

# ON GASTRONOMIC TERMINOLOGY: COCKTAILS

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## Abstract

Proper names represent a distinct category within gastronomic terminology, being the source of numerous dish names. That also holds true in case of cocktails, which were named by their creators by making reference to important personalities of world history and civilisation- names of kings and queens, politicians, writers, painters and actors- and to significant places, whether they were the places where such drinks were made for the first time or they were simply far-away, exotic regions.

**Key words:** *gastronomic terminology, cocktails, antonomasia, anthroponyms, toponyms*

## Résumé

Les noms propres forment une catégorie spéciale dans la gastronomie, étant la source pour beaucoup de dénominations de préparés. Aussi dans le cas des cocktails, les noms donnés par leurs créateurs font référence aux personnalités importantes de l'histoire et de la civilisation de divers peuples – noms de rois et de reines, d'hommes politiques, d'écrivains, de peintres et d'acteurs – et des lieux d'une importance particulière, lieux où les boissons ont été créées ou lieux exotiques, lointains.

**Mots-clés:** *terminologie gastronomique, cocktails, antonomase, anthroponymie, toponymie*

At present gastronomic terminology appears as a domain with a specific dynamics, registering all the influences on the Romanian language throughout time; names having Latin as their source coexist in harmony with terms borrowed from French, English, German, Spanish, Italian and even Japanese. This rapid development included cocktails, which, in the second half of the twentieth century, spread in all Romanian restaurants, hotels and bars. Together with the flavoured and vividly coloured recipes, the Romanian language was penetrated by a large number of names, derived from languages all over the world, preserving the original spelling and

pronunciation, thus enriching gastronomic terminology, and, lastly, the target language, i.e. Romanian. The names of such drinks are connected to legends, symbols, stories, which are more than 100 years old and make reference to far-away places or important historic personalities. These names in themselves constitute a history of the evolution of civilisation.

A cocktail is a mixed drink which contains one or more types of alcohol, flavours and one or several liquors, juices, sauces, honey, milk, cream or spices, etc.<sup>1</sup>. Their gained popularity is closely connected to the period of the Prohibition in the USA, when the art of mixing drinks had become increasingly necessary to disguise the taste of alcohol. One of the oldest cocktails acknowledged by experts is *Sazerac*, having brandy as main ingredient. It dates from the 1850s and originated in New Orleans, being 70 years older than the Prohibition<sup>2</sup>.

There are many debates on the origin of the word *cocktail*, none being fully documented. *The Webster Dictionary* mentions the following on the word origin: “probably from *cock* + *tail*” (Webster: 268), the word attestation year being 1806. Literature offers some stories to justify the word etymology: the term *cocktail* seems to have resulted from the mispronunciation of the French word *coquetier* “eggcup (suportul pentru ouă)”, where the first cocktail was allegedly prepared. Another story makes reference to an inn-keeper during the American Revolution, Betsy Flanagan, who used to garnish the drinks with a colorful feather from the roosters’ tails, astonishing the soldiers who used to exclaim “Vive le coqtail!”; the term is a compound made of the colonial word *cock*, a mug used to pour alcohol, and *tailing*, the dregs on the barrel bottom. The latter were served to those who wanted a cheap drink, called *cocktail*, the result of mixing the remnants from several mugs. There are as many stories about the origin of this word as cocktails in the world<sup>3</sup>.

