

MIXOLOGY

Spooky Spirits

6 creepy,
creative
cocktails to
toast the
Halloween
season

BY BILL BURKE

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The days are growing shorter, the leaves have burst into vivid fall colors and it's just a matter of time until we awaken to find a little frost on the pumpkin. It all means one thing — Halloween is just about here.

And since the season when we celebrate the supernatural also coincides with cinematic offerings that tend to grow slightly spookier, we've got a few film-cocktail pairings tailor-made to soften the frights brought on by ghosts and ghouls. Just make a note of the shopping list provided, stock up your home bar and then stream your favorite scary movie.

A suggestion: To kick your frightful film fest off, start with a pair of chilling films set right here in Vermont: "Wolf" and "What Lies Beneath."

"Wolf"

This Mike Nichols-directed 1994 film is packed with Hollywood A-listers, including Jack Nicholson, Michelle Pfeiffer, James Spader and Christopher Plummer, among a number of other recognizable actors. Will Randall (Nicholson) is bitten by a wolf after clipping it with his Volvo along a snowy Vermont road late one night — soon beginning his own transformation. "Wolf" offers up a few of the typical werewolf tropes like experiencing sharper senses, memory blackouts and struggling with a new beastly nature, but it does also offer a bit of romance, and it is set here in Vermont (though the state is played somewhat convincingly by rural New York and an office building in Los Angeles). And while it's widely known that the best way to protect one's self from an aggressive lycanthrope is with silver bullets, there's something to be said for embracing a wolf bite, especially if it's delivered in a shot glass with a slightly sweet character.

The Wolf Bite

courtesy tipsybartender.com

- ½ ounce absinthe
- ½ ounce melon liqueur
- ½ ounce lemon-lime soda
- ½ ounce pineapple juice
- Dash grenadine
- Ice

Add ice to shaking glass and pour over absinthe, melon liqueur, pineapple juice and lemon-lime soda. Stir to combine. Strain mix into shot glass and drizzle with grenadine.

"What Lies Beneath"

Michelle Pfeiffer returns to Vermont in this 2000 Hitchcockian thriller, alongside Harrison Ford and director Robert Zemeckis. Norman Spencer (Ford) becomes concerned about his wife (Pfeiffer) who has started hearing voices in their lakeside home. Supernatural occurrences begin to haunt Pfeiffer, eventually leading to suspicions about her husband's involvement in a terrible accident.



PHOTO COURTESY OF TIPSYBARTENDER.COM

There are two notable details to focus on in "What Lies Beneath." First, the couple's home sits on a picturesque lake. On screen, and in actuality, you're looking at Lake Champlain. We'll overlook the fact that it was shot on the New York side and say that it pulls off Vermont quite well. The second convincing element is Harrison Ford's performance is another enjoyable (and chilling) credit in a long career. Why not toast the actor's resume, and his appearance in this film, in particular, with a cocktail named for him?

The Harrison Ford

courtesy thedailymeal.com

- 1½ ounces coffee liqueur
- 3 ounces Irish cream
- 2¼ ounces vodka
- Mint leaves, for garnish

Combine the coffee liqueur, Irish cream and vodka in a martini glass, garnish with mint leaves and serve.



Things are starting to get interesting in Vermont...

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The iconic figures made famous in the black-and-white Universal films of the 1920s through the 1950s who creeped, stomped, swept and flew across the silver screen decades ago bring a classic feel to the Halloween season. It stands to reason, then, that a punch based on one of the most renowned cultural icons from that era would be welcome at any Halloween gathering.

Frankenpunch

courtesy delish.com

- 2 liters ginger ale
- 1 can pineapple juice (46 ounces)
- 2 cups tequila
- 1 quart lime sorbet
- Lemon and lime slices

Combine the ginger ale, pineapple, juice and tequila in a punch bowl. Top with scoops of lime sorbet and slices of lemon and lime. Serve with ice.

A tip from the folks at delish.com: Can't find lime sorbet? A lime popsicle works, too, and it can double as a drink stirrer. Also, the kicker to the Frankenpunch may not be the refreshing, sweet flavors but in the glassware. Try serving your guests this treat in skull-shaped mugs (available on Amazon.com from \$7.98 to \$34.99).

