

THE Absinthe RITUAL



ILLUSTRATION BY AMANDA WEISBROD | PHOTO BY STEEL BROOKS

Otherwise known as the "Green Fairy," absinthe is one of the most obscure and misunderstood spirits in the world — and its preparation only adds to its intrigue. Involving a fountain, ornate slotted spoons and chalices specifically designed to hold the aperitif spirit, fixing a glass of absinthe has been described by enthusiasts as somewhat of a ritual.

What Does It Taste Like?

Absinthe has a flavor similar to black licorice because of its three main ingredients:

GRAND
WORMWOOD

ANISEED

FENNEL

A Step-By-Step Preparation Guide



1 Pour your favorite absinthe into a special absinthe glass up to the top of its reservoir.



2 Rest an absinthe spoon across the rim of the glass and set a sugar cube or two on top of it.



3 Place the glass beneath a fountain spout and slightly turn the valve to get a slow drip going.

Make sure the water drips over the sugar cube so it dissolves properly.



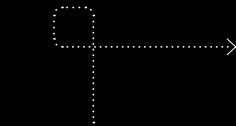
4 Once your glass is full, stir with the pointed absinthe spoon to help dissolve the rest of the sugar. Enjoy!

The Green Ratio

Traditionally, absinthe should be prepared in a 1-to-5 ratio with cold water, which gives the drink a strength similar to a glass of wine. This ratio should be adjusted depending on the proof of the absinthe and to individual taste.



Unique and beautifully designed, absinthe spoons feature intricate slots that allow water and sugar to drip into the glass below.



As water mixes with absinthe, it combines with the spirit's essential oils to create an opalescent, cloudy effect known as a louche.



True or False?

Because of its harrowing history, there are many misconceptions about absinthe. Take the quiz below to see how many myths you can catch. Answers in bottom right corner.

1 T / F

Absinthe is not a drug or poison and it never was.

2 T / F

Authentic absinthe is legal in the U.S.

3 T / F

If you drink absinthe, you will hallucinate and see a green fairy.

4 T / F

Serving the spirit with flaming sugar cubes is an authentic absinthe tradition.

Absinthe fountains can come with two, four or even six spouts for an entire party to enjoy the drink together.

True or false answers: T, T, F, F

Sources: The Warmwood Society, warmwoodsociety.org; WikiMedia Commons, commons.wikimedia.org