In Romanian the word *cocktail* has a double etymology: English and French. *Dicționarul explicativ al limbii române* mentions the term giving a

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<sup>1</sup> Cf. <http://ro.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cocteil>

<sup>2</sup> Cf. Dale DeGroff, 2008, p. 34.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. Jeff Hollinger, Rob Schwartz, 2006, p. 17.

vague definition: “1. Băutură preparată dintr-un amestec de băuturi alcoolice (cu ingrediente)/drink made by mixing alcoholic drinks (and ingredients) 2. Recepție de proporții mai modeste”/a rather modest reception (DEX: 192). Florin Marcu adds new shades of meaning to the definitions offered by English dictionaries, definitions that he takes over and enlarges on: “1. băutură dintr-un amestec de lichior, coniac sau vin cu zeamă de lămâie, sirop de zahăr și gheață/drink made of liquor, brandy or wine mixed with lemon juice, sugar syrup and ice 2. reuniune mondenă la care se servește această băutură/ elegant reunion where cocktails are served 3. (fig.) ansamblu constituit dintr-un amestec de elemente diverse/mixture of various elements 4. ~ Molotov = proiectil ofensiv constând dintr-o sticlă umplută cu un lichid exploziv/offensive projectile consisting of a bottle filled with an explosive liquid” (MDN: 206). Both dictionaries favor the adapted spelling of the word: *cocteil*, a form encountered more and more frequently in Romanian books and articles.

“După câteva secunde, exteriorul paharului capătă un aspect jivrat, care indică faptul că băutura a fost corect răcită. Eventual, decorați *cocteilul* și serviți imediat./In a few seconds, the outer side of the glass acquires a frosted aspect, indicating the fact that the drink has been appropriately cooled. At wish, you may garnish the cocktail and serve it immediately” (Cocteiluri/Larousse, 2008: 6)

“În bar ouăle proaspete se folosesc la pregătire diferitelor *cocteiluri*, fapt ce impune o atenție deosebită din partea lucrătorilor.../In bars fresh eggs are used to prepare various cocktails, which require the waiters’ full attention” (Nicolescu, Mladin, 1985: 101)

“Atunci încearcă să bei un *cocteil* verde, care abundă în vitamine și minerale./Then try to drink a green cocktail, abounding in vitamins and minerals” (<http://www.perfecte.ro>)

Nevertheless, *DOOM* registers the word as a loan from English, recommends *cocktail* as the primary form and accepts *cocteil* as a secondary, tolerable form (DOOM: 158). There are also texts which continue to use the form taken over from English: “Un *cocktail* surprinzător și aromat, Black Forest încântă și prin aspectul său contrastant, alb și

negru.../A surprising and flavoured cocktail, *Black Forest* delights you by its contrasting, white and black aspect” (www.gastronomie.ele.ro).

“Un *cocktail* de-a dreptul incendiar. Culoarea roșie ca focul și gustul extrem de intens, un melanj între roșiile coapte, votcă și ardei iuți.../A really incendiary cocktail. Its purple color and extremely intense taste, a mixture of ripe tomatoes, vodka and chilly peppers” (<http://www.antena1.ro> – 30 mai 2010)

The plural of the word is not hyphenated: *cocktailuri/cocteiluri*, the same as the plural of other recent loan words ending in letters found in Romanian and pronounced according to the rules of Romanian: *boarduri*, *clickuri*, *gadgeturi*, *itemuri*, *trenduri*, *week-enduri* (DOOM: XCVI). Nevertheless, some texts contain a hyphenated plural form, unacceptable according to presentday formal language norms: “*Cocktail*-urile se servesc cu plăcere oriunde și oricând, fiind, în plus, ușor de preparat.../Cocktails are enjoyed anywhere and at any time, being also easy to prepare” (www.retete.eva.ro)

Together with new and spectacular recipes, the creators of these drinks offered a wide range of names, giving each cocktail the uniqueness it needed to draw a large public’s attention and be savoured by them. The creators chose for their drinks names of great personalities, in order to honor them, or place names creating metaphors based on colours or on their country’s specific symbols. Most names come from English, USA being considered the homecountry of cocktails: *Alexander cocktail*, *Bloody Mary*, *Bobby Burns*, *Hemingway*, *Alonquin*, *Florida*, *Manhattan*, *Black Pearl*, *Jinx* etc. The art of preparing cocktails has spread all over the world, in Romanian appearing names borrowed from French – *Biarritz*, *Mauresque* (“Moor”), *Perroquet* (“parrot”), *Cornichon* (“trouble”), Spanish – *Margarita* (“daisy”), *Mentiroso* (“liar”), *Diabola* (“deviless”), *El diablo* (“devil”), Italian – *Bellini*, *Garibaldi*, *Negroni*, *American*, and even Japanese – *Kamikaze* (“divine wind”) or Tahitian – *Mai Tai* (“very good”).

