



OCEAN DRIVE

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NIGHTLIFE
WITH A
twist

Miami has become the epicenter of mixology. Ocean Drive reveals the people, places, and ingredients—both experimental and healthier!—that have shaken and stirred the city's cocktail culture.

by JON WARECH
photography by GARY JAMES

IT'S 9 PM ON A FRIDAY NIGHT—early by old South Beach standards—and one-man band Lone Wolf is strumming his banjo and seducing the crowd at Sweet Liberty Drinks & Supply Company with his raspy voice. It's a sound that pairs perfectly with The Beast of Bourbon, the bar's take on an Old Fashioned made with Jim Beam Black, spiced rum, coffee, allspice, ango, and orange oil.

Couples in booths, friends at the bar, locals and tourists, young and old, from all walks of life, are savoring the moment with a craft cocktail like The Beast of Bourbon, the Old Pal, or Collins Park Sour. At first glance, one could easily forget they're in South Beach, but anyone in tune with modern-day Miami knows that this scene—with creative craft cocktails in glasses of all shapes and sizes—is the city's new spirit.

"Miami has this ability to make people try new things," says renowned bartender and Sweet Liberty co-owner John Lermayer. "I think when they land here, the sky is blue, the buildings are white, the people are colorful, the girls are beautiful, and the guy who lives in Chicago who drinks the same Scotch at the same bar



Zombie No. 305: Bacardi 8-Year, Mount Gay Black Barrel, Avion tequila, Hamilton 151, Kronan Swedish Punsch, Don's Mix #2, lime and grenadine, served in an absinthe-rinsed glass.

Restaurants with a party crowd like STK are going craft with their shots—concocting one-hitters like STK’s tequila-based Raspberry Mama—while other eateries known predominantly for their food are adding complementary seasoning to their bars as well. Macchialina creates complex-flavored drinks by using Italian-based ingredients like amaro, juniper, or speck. The upscale Pao at Faena slides the hard-to-find Filipino San Miguel beer into its High on Life tequila cocktail. And Drunken Dragon makes a whiskey cocktail called Marlee’s Green Tea. Let bartender Zane Hellenga (who adds a black-tea-infused simple syrup) make it for you.

There’s synergy now, too. The same Tequila Mockingbird with red bell peppers and muddled serrano pepper that can spice up your night at the Raleigh Miami Beach’s Martini Bar can also be enjoyed beachside at SBE’s sister property Hyde Beach Kitchen + Cocktails in Hallandale Beach.

“Eight years ago, people in Miami were drinking Johnnie Walker on the rocks, vodka sodas, and apple martinis,” says Cabrera of the widespread movement. “We had to change the mentality of people. They don’t go to the bar ordering apple martinis or lychee martinis anymore.”

Instead customers look for twists on classics and new concoctions that stimulate the senses. The result is a permanent twist on the nightlife experience. The growth in the cocktail industry hasn’t just changed the palate of the local drinker; it’s changed the culture of the community. They’ll all stress fresh ingredients and approachable menus, but at the end of the day, it’s all about good taste. Finally, Miami has some. **OD**

Bottoms Up!

Where to find Miami’s leading craft cocktails:

The Anderson, 709 NE 79th St., Miami, 305-757-3368; theandersonmiami.com

Ball & Chain, 1513 SW Eighth St., Miami, 305-643-7820; ballandchainmiami.com

The Bar at 1306, 1306 N. Miami Ave., Miami, 305-377-2277; 1306miami.com

Beaker & Gray, 2637 N. Miami Ave., Miami, 305-699-2637; beakerandgray.com

Blackbird Ordinary, 729 SW First Ave., Miami, 305-671-3307; blackbirdordinary.com

Bodega Taqueria y Tequila, 1220 16th St., Miami Beach, 305-704-2145; bodegasouthbeach.com

Bond Lounge, 1905 Collins Ave., Miami Beach, 305-604-6001; bondloungeiami.com

The Broken Shaker, 2727 Indian Creek Dr., Miami Beach, 305-531-2727; thefreehand.com

The Corner, 1035 N. Miami Ave., Miami, 305-961-7887; thecornermiami.com

Coya, 999 Brickell Ave., Miami, 305-415-9990; coyarestaurant.com

Craft Social Club, 100 Collins Ave., Miami Beach, 786-216-7719; craftsocialclub.com

db Bistro Moderne, 255 Biscayne Blvd. Way, Miami, 305-421-8800; dbbistro.com

Drunken Dragon, 1424 Alton Road, Miami Beach, 305-397-8556; drunkendragon.com

Hyde Beach Kitchen + Cocktails, 111 S. Surf Road, Hallandale Beach, 954-699-0901; sbe.com

Macchialina, 820 Alton Road, Miami Beach, 305-534-2124; macchialina.com

Marion, 1111 SW First Ave., Miami, 786-717-7512; marionmiami.com

Matador Bar, 2901 Collins Ave., Miami Beach, 786-257-4600; matadorroom.com

Pao by Paul Qui, 3201 Collins Ave., Miami Beach, 786-655-5600; faena.com

Radio Bar, 814 First St., Miami Beach, 305-397-8382; radio-southbeach.com

The Raleigh Hotel, 1775 Collins Ave., Miami Beach, 305-612-1163; raleighhotel.com

Red Ginger, 736 First St., Miami, 305-433-6876; redgingersouthbeach.com

The Regent Cocktail Club, 1690 Collins Ave., Miami Beach, 786-975-2555; galehotel.com

Repour Bar, 1605 James Ave., Miami Beach, 305-913-1000; repourbar.com

The Rum Line, 1601 Collins Ave., Miami Beach, 305-695-0110; therumline.com

STK, 2305 Collins Ave., Miami Beach, 305-604-6988; togrp.com

Sweet Liberty Drinks & Supply Company, 237-B 20th St., Miami Beach, 305-763-8217; mysweetliberty.com

Talde, 4041 Collins Ave., Miami Beach, 786-605-4094; taldeiami.com

The Thompson Miami Beach, 4041 Collins Ave., 786-605-4041; thompsonhotels.com

Wynwood Diner, 2601 NW Second Ave., Miami, 305-747-7888; wynwooddiner.com