

Dairy

FOODS

2 jiggers of Jersey

Cow-water cocktails are the latest trend in New York City bars, restaurants

A Cornell grad's chance encounter with the founder of Shake Shack led to networking opportunities. Cow-water cocktails like Moscow Moo and Tom Cow-ins soon followed.



Mooove over Manhattan. The trendiest cocktail in New York is the Moscow Moo, made with vodka, ginger beer and cow water.

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Jim Carper

The newest, trendy cocktail on the bar scene in the Big Apple is the Moscow Moo, a variation of the classic Moscow Mule made with vodka and ginger beer. The “secret” ingredient in a Moscow Moo is cow water, the watery component of milk that remains after dairy processors have filtered out fats and other solids.

Dairy entrepreneur Bob Garrison moved to Brooklyn after graduating with a dairy science degree from Cornell University, where he minored in business. For his senior capstone project, he wrote about the potential of developing a revenue stream from cow water, which is typically flushed down the drain or used in cleaning dairy processing equipment.

Cow water represents a new revenue stream for milk bottlers

“Cow water is a refreshing beverage that also solves an environmental problem,” Garrison said. “In addition, dairy processors, hard hit by the drop in milk sales, now have a revenue stream from a by-product that otherwise would strain municipal waste-water treatment facilities.”

Garrison’s cow water comes from an upstate New York dairy that first pasteurizes it and then bottles it in plastic gallon jugs. Garrison sells the cow water to trendy bars in SoHo, fashionable Upper East Side watering holes and in Brooklyn’s Bay Ridge neighborhood, which StreetAdvisor.com called “up and coming.”

Shake Shack owner helped cow-water cocktail inventor

Garrison developed recipes for classic cocktails using cow water and test-marketed them on his roommates, who gave them glowing reviews. A chance encounter with restaurateur Danny Meyer led to networking opportunities. While eating lunch at the Shake Shack at Citi Field (home of the New York Mets), Garrison accidentally spilled a Jelly’s Last Donut frozen custard shake on Meyer, who was visiting the ballpark to watch a Mets-Phillies game. Garrison told Meyer of his idea and Meyer put him in contact with bartenders across the city.

“Cow-water cocktails are popular with all demographics, but for different reasons,” Garrison said. Millennials feel they are doing something good for the environment, while Upper East Side socialites like the clean taste of the no-calorie cow water, he said. Late-night party goers tend to mix cow water with energy drinks. A Red Bull and cow-water cocktail, known as an Elsie & Elmer, is typically ordered as a “double-E.”

Cow-water cocktail recipes

Garrison shared the following recipes.

Tom Cow-ins

2 ounces gin

2 ounces cow water

Juice of one-half lemon

Half-ounce simple syrup

Combine ingredients in cocktail shaker. Serve over ice.

Moscow Moo

2 ounces vodka

3 ounces ginger beer

2 ounces cow water

Shake ingredients and serve in a copper mug.

Elsie & Elmer

6 ounces cow water

6 ounces Red Bull

Serve over ice.

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