### 1. Anthroponyms

A large part of cocktail names derives from the proper names of famous people, who remained in history, and in whose honor skillful

bartenders created these flavoured and colourful drinks. Among the sources we find names of kings and queens, emperors, painters, revolutionaries, legendary heroes but also names of contemporary famous actors, directors and writers, etc. Only in few cases has a cocktail been named after its creator; even if there are such exceptions, they are controversial, unaccepted by all specialists in the field.

*King Alfonso* is a cocktail made of Dubonnet wine<sup>4</sup>, champagne, a sugar cube and rum. The name of this drink derives from that of King Alfonso III of Spain, in whose honor the cocktail was created. It spread in France and Great Britain in the 1920s after the king spent some time in Deanville<sup>5</sup>.

“Cocktailul *King Alfonso*. Ingrediente necesare: 2-3 cl lichior de cafea, 2 linguri de frișcă proaspătă.”/“*King Alfonso* cocktail. Necessary ingredients: 2-3 cl coffee liquor, 2 spoonfuls of fresh sour cream” (www.puburi.ro. – 9 oct. 2009)

*Bellini* is a cocktail originary from Venice, a mixture of sparkling wine and mashed peaches, usually served on holidays. It is one of the most popular cocktails in Italy. *Bellini* was invented between 1934 and 1948 by Giuseppe Cipriani, the founder of Harry Bar in Venice, Italy. The distinct pink shade of the drink reminded the creator of the toga of a saint from a Venetian painting by Giovanni Bellini<sup>6</sup> (the 15-th century). Therefore, the name *Bellini* cocktail<sup>7</sup>.

“*Bellini Cocktail* – 1 part fresh peach juice, 3 parts champagne or slightly acidulated white wine.” (www.gradinamea.ro)

*Bloody Caesar* /bladi sizăr/ is a cocktail made of vodka, clamato juice<sup>8</sup> and Tabasco sauce, it is served with ice, celary, salt and lemon. The

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<sup>4</sup> Dubonnet is a bitter flavoured wine, invented by Joseph Dubonnet in Paris in 1846. (Cf. Cocteiluri / Larousse, 2008, p. 68.)

<sup>5</sup> Cf. Cocteiluri / Larousse, 2008, p. 68.

<sup>6</sup> Giovanni Bellini (c. 1430 – November 29, 1516) was a Renaissance Italian painter, a representative of The Venetian School. Giovanni Bellini completely changed the Venetian art of painting, by doing away with the gothic style for good. (Cf. [http://ro.wikipedia.org/wiki/Giovanni\\_Bellini](http://ro.wikipedia.org/wiki/Giovanni_Bellini))

<sup>7</sup> Cf. Cocteiluri / Larousse, 2008, p. 71.

<sup>8</sup> A mixture of tomato juice and oyster soup.

bartender Walter Chell named this drink after Gaius Julius Caesar (100-44 BC), a military and political leader of Rome, the one who changed the Roman Republic into a large empire. The appellation *bloody* (< Engl. *blood* “sânge”, *bloody* “sângeros”) may refer to the ‘bloody’ behaviour and actions of Caesar but also to the purple color of the drink, thus following the pattern of the better known *Bloody Mary*.

