflective and celebratory, making it a perfect toast to the season.

#### Ingredients (1 serving)

- 1 oz Mount Olympus–infused Ford's Gin
- 1 oz Rakomelo (Greek honey-spiced liqueur)
- 0.5 oz Simple syrup
- 0.5 oz Fresh lemon juice
- 2 oz Soda water
- 2 oz Paleokerisio (Greek sparkling wine, for topping)

#### Glassware

Collins or highball

#### Method

1. In a shaker filled with ice, combine gin, rakomelo, simple syrup, and lemon juice.

2. Shake gently for 10–15 seconds to chill and integrate flavors.

3. Strain into a highball glass filled with fresh ice.

4. Add soda water and stir gently.

5. Top with Paleokerisio sparkling wine for brightness and effervescence.

#### Garnish & Presentation

- Garnish with a Mountain tea sprig
- Serve in a tall, clear glass to showcase the layered amber hues

#### Style

Bright, aromatic, lightly effervescent, a sophisticated Greek-inspired cocktail with warmth, citrus, and sparkling elegance.

## The Mistletoe Margarita

**A Holiday Toast in Crimson & Gold**  
Presented by Kouzina  
134 Newbury Street,  
Peabody, MA 01930  
kouzinapeabodyma.com

### Inspiration

Winter in New England carries its own kind of magic, crisp air that bites at your cheeks, strings of lights warming dark evenings, and the promise of gathering around tables laden with laughter and good cheer. At Kouzina, we wanted to honor the season's festive spirit while keeping things bright and refreshing. The Mistletoe Margarita takes the beloved classic and wraps it in holiday elegance: the vibrant tartness of cranberry, the herbal kiss of rosemary, and that signature agave brightness that reminds us winter can still sparkle. It's perfect for festive celebrations, intimate holiday dinners, or that moment when you want to raise a glass to the season.

### Ingredients (1 serving)

- 1.5 oz Blanco tequila (clean, bright, agave-forward)
- 0.5 oz Cointreau (orange liqueur, refined and aromatic)
- 0.75 oz Fresh lime juice (always fresh-squeezed)
- 0.75 oz Cranberry juice (unsweetened or lightly sweetened)
- Sugar (for rim)



- Fresh cranberries (for muddling and garnish)
- Fresh rosemary sprig (for garnish and aroma)

### Glassware

Double rocks glass (textured crystal pattern)

### Method

- 1.** Prepare the glass: Run a lime wedge around the rim of your textured rocks glass, then dip it into sugar to create a sparkling, festive rim.
- 2.** Muddle cranberries: Add 4–5 fresh cranberries to your shaker and gently muddle to release their tart juices and vibrant color.
- 3.** Build the cocktail: Add tequila, Cointreau, fresh lime juice, and cranberry juice to the shaker.

**4.** Shake: Fill the shaker with ice and shake vigorously for 15–20 seconds until well-chilled and the mixture takes on a beautiful rosy hue.

**5.** Serve: Fill your prepared glass with fresh ice and strain the cocktail over it.

**6.** Garnish: Arrange a generous cluster of fresh cranberries in the center of the drink, then add a full, generous rosemary sprig standing tall beside them. Lightly clap the rosemary between your hands before placing it to release its piney, aromatic oils.

### Garnish & Presentation

- Sparkling sugar rim (delicate and festive, catching the light)
- Abundant fresh cranberries (clustered generously

on top for visual drama)

- Bold rosemary sprig (tall and aromatic, creating height and elegance)
- Served in a textured double rocks glass that catches the light beautifully, showcasing the cocktail's gorgeous pink-coral hue

### Style

Bright, festive, elegantly tart, a holiday margarita that balances tradition with seasonal flair. The generous garnish makes it Instagram-worthy, while the flavor profile is crisp enough to cut through rich holiday meals, refreshing enough to keep conversations flowing, and beautiful enough to be the centerpiece of any gathering.