

May Flowers

Raise a Glass to the Rites of Spring

Enough with the April showers, already. As we head into the heart of spring, Vermont is beginning to live up to its nickname. The Green Mountain State is starting to bloom in earnest, as buds blossom and long-dormant flora springs to life.



From the Northeast Kingdom to the lower reaches of the Connecticut River, the forests, meadows and mountains are flowering. And what better way to celebrate this annual renewal than with an appropriately-themed cocktail? We've gathered a garden full of recipes that look too pretty to drink, but taste too good to pass up.

Cheers to Mother Nature.

Red Clover is the Vermont state flower. This small, fast growing biennial represents Vermont's farms and fields. It's easy to spot, if only because it flourishes from Derby to Stamford: Just look for its telltale three green leaves and purple flower. Honeybees gather nectar from it and some people have been known to make tea with it. We'll settle for a drink in its honor.



The Red Clover

Courtesy absolutdrinks.com

8 whole raspberries	$\frac{3}{4}$ ounces simple syrup
$1\frac{1}{2}$ ounces Absolut Vodka	$\frac{1}{2}$ egg white
$\frac{3}{4}$ ounces lemon juice	

Muddle raspberries in a shaker. Add the vodka, lemon juice, simple syrup and egg white. Fill with ice cubes. Shake and strain into a cocktail glass.



Columbine flowers are common to the state. They're tough (pretty much a prerequisite for any plant making its home in Vermont), and beautiful to look at.

These perennials – also known as Granny's Bonnet – have a lacy appearance, with distinctive bell-shaped, spurred flowers that range from light pastels to purple. Columbines are easy to grow, just as its namesake cocktail is easy to craft.



The Columbine

Courtesy barnonedrinks.com

- ½ ounce vodka
- ½ ounce Johnnie Walker Scotch (blue label)
- 2 ounces lime juice

Combine all ingredients in a cocktail glass and serve.

Lavender can be difficult to grow in Vermont. Bees, however, we've got in spades. And Caledonia Spirits, in Hardwick, makes the most of the bees' labor. Its Barr Hill Gin uses a neutral corn-based spirit, juniper and raw honey. Try a little home-grown gin (and some local honey) in this prohibition-era concoction.

→ ON THE COVER

The Lavender Bees Knees

Courtesy honesttummy.com

- 2 ounces Barr Hill Gin
- ¾ ounces lavender honey syrup*
- 1 ounce lemon juice

*Lavender Honey Syrup:

- ¼ cup honey
- ½ cup hot water
- 1 teaspoon dried lavender

To make the lavender honey syrup, combine hot water with honey and stir until evenly mixed. Add lavender, stirring to combine and let cool for 30 minutes. Pour through a fine mesh strainer to remove lavender.

Combine all ingredients in a shaker full of ice. Shake vigorously for 10 full seconds. Double strain into a cocktail glass and garnish with a lavender sprig.

Buttercups crawl through fields, farms and meadows throughout the state, brightening up the environment – but cause a bit of a headache for farmers. It spreads aggressively, is difficult to eradicate and can be toxic to livestock. While they're lovely to look at, they're not something you want to ingest. Unless it's this deliciously sweet cocktail, prohibition-era concoction.

The Buttercup

Courtesy allrecipes.com



- 4 ounces light cream
- 1 ounce crème de cacao
- 1 ounce butterscotch schnapps
- ¼ cup crushed ice

Fill a brandy snifter (or medium sized glass) with the ice and cream. Add in the crème de cacao and butterscotch schnapps and serve.

Sunflowers swaying in the warm spring breeze are beautiful to be sure, but the seeds of these tall, bright flowers have also been used as biodiesel fuel here in Vermont. Twenty acres of sunflowers were cultivated in Shaftsbury and another 10 acres in Newbury, which were then dried and pressed. The raw oil can then be converted to biodiesel, and the solid portion of the seed is used as livestock feed. The initial effort was a pilot program between Green Mountain Power, UVM Extension and Vermont Bioenergy Initiative. So whip up this flowery drink and raise a toast to sustainable, clean fuel.

The Sunflower

Courtesy allrecipes.com

(makes two cocktails)

- 1½ ounces gin
- 1½ ounces Cointreau
- 1½ ounces St. Germain elderflower liqueur
- 1½ ounces lemon juice
- Crushed ice

Combine gin, Cointreau, elderflower liqueur and lemon juice with the crushed ice in a cocktail shaker. Cover and shake until the outside of the shaker has frosted. Strain into two glasses.



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