“*Bloody Caesar* este un cocktail pentru oamenii care știu ce vor.../*Bloody Caesar* is a cocktail for the people who know what they want”. (www.floaredecolt.org)

*Bloody Mary* is a cocktail made of vodka, tomato juice and pepper. The name of this drink (*bloody Mary* is the English for “Maria cea sângeroasă”) is associated to several personalities: Mary I (1516–1558), known as Mary Tudor, queen of England and Ireland<sup>9</sup>; there is also an old legend which mentions the magic power of Bloody Mary’s phantom<sup>10</sup>. As in the case of *Bloody Caesar*, the epithet can refer either to the color of the drink or to the queen’s cruel deeds.

“Originea cocktailului *Bloody Mary* rămâne controversată. Deși expresia *bloody* este tipic englezescă, cei care își dispută originea lui sunt francezii.../The origin of *Bloody Mary* cocktail remains controversial. Though the word *bloody* is English, those who claim to have been its creators are the French...” (www.cevabun.ro)

*Bobby Burns* is a cocktail prepared with whisky, Bénédictine liquor<sup>11</sup>, red vermouth and ice. This drink bears the name of a famous American actor and director, Bobby Burns (1878 – 1966), in whose honor it was created. (http://en.wikipedia.org)

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<sup>9</sup> She is mainly known for her temporary restoration of Catholicism in England. Till the end of her reign, Mary I had more than 300 opponents executed, and was therefore nicknamed *Bloody Mary* (‘Mary cea sângeroasă’). Cf. en.wikipedia.org

<sup>10</sup> Anthony Dias Blue, 2004, p. 50.

<sup>11</sup> Bénédictine is a yellow liquor made of aromatic plants (coriander, hyssop, myrrh, nutmeg, clove, etc.), prepared by Benedictin monks in the XVI-th century. (Cf. Cocteiluri / Larousse, 2008, p. 91)

*Garibaldi*, a cocktail prepared with Campari<sup>12</sup>, fresh orange juice and ice cubes, was named after Giuseppe Garibaldi (1807–1882), a remarkable personality of the Italian Revolution.

“*Garibaldi Cocktail* – necessary ingredients: 3/10 Bitter Campari, 7/10 fresh orange juice...” (www.lya.ro/market 23 Mai 2010)

*Hemingway*, a cocktail made of champagne and Pernod, was named after Ernest Miller Hemingway (1899–1961)<sup>13</sup>, a famous novelist, short story writer, war reporter and winner of the Nobel Prize for Literature in 1954, one of the most renowned American writers.

“Există mai multe variații ale Daiquiri-ului cum ar fi Daiquiri Floridita care conține și lichior maraschino sau *Hemingway*, care conține.../There are several variations of Daiquiri, such as Daiquiri Floridita which contains Maraschino liquor or *Hemingway* which contains...” (www.bar-mix.ro/daiquiri.html)

*Margarita* is a cocktail made of tequila and lemon or orange syrup. Various stories belonging to the same period are connected to this drink. Margarita Samas claims that she invented this cocktail in 1948 for a party; Enrique Bastate Gutierrez says that it is he who created it in Tijuana in 1940 for Rita Hayworth, whose real name was Margarita Cansino; Carlos Herrera claims to have created this drink for Marjorie King in a restaurant in Tijuana in 1938–1939<sup>14</sup>. The name *Margarita* (the Spanish for “daisy” < Lat. *Margarita* “pearl”) is frequent in Spanish, which makes it difficult to establish the certain origin of the drink.

“*Margarita*, unul dintre cele mai cunoscute băuturi din lume, se servește adesea la diverse reuniuni sau baluri de seara./Margarita, one of the best known drinks in the world, is often served at various evening reunions or balls” (www.ghid-culinar.ro/retete)

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<sup>12</sup> Bitter red alcoholic drink flavoured with roots and fruit extracts. (Cf. Cocteiluri/Larousse, 2008, p. 91).

<sup>13</sup> Cf. Anthony Dias Blue, 2004, p. 85.

<sup>14</sup> Cf. Anthony Dias Blue, 2004, p. 110 -114.

