

## **The Nose Knows** ***Science of Cocktails version***



Discover the difference between taste and smell

Think of all the wonderful sensations provided by your sense of taste--the sweetness of a perfectly ripe peach, the saltiness of a dill pickle. You can use your sense of taste to tell the difference between two kinds of apples or two kinds of chocolate. How does this powerful sense actually work? How does your body "taste" things?

### **Things You Will Need:**

- several different flavors of a spirit (flavored rum works well)
- cups for tasting
- paper for recording observations

### **To Do and Notice**

Work with a partner in this activity. One person holds their nose and looks away while the other person pours a small amount of one flavor of rum into a cup and gives it to them, without telling them the flavor. The person should try to guess what flavor the spirit is, without letting go of their nose. Observations should proceed for about 10-20 seconds. Now tell the person to unplug their nose. Is there any change in the taste from before and after they held their nose? Describe the tastes.

### **Interpreting Observations**

What sensations did you experience in your mouth? How did these sensations change over time? Could you determine the true flavor of the spirit? If so, when? Did your taste sensations change when you opened your nose? What does this tell you about your sense of taste?