Old, black-and-white chillers were often shown as double features, and wherever Frankenstein's monster (with or without his bride) lurked, you'd likely find Dracula. His recipes usually contain slightly more hemoglobin than recommended, so an excellent substitute is the Dracula's Blood cocktail, which gets its deep, red hue from the black cherry juice and grenadine — a sweet, red syrup made from pomegranates.

Dracula's Blood

courtesy thekitchenismyplayground.com

- 2 ounces white rum
- ¾ ounces peach schnapps
- 3 ounces black cherry juice
- 2 teaspoons grenadine
- Fresh cherries for garnish

Place rum, peach schnapps, black cherry juice and grenadine into a cocktail shaker with ice. Shake for about 10 seconds to mix and chill.

Strain into a martini glass. Garnish with a fresh or maraschino cherry.

Pro tip: Play mad scientist and show your creative side by dropping a set of (clean) plastic vampire teeth to complete the perfect Halloween vibe. They'll float — canines up — and the white teeth will stand out from the deep red of the cocktail.

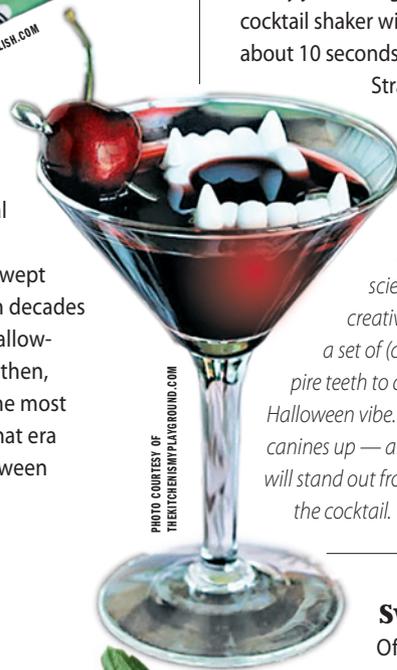


PHOTO COURTESY OF THEKITCHENISMYPLAYGROUND.COM

Sweet Treats

Of course, you'll need snacks for this film fest, and since

Halloween is the high candy holiday, it makes sense to infuse your sippers with a few sweet seasonal favorites.



Junior Mint

courtesy mixthatdrink.com

- ½ ounce Malibu Rum
- 1 ounce white crème de cacao
- 1 ounce white crème de menthe
- Mint sprig

Fill a cocktail shaker with ice. Pour in the ingredients and shake. Strain the mixture into an old-fashioned glass and garnish with the mint sprig.

Frankly

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MIXOLOGY: SPOOKY SPIRITS

Candy Corn Martini

courtesy bitememore.com

- 3 ounces vanilla vodka
- ¾ cup candy corn
- 1 Grand Marnier Grand Marnier

In a glass dish, soak candy corn in vanilla vodka for 1-2 hours. Stir and strain out the candy. In a martini shaker with a handful of ice, combine the candy corn-infused vodka and Grand Marnier. Strain into a martini glass and serve.



PHOTO COURTESY OF BITEMEMORE.COM

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Shopping List

Stock up on the spirits included in these recipes:

- Absente, 750ML, \$41.99 on sale \$37.99
- Midori Melon Liqueur, 750ML, \$22.99 on sale \$20.99
- Perc Coffee Liqueur, 750ML, \$26.99
- Bailey's Original Irish Cream, 750ML, \$29.99 on sale \$24.99
- Smugglers' Notch Vodka, 750ML, \$26.99 on sale \$23.99
- 1800 Anejo Tequila, 750ML, \$41.99
- Captain Morgan White Rum, 750ML, \$14.99
- DeKuyper Luscious Peachtree Schnapps, 750ML, \$9.99
- Malibu Rum, 750ML, \$16.99 on sale \$14.39
- Bols Crème de Cacao, 1L, \$13.99
- Dek Signature Crème de Menthe, 750ML, \$9.99
- Green Mountain Organic Vanilla Vodka, 750ML, \$25.99
- Grand Marnier, 750ML, \$39.99 on sale \$35.99