## 2. Toponyms

Cocktails names generally remind people of the places where they were served for the first time – hotels (*Algonquin*), bars remained famous until today (*Manhattan*, *Chimayó*) but also far-away, exotic places (*Alaska*, *Bora Bora*), their creators intending to recreate the atmosphere of those regions, thus drawing consumers' attention.

*Algonquin* is a cocktail made of rye whiskey, vermouth<sup>15</sup> and pineapple juice. The cocktail was named after The Algonquin Hotel in New York City, where it is still served as a specialty<sup>16</sup>. Originally, Algonquin was the name of a tribe of American Indians, who inhabited regions now found in USA and Canada (en.wikipedia.org).

“Cocktail *Algonquin*, rețetă culinară, modalitate de preparare, comentarii și instrucțiuni pentru gătit, impresii în urma preparării./*Algonquin* Cocktail – recipe, preparation, comments and cooking instructions, impressions after the preparation.” (www.gustos.ro)

*Alaska*, a cocktail made of gin, yellow Chartreuse liquor<sup>17</sup> and ice, makes reference to the name of the State of Alaska, located in the north-western part of North America. The name Alaska probably comes from the word *Alyeska*, meaning “big country”, “continent”, “big land” (ro.wikipedia.org). The reasons why the cocktail got its name remain unknown and largely debated by specialists who, nevertheless, agreed on one aspect: the sweet-sour liquid mixed with ice cubes makes a cold, refreshing drink which reminds one of the snow and iceberg- covered regions of the State of Alaska<sup>18</sup>.

*American* (the Italian for “American”), is a cocktail prepared with red vermouth, Campari, lemon and ice and it was served for the first time in

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<sup>15</sup> Mixture obtained by flavouring a blend of wine and alcohol with plant extracts and bitter spices. (Cf. Cocteiluri / Larousse, 2008, p. 94).

<sup>16</sup> Cf. Anthony Dias Blue, 2004, p. 286.

<sup>17</sup> Chartreuse „pear liquor flavoured with extracts from more than 100 plants and spices (melissa, hyssop, cinnamon, saffron etc.)” This type of liquor is prepared in Voiron, in Grande-Chartreuse, France. (Cf. Cocteiluri / Larousse, 2008, p. 92)

<sup>18</sup> “So far as can be ascertained this delectable potion is not the staple diet of the Esquimaux. It was probably first thought of in South Carolina hence its name.” (Harry Craddock, 2003, p. 113)

the 1860s in Garspare Campari's bar in Milan, Italy. Initially called *Milano-Torino*, due to the origin of the ingredients, it was later renamed due to its popularity among American tourists during the Prohibition<sup>19</sup>. There is also a sweeter variant of this drink, made with champagne and a sugar cube, called *Americana*<sup>20</sup>.

“*Americano* este un cocktail destul de vechi, chiar poate fi considerat un clasic, dar care pe parcurs a pierdut teren în fața altor cocktail-uri mai tinere./*Americano* is rather an old cocktail, it can be considered a classic, but it gradually lost its top place in favor of more recent cocktails ” (www.barmix.ro)

*Chimayó* is a cocktail made of white tequila, apple juice and ice cubes. The name refers to a town in New Mexico, where Arturo Jaramillo, the owner of a local restaurant first served this drink in 1965<sup>21</sup>.

“Încă mă atrage, fu sincer Doru, sorbind cocktailul *Chimayo*, pe care i-l preparase Cora (pe bază de tequila).../I still enjoy it, admitted Doru sincerely, sipping his *Chimayo* cocktail that Cora had made for him using tequila...” (www.lacasuriliterare.com)

*Cuba Libre*, a cocktail prepared with white rum, green lemon, cola and ice, was named after the Republic of Cuba, a state in the northern part of Central America. It appeared during the Prohibition<sup>22</sup>. Some call it *Mentiroso* nowadays, in Spanish *mentiroso* meaning “liar”, to emphasize that Cuba is not yet free<sup>23</sup>. Some other cocktail names were formed from the same base: *Cuban Manhattan* (a cocktail made with rum, red vermouth, a Maraschino cherry and ice cubes<sup>24</sup>); *Cubanita* (a cocktail prepared with white rum, tomato juice, celery, black pepper. Cubanita is the Cubanese version of Bloody Mary, appeared at the end of the 1930s<sup>25</sup>).

