

To “Marines and Others” to paraphrase an old John W. Thomason title...

What with the 10th and 11th of November creeping up on us, I thought that it was time to post my annual "appropriate libation" formula(s) to allow those so inclined to stock up on the necessary ingredients! Well then, go forth (or even fifth - little pun there) and enjoy. ...And here's to absent comrades or mud in your eye as appropriate!

Semper Fi,

Dick

FORMULA FOR THE INFAMOUS “FRENCH 75”

It seems that after every war, there is a favorite libation that somehow comes home with the returning combat troops... After the War of Cuban Liberation (Spanish American War to you new comers) it was the Cuba Libré... (this was simply the well known Rum and Coke – with a slight twist of lime)... After WWI it was a drink named after the famous French Artillery Piece, “The French 75”! Needless to say this drink was noted for its “kick” and its ability to slip up on you. It was always a great favorite at Marine Corps Birthday Bashes and artillerymen held it in high esteem....

Current Official Bar Drink Mixing Books list the formula as follows:

1. 1 ½ ounce Cognac (brandy will do nicely) – 1 ½ oz. is usually considered to be a standard shot glass.
2. 1 ounce Bar Sour (I never heard of this stuff, but after tasting it, I'd say that probably Collins Mix or Lemon Juice will do – I've seen many a punch bowl made of this stuff without using it, probably because of where I had dug my hole at the time!).
3. Pour into a Collins sized glass (or canteen cup) and fill with Champagne and add a bit of ice.

Another Formula from a Drink Mixing Page (similar but with subtle variations):

French 75 (Cognac)

1 1/2 oz Cognac
1 oz Lemon juice
1 tsp Sugar
6 oz Champagne

Mixing instructions:

Combine cognac, sugar and lemon juice in shaker. Add ice and shake till chilled. Pour into champagne flute. Pour champagne over cognac concoction. Garnish with lemon curl.

Watch out, these things don't really taste like much more than sparkling vino, but they'll grow on ya' in short order.

If you can't remember all the fancy measurements, the following will work! In the field and far from chimney smoke, we used to make the stuff by dumping a bottle of Cognac or Brandy in a punch bowl, along with a couple of bottles of Champagne, and a couple of drops of lemon juice to taste (you can omit the lemon juice in a pinch)... Add ice and you are ready to go. Air Wingers can simply put the covered bowl in a tub and cool down with av-gas or CO2 fire extinguishers... If the bullets are flying, and refrigeration isn't handy, drink it warm, you won't notice after a couple anyway!

Don't schedule anything for the next day!

Great for the Marine Corps Birthday when you have the 11th to recuperate, and MOST appropriate for Armistice Day...

Happy Birthday Marines, and a Happy Armistice Day to all!

Semper Fi,

Dick

NOTE: This stuff is also known as "Artilleryman's Punch" for those who no longer remember that a French 75 was the de-facto Artillery Piece from WWI until WWII. When I was going to school at VMI, the cannon we used for the Evening Gun Salute (to lower the flag) was still a French 75. It wasn't replaced by a 105 until about 1957....

P.S. For all you Ducks, Squids and Pollywogs, it would be well to have a friendly Marine to escort you home after a night of these! Most Army Artillerymen are bullet proof on these, but a standard grunt may have to work up an immunity... Airborne troops are resilient but you may get the sensation of "still floating" after a few libations!
