



Limoncello: Libations of the World

Description

Our Featured Libation of the World comes from the Sorrentine Peninsula and Amalfi Coast in Southern Italy

Cover Photo by [Roberto Patti](#) on [Unsplash](#)

“When life hands you lemons.....make.....limoncello”

Unknown



Limoncello is a sweet and tangy Italian Lemon Liqueur mainly produced in Southern Italy, along the Amalfi coast, and in the region known as the Sorrentine Peninsula. This region stands at the heart of the lemon agricultural community.

This delightful burst of lemon with a punch is made from the zest of lemons and is traditionally served chilled as an end-of-the-meal digestive. It can be enjoyed on its own but also with desserts. Limoncello pairs well with any chocolate-type dessert (citrus and chocolate always go well), a pear tart, or drizzled-over vanilla ice cream. It beautifully compliments classic Italian tiramisu. That said, you will often observe people enjoying a chilled glass of limoncello midafternoon as it makes a lovely aperitif. There is no wrong time to enjoy this intriguing drink.

Another version, called limoncino found in Cinque Terre and other areas of Northern Italy. It differs slightly, and the article will focus on Limoncello only.

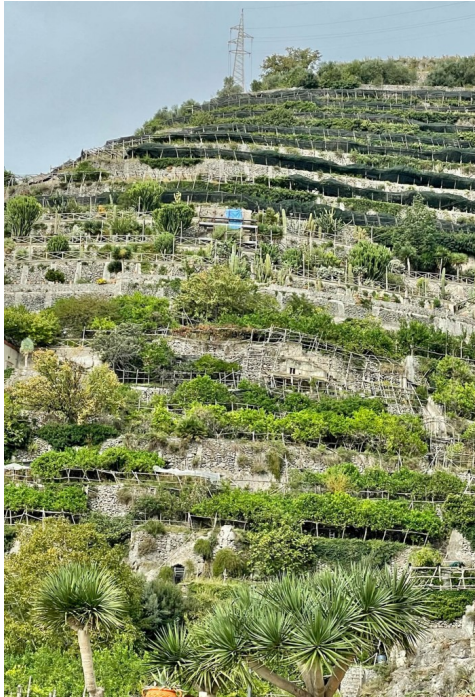


History of Limoncello



Historical documents date lemons in the Sorrento area to 1500 AD, but the current Sorrento oval ancestors date back to the Roman era. Excavations of Pompeii and Herculaneum revealed numerous paintings depicting lemons similar to those of today served on the tables of ancient Romans.

Lemons are thought to have originated in India and were introduced to southern Italy around 200 AD. Arabs spread lemons throughout the Mediterranean region during their sea travels. The ship crews were especially susceptible to scurvy during their long voyages, and the Vitamin C in lemons could prevent it. Even Christopher Columbus had lemon seeds on his ships when he came to America.



Hillside gardens

That, though, is not the origin of Limoncello. The origin is entirely disputed. There are stories of monks enjoying Limoncello between prayers during the Middle Ages. Some speak of fishermen ages ago drinking this lemon liquor in the morning to ward off the morning chill.

The most accepted story originated in a small boarding house on the island of Capri in the early 1900s. A woman, Maria Antonia Farace, who tended a large garden of Sorrento lemons, created the fragrant and intense liqueur with a unique flavor thanks to the mixing with sugar, alcohol, and water. Her nephew opened a bar, and the specialty was the lemon liquor made with his aunt's recipe. Interestingly it was not registered for a trademark until 1988, though it was by the son of Maria's nephew. From the nineteenth century to today, Limoncello has become one of the region's most significant products and a worldwide commercial phenomenon.

Nutritional value

Lemons are exceptionally high in vitamin C. The Amalfi Coast lemon has more vitamin C than other lemon varieties. Vitamin C protects cells from damage and strengthens the immune system. The skin of lemons contains additional phytochemicals that are important in preventing disease.

The Fruit

The lemons in this region are a masterpiece born thanks to the nature surrounding them. This is due to the influence of the sea and the sun that shines on the coast for most of the year. Sorrento and the Amalfi Coast are two distinct areas that are very close, but there is a significant difference between the Sorrento lemon and the Amalfi Coast lemon. They share the Sorrento and Amalfi lemon groves, often called "lemon gardens."

Most lemons used in limoncello production are cultivated by training the trees to climb along a framework made of poles about twelve feet high, forming an arbor. The lemons ripen between February and October, then are hand-picked based on their size, color, and shape. They are harvested throughout the year on steep terraces accessed by stone stairs. There are many celebrations around the lemons, mainly in spring and summer.

Sorrento Lemons



The best-known citrus of the Sorrento Peninsula is the Sorrentino lemon called ‘Femminello,’ It differs from the lemons of the nearby Amalfi coast for its different cultivation methods and organoleptic properties.

The Sorrento femminiello, also known as “Massa lemon” or “Sorrento Oval” (referring to the oval shape of the fruit), has medium-large dimensions. Each lemon weighs no more than 2.5 ounces grams, and its pulp is straw yellow with a highly acidic juice (which differentiates it from the Amalfitano lemon, which is moderately acidic).



Sorrento

The peel is of medium thickness, rough, and fragrant due to the rich presence of essential oils and is citrine yellow.

The P.G.I. Sorrento lemon has particular production techniques based on cultivation under “straw mats.” The mats rest on wooden support poles to cover the foliage of the trees. This protects citrus fruits from adverse weather conditions and regulates ripening.

Amalfi Coast Lemons



Lemons at the market

Amalfi lemons belong to a different category known in Italian as the 'sfusato,' which refers to the fruit's tapered shape, entirely different from the rounder varieties of lemons grown elsewhere in Italy. This variety was developed by crossing small, local lemons and bitter oranges. These lemons are significantly larger, with each fruit weighing at least 3 ounces. The medium to thick skin is a light yellow color. The rind has an exceptionally intense lemon aroma because of the essential oils in its skin. Inside, the flesh is acidic, semi-sweet, and very juicy. Amalfi Coast lemons contain few seeds and grow year-round.



Amalfi Coast

The local lemons are traditionally what they use to make Limoncello. They are perfect for cooking because of their flavor and lack of seeds. Lemons are excellent in salad dressings. Of course, they are always wonderful with fish. The zest and flesh are useful in baking and are in several regional desserts.

The Process

The first step in the limoncello production process begins with fresh lemon peels and removing the bitter white pith that covers the fruit. The oil in the peels infuses the alcohol with flavor, so thicker peels are preferred for making lemon liqueur. The pulp can go into lemon pastries and other lemon-based products as it is generally unnecessary for making Limoncello.



The peels soak in pure, high-quality alcohol. Each producer will use different neutral spirits derived from grain, grapes, sugar beets, sugar cane, and even wine or vodka. These spirits act as a solvent to extract the oils and flavor from the lemon rinds because they have up to ninety-five percent alcohol. For a minimum of forty days, the lemon rinds will marinate in the alcohol in a dark place. The alcohol will develop a more intense lemon flavor the longer they steep and become richer in color.

The mixture is then strained after marinating for the desired time. The resulting liquid is then combined with a syrup of sugar dissolved in boiling water. It will rest for another month, covered in a cool, dark place. Finally, the whole Limoncello brew is filtered, bottled, and corked.

Check out our [Italian **Tomato Balsamic Bruschetta** recipe](#)

Letting it Sit



Those fresh lemons can take 28-80 days to become Limoncello. The process is relatively simple, but each producer boasts their limoncello secrets. For example, some use only the rinds, while others

marinate the pulp and seeds. Some experiments with different sugar-to-water ratios in the syrup. The location where the limoncello steeps can also play a role because of varying temperatures and humidity.

Ultimately, these factors affect the final product's flavor, opacity, and texture. Taste can vary dramatically from lovely and refreshing to a taste similar to a cleaning substance.

How Best to Experience Limoncello



Ice cold in a chilled glass



The preferred way to serve Limoncello is cold (without ice), usually kept in the freezer before serving.

The glass should be chilled as well. A serving size is 45 ml or 1.5 ounces.

It is 30% alcohol, so it does pack a punch and is deceiving due to its sweetness.

Always drink responsibly.

Beyond the “*Digestivo*”

Digestivo refers to helping you digest after a meal. That is why Limoncello is most commonly enjoyed as an after-dinner drink, but there are many other ways to enjoy it:

Drizzle it over gelato or ice cream or

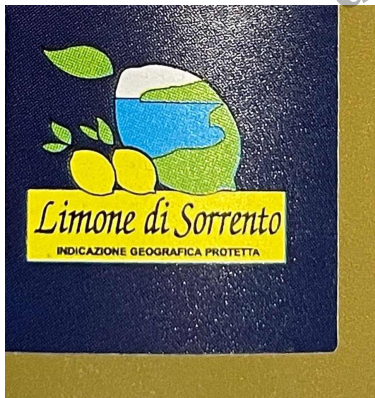
Pour over some fresh fruit

Swirl it into champagne or sparkling water

Stir it into pastry cream or drizzle it over pound cake

Add to homemade cocktails.

The Seal of the Real Limoncello, avoiding Tourist Knock-Offs



In Italy, prized agricultural products are strictly regulated. Lemons grown in certain designated regions of Capri and the Sorrentine Peninsula fall under the legal protection afforded by an I.G.P. (Indicazione Geografica Protetta), a protected geographic area. The consortia protect the two main lemons cultivated there based on their cultural, historical, and culinary importance. These certified areas are under protection by the laws of the European Union.



Limoncello overdone

Most limoncellos you will see for sale in tourist trap stores are not authentic. They are aromatics, not true Limoncello. Avoid those and seek the “real” product.

default watermark

Limoncello of Sorrento has the Consortium for the Promotion of the Sorrento Lemon, which regulates the cultivation of Sorrento lemons.

The Consortium for the Promotion of the Amalfi Coast Lemon preserves this variety’s heritage label for the Amalfi Coast.

Lemons Everywhere



With lemons being the agricultural focus in this region, it goes way beyond just Limoncello. It is pretty much lemon everything. Along with Limoncello are lemon-flavored candy, cookies, pastries, and limoncello chocolate. If that wasn't enough, you could find lemons in or on almost anything, including lemon soaps, trinkets, clothing, ceramics, artwork, etc.

One of our favorite treats is a cone of lemon sorbet, which is refreshing and delicious. We also enjoyed mouth-watering lemon pastries and desserts. If you are not a lemon, you are in the wrong place.

Taking Limoncello Home



Limoncello di Sorrento Shop



Sorrento shop

Our favorite was from Sorrento. The Labadia Distillates group was founded in 1884. It was born in the center of Naples and established itself throughout Italy during the early 1900s. It produces an

incredible limoncello. They have an artisan shop in Sorrento's historic center so that you can sample it. We brought several bottles home with us. Look out for Limoncello di Sorrento or click here on their website.

If you have a limoncello that you love while trying different brands, buy it at the location. If you don't have a favorite, you can wait until your flight home and buy it duty-free at Naples Airport. The prices at the airport were great, and there were extensive choices.

Planning a trip to Italy? Check out our [Italy Travel Guide here](#)

Purchasing Limoncello at Home



Once home, finding Italian Limoncello in our local liquor/wine stores is easy. Depending on the location, large-scale stores like Total Wine can have an excellent selection. If you don't see a brand in the store, check what they have online; you may be able to special order it. Drizly.com is an online company that delivers to your door and would serve best those living in bigger cities. This is a new site, and it has a pretty impressive inventory. To our surprise, we found Amazon.com had great choices as well.

Other options Wine-Search.com will search online sources worldwide for any wine, beer, and spirits. They ship to your home if your state allows it. There seemed to be a wide variety, but we have not ordered any.

It is also worth contacting your local specialty liquor store to see what they can order for you.

If there is a brand you especially were fond of in Italy, some producers ship to the U.S. and other countries, so check out their site.

Here is the fun part, it is easy to make your own Limoncello for yourself or the perfect gift

Limoncello

Prep time 30 minutes

It makes 3 liters of Limoncello

Ingredients

9 Organic Lemons Unwaxed and Untreated

1 quart/liter of 151-proof grain alcohol like Everclear
(100% Vodka can be used but not encouraged)

1.5 quarts of water plus 4 ounces

3 1/2 cups of white sugar

Instructions

Step 1

1. Peel the 9 organic lemons. Only use the skin and not the white pith. A Microplane zester works well.
2. Place the lemon skins in a large jar (mason jars work well) and add alcohol. Seal the jar and allow it to sit for two to three weeks until it is a bold yellow.

Step 2

1. Bring 1.5 quarts of water to a boil and add the 3 1/2 cups of sugar.
2. Add the alcohol-soaked with the lemon rinds when the water cools. Use a strainer to remove the

lemon rinds from the water-sugar mixture.

3. Swirl 4 ounces of water in the jar to capture the remaining lemon mix

4. Add the 4 ounces to the sugar mix

Step 3

1. Fill your chosen bottles with Limoncello and seal them.

2. Let stand for two weeks before drinking

Always serve cold in chilled glasses.

Oh, those lemons!

default watermark



Photo by [Ernest Porzi](#) on [Unsplash](#)

May we suggest a few cocktail recipes

Cocktails

Limoncello Martini

Ingredients

45 ml Vodka
45 ml Limoncello di Sorrento
20 ml lemon juice
freshly squeezed
?

Serve in:
Martini glass

Recipe from [Limoncello di Sorrento website](#)

Limoncello Frizzy Gin

Ingredients

45 ml Gin
15 ml Limoncello di Sorrento
15 ml lime juice
1 drop of simple syrup
2 sprigs of rosemary
Sparkling water

Serve in:
Wine glass

Recipe from [Limoncello di Sorrento website](#)

© 2024 [Wanderers Compass](#) All Rights Reserved

This page contains some affiliate links. If you use these links to buy something, we may earn a small commission at no additional cost to you. Thank you!

Our Limoncello and Southern Italy Photo Gallery

default watermark









default watermark



default watermark



default watermark



default watermark





default watermark



default watermark





default watermark



default watermark



default watermark





default watermark



default watermark







default watermark



default watermark





default watermark







default watermark





default watermark





default watermark



default watermark



Learn more about the Amalfi Coast, Italy. Check out the Amalfis Coast [Official Tourism Site](#)

Check out our most recent blog posts



[Destinations](#) / [Hotel Reviews](#)

[Conrad Tulum Riviera Maya – Luxury Extraordinaire](#)

An in-depth and honest review of our stay at th Conrad Tulum Riviera Maya...

March 30, 2024



[Destinations](#) / [France](#) / [Monaco](#)

Eze France: Medieval Splendor

Charming Eze, France, is a picturesque hilltop medieval village renowned for its breathtaking panoramic...

March 29, 2024



[Denmark](#) / [Destinations](#)

[Nyhavn Copenhagen – Ultimate Visitor Guide](#)

To move, to breathe, to fly, to float, To gain all while you give,...

March 28, 2024



[Italy](#) / [Libations of the World](#)

[Aperol: The Orange Sensation](#)

Our Fifth Featured Libation of the World comes from stunning Italy. The drink that...

March 28, 2024



[Croatia](#) / [Destinations](#)

Novigrad on the Dalmatia Coast – A Piece of Croatia Heaven

Located in Zadar County along the Dalmatia Coast, this medieval village will capture your...

March 28, 2024



[Destinations](#) / [Scotland](#)

12 Best Things to Do on the Isle of Skye, Scotland

Planning a Visit to the Isle of Skye? Read This First! “Wherever I wander,...

March 28, 2024



[Destinations](#) / [Ireland](#)

Cliffs of Moher – Ireland’s Best Natural Attraction

A guide to making the most of your visit to the magnificent Cliffs of...

March 27, 2024



[Destinations](#)

[Top 6 Restaurants in Singapore to Impress Your Partner](#)

Whether looking for a romantic setting or just a lovely evening with great food,...

March 25, 2024



[Belgium](#) / [Destinations](#)

[Antwerp Belgium Things to Know Before You Visit](#)

An Antwerp Visitor Guide and Photo Gallery Belgium is such a beautiful place with...

March 25, 2024

Want to learn about [Wanderers Compass](#)?

[Click Here](#)

Our Top Recommended [Travel Products and Resources](#)

[Squaremouth.com](#)

Our favorite travel insurance site!

If you book a trip, don't forget to get travel insurance within 14 days of your first booking. We could not be stronger advocates of being well-insured. Not just for the little stuff but the big things like medical emergencies. We never leave home without it. Over the years, we have used many sites but have now found our go-to place. [Squaremouth.com](https://squaremouth.com) does a fantastic job; it has a user-friendly interface, uses top-rated and reputable insurance carriers, and most policies cover COVID-19 medical issues and cancellations. They also mediate on your behalf if you have problems with your policy.

To empower you as a consumer, we suggest you read our [blog post](#) on the importance of travel insurance and how to get the best coverage from top-rated companies for an affordable price.

[MedjetAssist](#)

Medical transport back home from anywhere in the world

They are the premier global air medical transport. One caveat to travel insurance is that medical evacuation usually gets you to the closest facility to care for you. Medjet gets you back to the U.S. to the hospital of your choice once you are stable enough to fly. They cover COVID-related transport as well.

[Medjet](#) carries its own policies. These policies are only for transport and do not cover other aspects of travel insurance. They have individual trip policies starting at \$99 and annual policies for around \$300. Most of their policies limit the age to 74 and younger. Prices are not based on age below that.

To learn more about how Medical Evacuation membership with Medjet Assist works, check out our [blog post](#) for a more detailed review.

[Expedia.com](#)

Hotels, home rentals, BNBs, flights, and other transportation & tours

[Expedia](#) is a US-based company whose mission is to power global travel for everyone and everywhere. Whether planning a family vacation, booking for business, or organizing the trip of a lifetime, they are a fantastic resource. Wanderers Compass focuses on independent travel, and using sites like [Expedia](#) makes that possible. Every aspect of travel you need, from airfare, accommodations, rental car, and cruises to activities to do at your destination, can be booked on [Expedia](#).

[Booking.com](#)

Hotels, Home rentals, BNBs, Flights, and other Transportation & Tours

[Booking.com](#) connects millions of travelers to memorable experiences, various transportation options, and incredible places to stay – from homes to hotels and much more. It is one of the world's largest travel marketplaces for established brands and entrepreneurs of all sizes.

We always check Expedia and Booking.com to verify prices. At times, one is sold out of rooms while

another at the same place has rooms. We also often find some European hotels, especially smaller ones, on Booking.com but not on Expedia. It could be they are a Europe-based company. Try both before booking accommodations.

[Vacation Rental By Owner \(VRBO\)](#)

Are you traveling with a family or having an extended stay at your destination?

With over 2 million bookable vacation rentals, [VRBO](#) connects homeowners with families and vacationers looking for something more than a hotel for their trip. The [VRBO](#) community offers families or groups various rental property types such as condos, cabins, lake rentals, beach houses, etc.

[VRBO](#) is now under the Expedia group's ownership, which many were worried about, but it hasn't panned out to be a concern. It is a massive network with access to all lodging forms should issues arise. Joelle has used VRBO for many years with her family and has had no problems with it.

[Viator](#)

As the leading marketplace for travel experiences, [Viator](#) believes that making memories is what travel is all about. And with 300,000+ experiences to explore—everything from simple tours to extreme adventures (and all the niche, interesting stuff in between)—making memories that will last a lifetime has never been easier.

With industry-leading flexibility and last-minute availability, it's never too late to make any day extraordinary. This one site has it all and has experiences throughout the world. We use them often during our travels, especially for food tours. We especially take the time to read the reviews provided.

[Amazon.com](#)

An excellent source for travel essentials and guides

We now have our own Amazon Storefront with all our favorite travel accessories and gear in one place. Check out our travel store at the link below.

[Wanderers Compass Amazon Storefront](#)

Amazon is one of the most comprehensive online shopping sources in the world. Teams worldwide provide lower prices, better selection, and rapid delivery on behalf of customers. They offer a vast inventory, and their 1.7 million small and medium businesses worldwide selling on Amazon.com offer extensive options to customers.

We buy most of our travel books, accessories, and luggage from Amazon. We have ordered up to two days before travel and get what we need.

HYDAWAY

This is not your ordinary drinkware company. The **HYDAWAY** difference is what their products do when you're not using them. Practical and portable, HYDAWAY doesn't take up unnecessary space in your already-packed life or pile up in landfills. We all know that trying to pack light while being environmentally conscious can be difficult. Having the right items can make a world of difference. **HYDAWAY** provides that.

We have used their collapsible water bottle, carrying case for the water bottle, and collapsible insulated drink tumbler. They are all lightweight and durable. A conservation-focused product you can be proud to buy.

Use our Promo Code. WANCOM15, at checkout for 15% off your Hydaway order

Welcome Pick-ups **(Airport and sightseeing service)**

A global leader in ground transportation for travelers. They help hundreds of companies worldwide enhance their services and boost their revenue with our 5-star ride experiences and hassle-free automation.

Founded in 2015 in Athens, Greece, **Welcome Pick-ups** goes above and beyond the standard transfer service as the first company to deliver a holistic, in-destination travel experience. From the moment a traveler arrives at a new destination until they return home, Welcome accommodates all their travel needs (transfers, travel products, things to do, information) as the easiest, friendliest, and most personalized solution.

PhotoAiD

Do you feel like you are wasting time visiting an on-site photographer only to be embarrassed by the photo? Would you like control of the final product? Get the perfect VISA or passport photo online with PhotoAID.

When traveling, you often need to apply for official documents such as a passport, ID, and different kinds of licenses or cards. Those applications require a picture that must meet specific conditions to be accepted, depending on the country. Now, it is possible to take this picture at home without the help of a professional photographer. PhotoAiD allows you to take the perfect biometric photo you approve without leaving home.

This article contains affiliate links. If you use these links to buy something, we may earn a small commission at no additional cost to you. Thank you!

Passionate about travel? Subscribe to our Wanderers Compass Community

Our quarterly newsletters will inspire your wanderlust

[Subscribe](#)

☐ [I accept the privacy policy](#)

Do you have a question for us or have a comment?

[Contact us](#)

Category

1. Italy
2. Libations of the World

Date Created

December 12, 2021

Author

contactwandererscompass-com

default watermark