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Midnight Margarita

Serves 6

From [Charcoal: New Ways to Cook with Fire](#) by Josiah Citrin and Joann Cianciulli © 2019. Reprinted in arrangement with Penguin Random House New York.

“A stone’s throw from the Pacific Ocean, the bar at Charcoal draws a lively, local crowd and often gets hopping before the sun sets over Venice Beach. Seductive-looking and equally delicious, our signature black margarita is a reimagined adaptation of the beloved classic, with tart lime foam, black smoked salt, and charcoal-infused tequila tinted jet-black from my restaurant’s namesake ingredient. Trust, your guests will be talking about it for days! Credit for this creative cocktail goes to master mixologist Pablo Moix, who consulted on our bar program and developed our most famous drink.”

INGREDIENTS

12 ounces silver tequila
1 teaspoon activated charcoal powder
½ cup freshly squeezed lime juice
1 tablespoon lecithin
2 teaspoons finely ground smoked sea salt, plus more for rimming the glasses

For Each Margarita:

Finely ground smoked sea salt, for rimming the glass
1 lime wedge, plus more for serving
1 large ice cube or sphere
2 ounces (¼ cup) charcoal-infused tequila
1 ounce (2 tablespoons) freshly squeezed lime juice
½ ounce (1 tablespoon) Cointreau orange liqueur
½ ounce (1 tablespoon) agave nectar

1.

In a liquid measuring cup or empty bottle, mix the tequila with the charcoal powder until black.

2.

To prepare the froth, combine 1 cup water, lime juice, lecithin, and smoked sea salt in a container with high sides. Just before you are ready to serve the cocktail, whisk vigorously with a small whisk (or use a frothing wand if you have one), until the lime water is thick and frothy. Froth each time before using.

3.

Sprinkle a saucer or small plate with smoked sea salt to cover the bottom. Use a lime wedge to moisten the rim of an old-fashioned glass, turn the glass upside down, and firmly dip into the smoked sea salt so it sticks. Turn the glass upright and add the large ice cube.

4.

For each Margarita, combine 2 ounces of the charcoal tequila with 1 ounce of lime juice, ½ ounce Cointreau, and ½ ounce of agave in a shaker with regular ice cubes; shake it up really well until the tin looks misty on the outside. Strain the Margarita into the glass. Rake off the foamy surface of the lime froth with a tablespoon and spoon on top of the Margarita. Garnish with a lime wedge.

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Ingredient Note: Lecithin

Derived from soybeans, lecithin is widely sold as a nutritional supplement due to its potential health benefits, as it is believed to provide antioxidant properties, promote weight loss, improve memory, and increase energy efficiency. That's all well and fine, but from a food standpoint, soy lecithin is a terrific emulsifier. Here, lecithin is the magic powder that stabilizes the Margarita foam, keeping it aerated with tiny bubbles for several minutes. It's possible to still froth the liquid without the lecithin, but the foam won't hold as long. Lecithin is available in powder, liquid, or pellet-like granules, and all will work in this recipe.