“...*Cuba Libre* este cocktailul preferat al anilor '70-'80, cunoscătorii știu și își vor aminti serile petrecute pe terasele de la mare.../ ...*Cuba Libre*

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<sup>19</sup> Cf. Anthony Dias Blue, 2004, p. 286.

<sup>20</sup> Cf. Cocteiluri / Larousse, 2008, p. 67.

<sup>21</sup> Cf. Harry Craddock, 2003, p. 89.

<sup>22</sup> Cf. Anthony Dias Blue, 2004, p. 79.

<sup>23</sup> Cf. Cocteiluri / Larousse, 2008, p. 42.

<sup>24</sup> Cf. Cocteiluri / Larousse, 2008, p. 40.

<sup>25</sup> Cf. Cocteiluri / Larousse, 2008, p. 47.

is the the favourite cocktail in the 1970s and 1980s, les connoisseurs know it and they will certainly remember the evenings spent on the seaside terraces.” (www.gastronomie.ele.ro)

*Daiquiri* is a cocktail prepared with white Cuban rum, green lemon juice, sugar syrup and ice cubes. It bears the name of a beach in Santiago, Cuba, where it had been invented by a group of American mining engineers round 1900, in a bar called ‘Venus’.<sup>26</sup>

“*Daiquiri* clasic: amestecă bine cu gheață 40 mililitri de rom slab, 20 mililitri de suc proaspăt de lămâie verde.../classic Daiquiri: mix well 40 ml low alcohol rum, 20 ml green lemon juice and ice...” (www.cocktail9.blogspot.com)

*Florida* is a non-alcoholic cocktail, prepared with orange and grapefruit juice, soda, sugar syrup, squeezed lemon juice and ice cubes. It bears the name of the State of Florida, discovered by the Spanish explorer Juan Ponce de León, who reached the peninsula coast on April 2, 1513, during a period of the year called *Pascua Florida* in Spain (“Paștele florilor”)<sup>27</sup>.

“Cocktailul *Florida* este ideal pentru sportivi și conducători auto. Este un cocktail puternic energizant.../*Florida cocktail* is ideal for sportspeople and for those who drive. It is extremely energizing...” (www.gastronomie.ele.ro)

*Manhattan* is a cocktail made of whisky, sweet vermouth, absynth and garnished with a Maraschino cherry. As story goes, the drink has its origin in Manhattan Club in New York at the beginning of the 1870s, where it had been invented by dr. Iain Marshall for a banquet hosted by Jennie Jerome. The success of the drink at the banquet made some people order it later by referring to it using the name of that club: “cocktail Manhattan”<sup>28</sup>.

“*Manhattan* nu este numai o insula care cuprinde cea mai amre parte a cartierului cu același nume din New York, ci și un cocktail faimos./ *Manhattan* is not only the island which comprises the greatest part of the

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<sup>26</sup> Cf. Salvatore Calabrese, 2002, p. 76.

<sup>27</sup> Cf. <http://ro.wikipedia.org/>

<sup>28</sup> Cf. Harry Craddock, 2003, p. 154.

district with the same name in NY, it is also a famous cocktail.” ([www.barmix.ro](http://www.barmix.ro))

*Ward Eight* is a cocktail made with whisky, orange juice and grenadine syrup. This short drink from the 1920s was created in Washington, in district 8 (in English *Ward Eight*), which justifies the name<sup>29</sup>.

