

VIDEO: Cocktails with Herbs at Bell Book & Candle

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As summertime comes to an end, there's one set of fresh ingredients that can be counted on even as the seasons change: herbs.

While basil and mint have been popular in drinks for quite some time (anyone tired of mojitos yet?), other herbs like sage, verbena, thyme or dill can add a distinctly fresh element to an otherwise booze-centric endeavor.

There are a few basic principles to keep in mind when you're adding herbs to your cocktails. The most essential is to understand the strength of the herb when deciding on the ratios for your drink. Lemongrass or sage can be overpowering when muddled, so go for a less-is-more approach. Also consider the delicacy of your herbs when you muddle. Muddle just enough to release the aromas and flavor, but don't pulverize them entirely. Lastly, don't be afraid of the strainer. If you want the look of the herbs you can always add them as a garnish on top after straining out your muddled or shaken concoctions. No one likes smashed herbs in their teeth as an after-effect to their drinks!

To get you started we have two recipes from Manhattan's Bell Book & Candle, which happens to have an entire herb garden on their surreptitiously hidden rooftop. For advice from chef John Mooney, watch the video above and then get started on the recipes below:

