Reds, whites and blues

Malachi Duffy shares recipes for Blue Curaçao cocktails as refreshing as an ocean breeze.

The appeal of tropical concoctions often lies in their eye-catching allure as much as in their flavor. Trader Vic’s signature Mai Tai, with its hue evocative of a Hawaiian sunset, comes readily to mind. But for pure visual punch nothing beats a blue cocktail.

Although they may vary widely in intensity and hue, these have one common ingredient: Blue Curaçao. Developed in the 19th century on the Caribbean island of Curacao, the liqueur takes its predominant flavor from the dried peel of a citrus fruit, the laraha. This evolved from the sweet Valencia orange trees imported by Spanish explorers. Notable for its dry climate and arid soil, the Valencia became the smaller, sweeter barba. But the peel proved to be distinctly aromatic, which led to the rise of Curaçao liqueur. (This is naturally clear, how the blue colorant came to be added is unknown.)

With the surging interest in cocktails, Blue Curaçao, once relegated to the dusty recesses of most bars, has sprung up as a popular ingredient with cocktails and cafés. Here are recipes I’ve gathered from distin-
guished bars around the world.

One of my favorite resorts in the Caribbean is Malliouhana in Anguilla. Their signature cocktail is light, refreshing and resembles the stunning waters that the resort overlooks.

**Malliouhana Sea**
6 fresh mint leaves
¾ oz. fresh-squeezed lime juice
¾ oz. Blue Curaçao
1 oz. white Mount Gay Rum
3 ½ oz. prosecco
Dash floral bitters
Dash simple syrup (combine equal parts of sugar and water over gentle heat)
Place five of the fresh mint leaves and lime juice in a shaker glass and muddle well. Fill shaker with ice, then add rum, Blue Curaçao, floral bitters and simple syrup. Shake well. Pour in a highball glass and top off with prosecco. Garnish with a fresh mint leaf.

White Namuuck is hardly a tropical island, its sea to the sea are intimate and timeless. Namuuck is home to some of the country’s top resorts, including the White Elephant, whose Brass Point Grill is a favorite dining spot. Here is one of its year-round popular drinks.

**The Wave Cocktail**
1 ½ oz. Captain Morgan Spiced Rum
1 ½ oz. fresh-made sour mix
¼ oz. Blue Curaçao
2 dashes of orange bitters
Garnish with a sprig of mint
Add all ingredients to a cocktail shaker. Add a dash of cinnamon sugar to the rim of a martini glass, pour the drink into the glass and garnish with a twist of orange.

Hawaii’s Big Island is home to one of my favorite places in the entire world – the Mauna Kea Beach Hotel. This drink was especially created for ShowBoats International by the hotel’s Director of Restaurants and Special Events, Raymond Kanohiaiiu.

**Mauna Kea Blue Skies**
2 sprigs tarragon
2 thinly sliced lemon wheels
¾ oz. Blue Curaçao
1 oz. Perrier
½ oz. Bombay Sapphire East gin
¾ oz. St-Germain elderflower liqueur
1 oz. fresh lemon juice
Music tarragon sprigs and lemon slices in a Collins glass. Add gin, Blue Curaçao, St-Germain, lemon juice and Perrier. Stir to combine. Serve over ice.

**Crucial-blue persuasion**

The remarkable Irish firm Waterford is benchmarking high from its own-multifaceted crystal works. The Mistral/Argon Blue decanter has a sleek shape and holds blue and clear crystal. $375. waterford.com