

THE DRUGGING OF THE AMERICAN B

IT'S A CRISIS: WE'RE OVERDIAGNOSING AND OVERPRESCRIBING, AND IT HAS

MAN AT HIS BEST

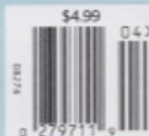
84 Things
A Man
Should
Do Before
He Dies:

THE
LIFE
LIST

#85: Get
Handsome

DO MEN CARE
ABOUT SHOES?
YUP.

SEE PAGE 85



NO. 06 → THE LEAST DAINTY PUNCH

Port Royal Punch: Stir 1½ cups loosely packed brown sugar and 1 cup water over a low flame until sugar dissolves. Let cool. Combine with 1½ cups fresh-squeezed lime juice in a gallon jug or pitcher. Add one 750-ml bottle Wray & Nephew White Overproof Rum, 2 qts water, and a few sprigs mint. Refrigerate for 1 hour before serving. Serve over ice. Serves 10 well.



No. 07 REALLY HIGH-PROOF BOOZE

DRINKING BY DAVID WONDRIKH

Poke around the shelves of liquor stores and the back bars of contemporary cocktail ateliers (or whatever they're calling themselves in 2014) and you'll find a surprising number of spirits that are a good deal stronger than the standard 80-proof, or 40 percent abv, alcohol by volume. In part, that's because cocktails are king these days and stronger spirits make for richer-tasting cocktails: A jigger of 100-proof rye packs substantially more whiskey into a drink than a jigger of 80-proof. It's also an appeal to tradition: Since many spirits used to be stronger than they are now, it's a way of saying that your product is old-fashioned in a way that transcends mere bottle design.

Some of those high proofs are logical: Whiskeys are bottled at 100-proof because the government used to guarantee that whiskeys aged and bottled under its supervision were 100-proof, which was defined as 50 percent abv. Others are arbitrary: London dry gins are traditionally 94-proof, which might as well be a random number. Yet others, primarily from the UK or its former colonies, are bottled at proofs that once made sense and now don't, because the countries involved changed the way

they measure alcohol. (They used to do it by weight, not volume, which gave different readings.) Jamaica's **[1] Wray & Nephew White Overproof Rum** (\$23), for example, clocks in at a hefty 63 percent abv, an arbitrary figure now, but 10 degrees over proof according to the old system. But the high proof means that if you mix it at home like Jamaicans usually do, with canned fruit punch or ice and coconut water (our preference), its potent, musky sugarcane funk still shines through brightly. That makes it the most popular rum in Jamaica, and it'll never change. There are also several so-called Navy Strength rums and even gins on the market, such as the excellent old-school **[2] Hayman's Royal Dock Gin** (\$27). These are bottled at 57 percent abv, which makes for fine concentrated cocktails but poor history: From 1866 on, the Royal Navy actually bottled its rum ration at 54 percent abv, or 4.5 (old) degrees under proof.

Other spirits get their high proof from a different tradition. A hundred-odd years ago, whiskey used to be wholesaled by the barrel, not the case, and undiluted, which meant that the retailer could add water or not as he or she saw fit. In the 1980s, distillers started bottling things at barrel-proof again. It's just coincidence that **[3] Old Grand-Dad** launched its 114 Barrel Proof at 57 percent abv, back in 1980 or thereabouts. Then, the company claimed it was "the most expensive bourbon in the world"; now, although it's dropped the Barrel Proof label, it's still 114-proof and will cost you just \$25. But it's rich and intense and almost winy and perfect on the rocks. For a fine barrel-strength Scotch, such as the **[4] Caol Ila Stichel Reserve** (\$110), which clocks in at a hefty 59.6 percent abv, we'd serve a little water on the side, allowing you to trickle in just enough to cut the burn but not hide its briny sweetness.

Finally, some things are higher proof just because they taste better that way, particularly in mixed drinks. Make a New York brandy sour (see right) with the potent, concentrated 106-proof **[5] Louis Royer Force 53 cognac** (\$40) and you'll have a hard time going back to 80-proof cognacs in such things. **12**



How to Tame the Forceful Spirits

Two of my favorite ways to use the really hard stuff, both of which compensate for the dilution that results from mixing with ice and the addition of other ingredients. —D.W.

No. 08: WARD-ROOM MARTINI

- ▶ Stir well with cracked ice:
- ▶ 1½ oz Hayman's Royal Dock gin
- ▶ 1½ oz dry vermouth
- ▶ 2 dashes orange bitters
- ▶ Strain into chilled cocktail glass and twist a thin-cut swatch of lemon peel over the top.

No. 09: NEW YORK BRANDY SOUR

- ▶ Stir ½ oz lemon juice and 1 tsp sugar together in a cocktail shaker.
- ▶ Add 2 oz Louis Royer Force 53 cognac.
- ▶ Fill with ice, shake well, and strain into chilled cocktail glass.
- ▶ Slowly, carefully pour ½ oz dry red wine over the back of a bar spoon held so that the edge of the spoon just touches the waterline of the drink. The wine will float on top of the drink, giving it a tangy and attractive red collar.