

THE RAMBUTINI

When it comes to weird fruit, don't judge a rambutan by its cover. These fruits— that frighteningly remind me of telescopic images of the coronavirus—have been here far longer than this awful plague. If you've ever wandered around your local Chinatown markets, you'll see them right between the longans and the mangosteens.

But when you get past their ugly exterior and delicately slice around their hairy bellies, you'll be treated to a delightfully light and sweet orb that's perfect for this martini.

INGREDIENTS (makes 2)

3 rambutans, skins and pits removed

4 ounces of Empress Gin

$\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon ginger syrup

2 teaspoons lemon juice

lemon strips or a twist for garnish

cucumber slice for garnish

ice

I like using Empress 1908 Indigo Gin for this cocktail because it has a great balance of botanicals and the indigo color turns a light violet with the addition of the lemon.

To peel rambutans, make a $\frac{1}{4}$ -inch slice around the belly of the fruit. Twist and gently squeeze the skin and the fruit should pop out. Remove the pit and rough chop the fruit.

Muddle the fruit in the bottom of the shaker. Add the gin, ginger syrup, lemon juice, and ice. Shake vigorously. Pour

into martini glasses and garnish with a slice of cucumber and lemon strips.