

# CONVENIENCE STORE COCKTAILS

## A Guide to Street-Side Mixology

By Sky Thomas Gidge

Chinese convenience store booze is a story of extremes: on the mellow end you have the watery slosh of shelf-stuffing lagers, filling out the middle ground is *jingjiu*, its medicinal undertones an acquired taste and, finally, comes the caustic zip of *baijiu*.

Plenty swear off the Middle Kingdom's alcohol after the first sip, but this article will change that. Not by teaching you to appreciate some of the world's most popular spirits, but by giving you some simple street-side mixes you can make - on the cheap.

### SCISSOR ME TIMBERS RMB16.5

My grandfather would call it 'gut rot'. In China it's known as *erguotou* (二锅头) - a usually cheap type of *baijiu* made from sorghum and widely available. It's also about as classy as chugging a forty in your underwear before noon on a weekday. So it was a shock when an avid cocktail drinker deemed the following mix 'floral' and 'something I'd drink!'

#### INGREDIENTS:

- 50ml of erguotou
- 50ml of peach tea
- 1/3 of a cut apple

#### DIRECTIONS:

1. Cut one-third of the apple into pieces.
2. Add apple pieces into the shaker.
3. Add the erguotou into the shaker.
4. Add the peach tea.
5. Shake for 15 seconds and pour, using the bottle cap to strain out most of the apple.



## BAD MEDICINE

RMB21

Years ago, the *jingjiu*-milk tea combo had a following among a certain cash-strapped Shenzhen set – lets call this drink an ‘evolution’ of that.

Note: it’s important to use the Jingpai (劲牌) *jingjiu*, as this alcohol’s flavors range from ‘gag’ to ‘one more sip.’

In this mix, the *jingjiu*’s medicinal notes are paired with the flavor of Watson’s Vanilla Soda and a heavy dollop of milk coffee.

### INGREDIENTS:

- 50ml of jingjiu
- 20ml Watson’s Vanilla Soda
- 75ml Milk Coffee

### DIRECTIONS:

1. Add the vanilla soda, milk coffee and jingjiu to the shaker.
2. For 15 seconds, shake cautiously pointing the cap in a safe direction, as the soda is carbonated.
3. Think about where you went wrong in life.
4. Pour.

## THE SWEATY PIG

RMB30

A step up from *erguotou*, we call the *baijiu* in this drink ‘pig juice,’ owing to the pig emblazoned on its reusable vessel. The official name is Xiao Zhuge (小诸葛). Again, get the brand right for reasonable results.

The squeezed grapefruit juice lends this nepenthe a bitter, tongue numbing flavor – paired with refreshing green tea and a hint of saltiness from the unfortunately-named Pocari Sweat.

### INGREDIENTS:

- 50ml Xiao Zhuge Baijiu
- 50ml Green Tea
- 50ml grapefruit juice
- 15ml Pocari Sweat

### DIRECTIONS:

1. Add the grapefruit juice, baijiu and Pocari Sweat.
2. Shake 15 seconds.
3. Pour.

## TOOLS OF THE TRADE

This guide requires you to MacGyver some tools of the trade – and by MacGyver, we mean empty a water bottle and save the cap.

### THE SHAKER

No excuses. A water bottle can be substituted for this bartender basic – shake with caution when using fizzy as you risk an AV-style blow out.

### THE STRAINER

Just turn the cap (of said water bottle) sideways to create a small gap in the opening, catching most of the fruit bits – anything that gets through adds... texture and mouthfeel. Yes, texture and mouthfeel.



SCAN FOR VIDEO

Scan here to see our cocktail-mixing madness in action.

All recipes created with the help Ross Woodford, future lord commander of cocktail bar Life on Mars in Futian, Shenzhen