



COCKTAIL NOTES

**TASTEFUL
 EDUCATION /**

Mixology classes are bubbling up all over the map. Ready to shake, muddle, and strain?

COLUMBIA ROOM, WASHINGTON, D.C. / Courses at this much-lauded barroom cover a wide array of spirits and techniques. On December 17, create holiday favorites like the Tom and Jerry under the masterful instruction of head bartender Katie Nelson. \$65; passengerdc.com/columbia

THE WHISTLER, CHICAGO / This live music venue in the burgeoning Logan Square neighborhood also houses one of the city's best cocktail bars. Co-owner Paul McGee, whose experience spans 22 years, starts with the basics—like what makes bourbon bourbon—before putting guests behind the bar to craft their own cocktails. \$95; whistlerchicago.com

BRADSTREET CRAFTSHOUSE, MINNEAPOLIS / Staff from this esteemed cocktail bar partner with mixologists from Alchemy Consulting for two-hour forays into the art of drink-making that include lessons on history, bitters, and how to taste spirits (hint—you don't just shoot 'em). \$75; bradstreetcraftshouse.com



Oaxaca Old Fashioned

"The Old Fashioned is arguably the world's first cocktail, and it's beauty lies in its simplicity. Instead of using whiskey, as in the classic recipe, I use tequila and mezcal. This drink is a great introduction to the nuances of mezcal. It was an epiphany drink for me. It's what sparked my obsession with mezcal."

- 1½ ounces El Tesoro reposado tequila
- ½ ounce Del Maguey Vida mezcal
- 1 teaspoon amber agave nectar
- 2 dashes Angostura bitters
- 1 orange twist

Combine liquid ingredients in a mixing glass. Add ice, stir, then strain into a rocks glass over ice. Garnish with a flamed orange twist.



Lipspin #2

"I base all my drinks on classics. This one is in the vein of a Negroni. Sloe gin replaces the vermouth, adding a hint of richness that alludes to the subtle bitterness of Cynar, while mezcal plays nicely with both throughout. I call it the Lipspin because it takes your palate through a loop or two."

- 1 ounce Del Maguey Vida mezcal
- ¾ ounce Cynar
- ¾ ounce Plymouth sloe gin

Combine ingredients in a mixing glass. Add ice, stir, then strain into a cocktail glass.



The Good Cork

"I've always maintained that any two things can go together if you find the right bridge to bind them. Irish whiskey is similar to peaty scotch, which is similar to mezcal. Bénédictine and Peychaud's always work really well together, and they also pair nicely with scotch, as do apple slices. This is a whiskey drinker's mezcal drink."

- 1 ounce Del Maguey Vida mezcal
- 1 ounce Redbreast Irish whiskey
- ½ ounce Bénédictine
- 2 dashes Peychaud's bitters
- 1 apple slice

Combine liquid ingredients in a mixing glass. Stir, then strain into a double rocks glass over ice. Garnish with an apple slice.



Red Ant River Swizzle

"The Red Ant River flows through San Luis del Rio, where this mezcal is made. This drink is a take on a classic Caribbean swizzle, which is a fruity, punch-like drink. Absinthe and lime juice give it aromatics and brightness. It's refreshing and tasty—the taller the glass the better."

- 1½ ounces Del Maguey Vida mezcal
- ¾ ounce simple syrup
- ¾ ounce lime juice
- 2 dashes absinthe
- 1 mint sprig

Combine liquid ingredients over crushed ice in a tall cooler glass. Stir, then garnish with a mint sprig.



Division Bell

"The five months that Mayahuel was being built were the most stressful of my life. The only thing that kept me sane was hanging out in there alone listening to Pink Floyd and vanishing things, so I named this drink after the album. Mezcal is the backbone, the grapefruit and lime make it sour, maraschino makes it sweet, and Aperol adds complexity."

- 1½ ounces Del Maguey Vida mezcal
- ¾ ounce Aperol
- ¾ ounce lime juice
- ½ ounce Luxardo maraschino liqueur
- 1 grapefruit twist

Combine liquid ingredients in an ice-filled mixing glass. Shake, then strain into a cocktail glass. Garnish with a grapefruit twist.



PHIL WARD RECOMMENDS

**Del Maguey
 Vida Mezcal**

This smoky, agave-based spirit hails from San Luis del Rio, Mexico. \$40

"Mezcal is like tequila if it were a whiskey," says Ward, who has worked behind the bar at two of New York City's most famed cocktail spots, Pegu Club and Death & Company. "To make it, the agaves roast on hot rocks in covered pits, so you get a lot of earth and smoke when you taste it. Cocktails are the perfect vehicle to introduce people to complex spirits, and every drink at my bar is made with tequila or mezcal. People are often intimidated by mezcal, so we gingerly wean them onto it by using varying quantities of it in drinks. Eventually people graduate to saying, 'Just give me a *chupito* of the stuff.' We've given a first taste of mezcal to thousands of people, and there's no doubt that it's starting to catch on."

PHIL WARD is the co-owner of Mayahuel in New York City. mayahuelny.com

Red Ant River Swizzle

