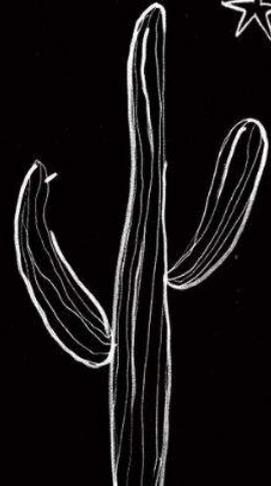


# dangerous DON



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Dangerous Don is a UK drinks brand, founded by London local **Thea Cumming**, that works with producers in Mexico to create a premium mezcal.

**Dangerous Don** has two pours, an **Espadin** and a **Destilado Con Café**, and a third **Destilado Con Mandarina** launching in July. It is the only Café Mezcal on the market, made with hand-grown, organic Naomque coffee beans which has a signature chocolatey, rich aroma.

At the heart of the business is nurturing the supply chain at every junction. Mezcal is expensive because it is made from agaves, a plant that takes time and love to grow, and expert knowledge to make the spirit, which is often passed down through the family. Thea passionately believes it is important to respect the whole process of mezcal – from seed to bottling, it is this care that creates a truly beautiful spirit.





Thea first tried mezcal in 2014 and recognised that it was a spirit that she would love to work with and believed that there were new ways to introduce the drink to the UK. It has a depth of flavour unlike anything else and mezcal's complexities in region, agave variety and production methods can be compared to wine; the flavour variations differ from one region as it takes on the terroir, making it a perfect category for the inquisitive drinker. Bartenders had been enjoying the drink for years but in the UK it had not been enjoyed on a wider level.

Thea's first endeavour with this drink was focused on showcasing the many great producers and forging trading opportunities and she, along with Melanie Symonds of Quiquiriqui Mezcal, launched the Mezcal Week in London in 2017. As she built ties with producers in Mexico and artisans the concept of Dangerous Don was born.

She now works closely with her producers and continues to grow the brand and spread the good word of mezcal.

The two mezcals Dangerous Don work with are all produced using traditional methods from mezcal production families that are generations old. The process is a labour of love and each part and each different technique is essential in deriving a unique and special mezcal.



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...is Thea's father! He's the inspiration behind it all, his devil-may-care attitude has given her the confidence to make things happen. But it is a collective project and there are many who make up the brand:

## **Thea Cumming**

Originally from Devon, Thea graduated from Manchester University with a BSc First Class honours degree in Management and Marketing of Textiles, before moving to London and immersing herself in the hospitality industry there. She worked as General Manager at pubs and restaurants including Pitt Cue Co and Patty and Bun before striking out on her own and embracing her entrepreneurial spirit.

Thea started London Mezcal Week in 2017 which ran for three years. In November 2019 she opened Doña bar in Stoke Newington which only serves mezcal and has a focus on female performers; it curates fun and diverse artists and musicians. In July 2021 they will be taking over the restaurant above the bar and working with [Tacos Tigre](#). Thea is also looking to open another mezcal bar in Hackney Wick, late summer 2021.



## **Celso Martínez**

Celso and his family are mezcal producers and master distillers. Celso makes Dangerous Don's destilado con café & destilado con mandarina, which are both made with espadin agave. He is based in Santiago Matatlan, often referred to as the 'World Capital Of Mezcal' it is a town and municipality in Oaxaca in South-Western Mexico.

## **Juan Diaz Cruz**

Juan produces Dangerous Don's espadin - straight espadin with no 'flavour'. He is based in Santa María Quiegolani, which is some distance from Dangerous Don's Oaxaca base.

## **Dangerous Don Bottling**

The bottles are handmade using a bespoke mould in Guadalajara, a region of Mexico known for artisan glass manufacturers. They are then printed in another factory in Guadalajara using a process called seriography - a very specific screen printing technique.

The mezcal is then bottled in Oaxaca City at Juan's bottling facility and shipped globally!



THE SIPPER  
ESPADIN 45%

Light &  
drinkable, floral  
& stone fruits  
for the new  
mezcal drinker.



THE DON DIGESTIF  
Destilado con cafe

Rich & classy cafe  
mezcal, chocolatey  
& smooth for the  
espresso martini  
drinker



THE CITRUS SUNDOWNER  
Destilado con mandarina

Super fresh mandarine  
mezcal, citrusy &  
tangy, perfect with  
tonic for the G&T  
drinker.



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## Thea's favourite ways to drink Dangerous Don...

"I am not a big fan of telling people how to drink things as I think it is a personal preference and sometimes we can be over prescriptive about the do's and don'ts of consuming new things - my Dad keeps his espadin in the fridge, I think it doesn't taste as good but that is how he likes it.

My preference is to drink my mezcal straight up at room temperature. The beauty of mezcal is the way the flavour changes when paired with food and so getting the right snack to sip with your mezcal is key.

### Dangerous Don Spritz

40ml Dangerous Don Espadin  
20ml Aperol  
15ml Lime Juice  
15ml grapefruit juice  
Garnish - orange

Fill a highball or wine glass with ice, add ingredients, stir, garnish & serve

### Dangerous Don Espresso Martini

40ml Dangerous Don Cafe  
30ml Cold Brew Coffee  
15ml Creme de Cacao  
5ml Agave syrup  
Shake & strain

Serve in a martini glass

I like having some dried fruit and nuts with the espadin, particularly mango. If I am not drinking it straight I will always have a little mezcalita; I like making it with 50% fresh orange juice so that I don't add any sugar but if not then agave syrup & some sal de gusano ('worm salt') on the rim; or a mezcal & tonic with a slice of grapefruit.

The café pairs perfectly with chocolate and dark fruits, and also works really well in a mezcal espresso martini or a negroni. I think the coffee mezcal is perfect for after dinner which is when I like to drink it. The mandarina, I would drink this straight up with a tiny bit of orange, or as a martini - because martinis are the best, and how could anyone anyone refuse a mandarine mezcal martini?! I've just discovered that the mandarina it goes insanely well with a bread & butter pudding! This expression you can drink before, after or even with dinner; I can imagine it will go very well with a ceviche or something citrusy like an orange sauce."



## What is mezcal?

Mezcal is a spirit which is distilled from the agave plant and has a denomination of origin protecting production in Mexico. It can be made from a variety of different agave plants, and production techniques vary drastically from one producer to another.

The agaves are firstly harvested at 8+ years and the pencas (leaves) are removed. The agave piña (heart, the soft centre) is then cooked in underground pits, if you are making ancestral or artisanal mezcal, and the sweet fibres are then crushed. The crushed fibres and juices are then put into wooden tinajas (vats) and left to naturally ferment. The fermented fibre and juice is then distilled twice in an abelique (still), Dangerous Don use copper abelique but there are a variety of different methods for distillation.

Mezcal is sacred and one of the oldest distilled spirits in the Americas dating back over 500 years; the word 'mezcal' comes from the ancient Aztec language, Nahuatl, and means cooked agave. During colonial times, the Spanish banned the production of mezcal in order to promote the sale and consumption of their own imported beverages, creating a local underground production culture. The process is a real testament to the producer themselves and each family has their own secret techniques. Mexico is a country that has a rich and diverse ecosystem of flora and fauna, which is great for producers of mezcal. As consumers become more interested in sourcing, hand crafted products, and people behind brands, mezcal is becoming globally popular – it is an exciting time in this drinks category.





[www.dangerousdon.com](http://www.dangerousdon.com)

@dangerousdon

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