“*Ward Eight*: 45 ml bourbon, 30 ml lemon juice, 30 ml orange juice...” ([www.mehedinti.info](http://www.mehedinti.info)).

Some cocktail names, more and more known and used, have entered the category of common nouns, their spelling varying between the capitalized and non-capitalized variant, depending on the preference of the author. In Romanian capitalization is generally maintained but in English cocktail names have become common nouns in most cases. Such examples are: *margarita*, *martini*, etc.

“Pentru *margarita* se preferă tequila blanco, deși se poate folosi și tequila oro.../For *margarita* tequila blanco is preferred but tequila oro can be used as well” (<http://ro.wikipedia.org/wiki/Margarita>).

“Iată un cocktail clasic pe care trebuie neapărat să știi să-l prepari: *martini* cocktail!/Here is a classic cocktail that one must know how to prepare: martini cocktail!” ([www.divahair.ro/](http://www.divahair.ro/) 23 Aug 2010).

The term *cocktail* began to be used in Romanian with meanings different from that of ‘alcoholic drink’, as it happened in English too. For example, Editura Humanitas, started publishing a collection of books called “Cocktail”: “Romanele chick-lit din colecția *Cocktail* sunt despre femei ca tine – frumoase, deștepte, ambițioase, care știu să se descurce în jungla urbană în care trăim.../Chick-lit novels from *Cocktail* Collection are about women like you – beautiful, smart, ambitious, able to survive in the urban jungle that we all live in” (<http://www.humanitas.ro/humanitas-fiction>).

*The Ring* (<http://www.ziarulring.ro/cocktail>), an online newspaper, called one of its headings *Cocktail*, placing it next to politics, sports, culture or VIP headings. It contains news about food, stress, health, interior design, etc. The heading refers to a figurative meaning of the word *cocktail*,

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<sup>29</sup> Cf. Cocteiluri / Larousse, 2008, p. 36.

„ansamblu constituit dintr-un amestec de elemente diverse” (MDN: 206). The same tendency appears at *adevarul.ro* where news flashes are presented under the heading *Cocktail*.

With the same figurative meaning, the term appears in other contexts as part of syntagms such as: *cocktail cultural*, *cocktail meteo*, *job cocktail*, *cocktail de imagini*, etc:

“Localitatea hârtibăceană Alțâna revine în atenția amatorilor de *cocktailuri culturale*, duminică după-amiaza.” (<http://www.tribuna.ro/stiri/actualitate>)

“*Cocteil meteo*: codul galben de ploi – suprapus codului roșu de inundații./ Weather cocktail: the yellow code for rain overlaps the red code for floods.” ([www.gandul.info/news/cocteil-meteo](http://www.gandul.info/news/cocteil-meteo), 28 iun. 2010).

“Au ramas mai putin de 3 zile pana la *Job Cocktail*. Cel mai mare eveniment de cariera.../It is less than 3 days till the Job Cocktail. The most important career event...” ([www.atitudinea.ro/articole](http://www.atitudinea.ro/articole))

The origin of the term *cocktail* has been debated for a long time now, since there are countless stories and legends, opinions and controversies on the topic but all lack certain, documented sources. In Romanian the term poses spelling and semantic problems: on the one hand, there is the form borrowed from English and, on the other, the adapted form preferred by most Romanian speakers: *cocteil*.

Cocktail names take over the prestige of the proper names which become known through these gastronomic terms, too. They are linked to the names of important personalities who made history (kings and queens, painters, politicians, famous writers and actors) or to place names of special significance (famous hotels and bars, remote, exotic places).

Due to their frequent usage, some proper names have become common nouns, being spelled with small initial letter. Moreover, an ever increasing number of texts show that the term *cocktail* began to be used figuratively to mean “amestec de elemente diverse/mixture of diverse elements”, resulting a diversity of Romanian syntagms and unusual collocations.

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