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Covering the basics of what every darubaaz should know seemed like a good idea so the next 3 articles I write will be fashioned after a "Dummies for Daru series". If you follow the next three articles, you will be well prepared for hosting "balle balle" style holiday parties at the end of the year.

For this issue, we will cover the hardware or the essential tools of the trade that are needed in your bar. November will address the software or the essential liquids, *daru* and any mixers that are needed and finally December will cover all the presentations or the different glassware that is needed.

As usual, I have to share a story first. This is about a *daru* party that was hosted for me the day before I got married. It was a cocktail party and there

were over 150 people partying it up until almost 4 AM. The *dhol* guys had been playing from 11 PM and fresh *seekh kababs* and chicken *tikkas* were doing the rounds. Our house in Delhi has a huge wet bar in the basement built under the supervision of yours truly (!) and a lot of the information in these three articles comes from my experience from entertaining there. Going back to that cocktail party, the police were also invited - not as guests but in order to break up a fight that was started by people who weren't invited in the first place!

Enough said and now, back to the business of hosting. There are some basic tools needed to make cocktails. Some of these items are already in the kitchen and the rest can be purchased at prices that fit any budget. With these basic essentials you can mix cocktails that are sure to please with ease.

COCKTAIL & BOSTON SHAKERS

There are two basic types of shakers available in the market: the Cocktail or Traditional Shaker, also called a "cocktail shaker" or "martini shaker", which is the classic shaker and the Boston Shaker.

A **shaker** has three parts - the cup, the top and the cap. Place ice, then the liquids into the cup, place the top and the cap tightly onto the cup, shake (away from the guest, especially while you are not comfortable with this item). To serve, remove the cap. The top works as a strainer.

Boston Shaker— this shaker serves a dual purpose because it is comprised of a 16 ounce mixing glass and a larger, flat-bottomed metal cone. The glass can be used by itself for stirring drinks over ice and the two pieces are used together for shaking ingredients with the metal part fitting over the glass. The Boston Shaker requires the use of a strainer.

JULEP STRAINER

A perforated metal strainer in the shape of a soup spoon that is used when drinks are strained from a mixing glass.

JIGGER

A metal measuring device that usually has two cones on either end. The larger cone typically holds 1 1/2 ounces while the smaller cone holds 3/4 or 1 ounce. The jigger is an essential, aesthetic piece of the bar set up which helps ensure precise measuring of liquids.

BAR SPOON

Different from the average spoon, a bar spoon typically has a long, spiral handle and a petite spoon bowl. This type of spoon is essential for stirring and layering drinks.

MUDDLER

A thick stick, made of either wood or stainless steel, used to mash ingredients at the bottom of a glass. Often used to mix sugars, bitters, and also to extract juices and oils from fruit and mint. Muddling is an essential step in making old-fashioned Mojitos and Caipirinhas. *Ghar ka belan*



SHAKER



MUDDLER



BOSTON SHAKER



SPEED POURER



JULEP STRAINER



WINE OPENER



JIGGER



BOTTLE OPENERS



BAR SPOON



ICE BUCKET

will NOT do!

SPEED POURER

The speed pourer, or bottle pourer can be handy for big parties for quick and easy pouring. Remove these pourers from bottles after the party or your hangover, whichever is later, and seal bottles with their original caps. This prolongs the shelf life and the freshness of the *daru*.

WINE OPENERS

Wine openers, from a simple corkscrew to the fancy "estate" wine openers, the most popular is the "waiter's corkscrew" which is small, easy to use, and folds up. If you drink a lot of wine, definitely invest your money in a good wine opener. A wine fridge is also a must for wine drinkers (price ranges from \$90 dollars to \$1,000 and up).

BOTTLE OPENERS

Corner of the kitchen table will do if the wife is not looking or if you are under 20, you can even use your teeth. The other alternative is to invite some one who wears a *kada* as it is an excellent bottle opener. For better and more consistent results, invest in something simple and easy to replace as they have a habit of disappearing.

ICE ACCESSORIES

Ice is key to the bar and items like ice buckets, crushers, scoops and tongs are essential. I cannot tell you how important ice is in hosting a party. Extra ice bags are imperative for a successful party.

ELECTRIC BLENDER

A blender is essential for preparing frozen drinks like frozen Daiquiris and Margaritas, and it is also used to crush ice and puree fruit.

You now have a shopping list for your next party. Hopefully, this will get you going and I will see you next month with my next edition in the series. Until then, have a *balle balle* of a time shopping for bar essentials.

Questions?

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