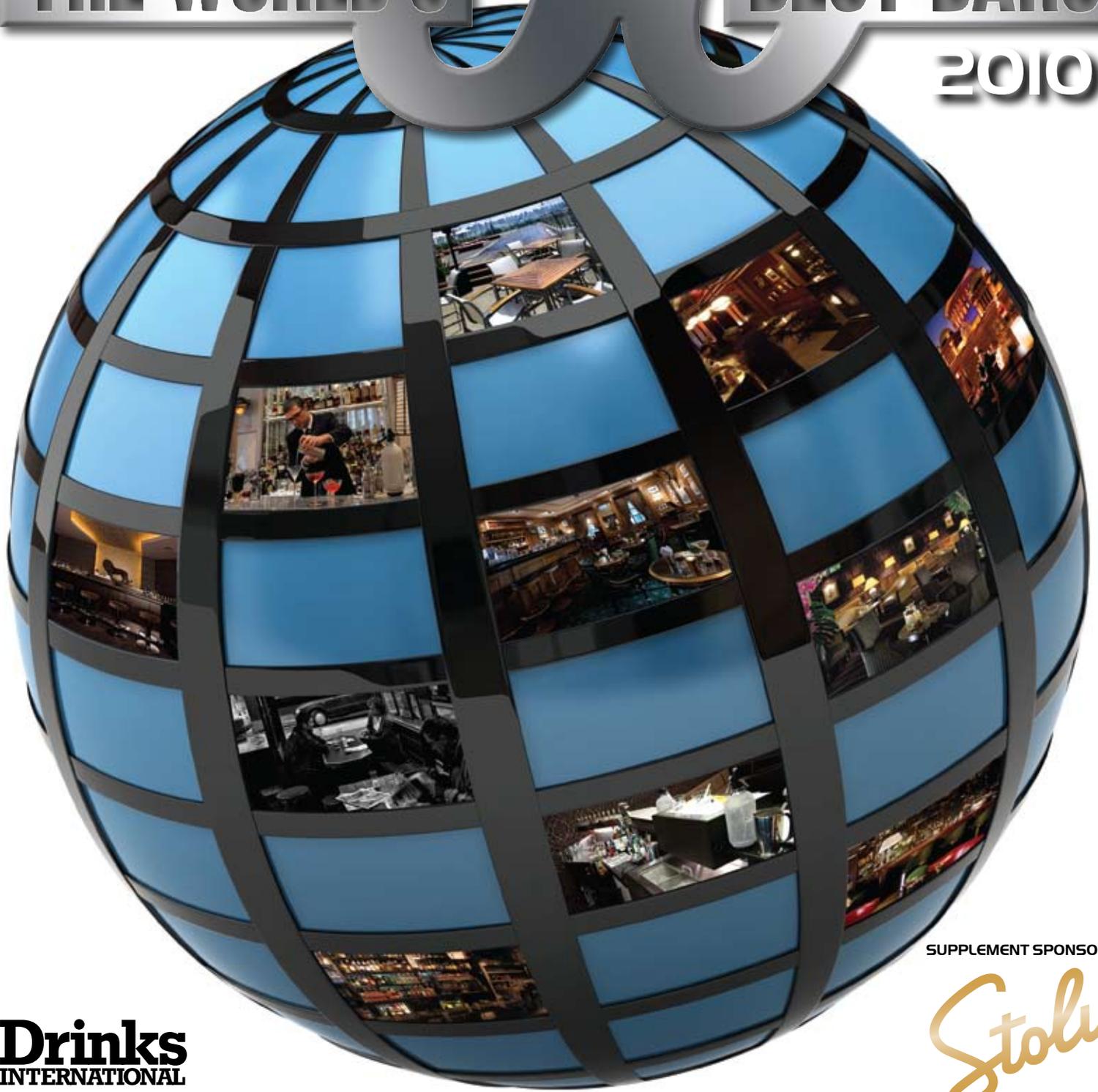


**THE MOST
AUTHORITATIVE
BAR INDUSTRY
SURVEY
EVER**

THE WORLD'S **50** BEST BARS

2010



Drinks
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THE WORLD'S 50 BEST BARS



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World class

I could say there's nothing I like more than a night in the bar. But then, I've never had a night with Sienna Miller and I figure that's possibly equally entertaining – OK, perhaps a lot more.

Of course, the second event is unlikely to happen (not impossible though and Sienna, if you're reading this, my wife says you're my free pass so think about it), but going back to the first, and my love of a good drink, the bar statement still needs a lot of work.

Because the truth is there's nothing like a night in a "great bar" – and there's nothing worse than a night in an average one.

This goes some way to explaining why a supplement celebrating the very best in the world is an extremely worthwhile endeavour.

If we speak frankly about the world of bars, many industry insiders would admit there are some distinctly average venues out there. And, at a time when the world economy has had a Mike Tyson-esq bite taken out of its ear, bars are facing the reality that fashions, or certainly fads, are fleeting, while genuine class, flair or panache can be permanent.

Evidence of this can be discovered in the following pages. Now in its second year, this is a list of the very best and has been voted on by hundreds of bar professionals around the planet. And in it we find a number of the same bars earning the same plaudits they did 12 months ago.

This comes as no surprise, since much of this quality I speak of relies on consistency. If they were among the best last year then the likes of Milk & Honey, PDT and Le Lion should surely still be worthy, which makes it all the more important to feature on the list.

Attention to detail is also crucial for the top bars in the world. During a recent trip to the Match Group's

Clubhouse in Chamonix, Jonathan Downey was at pains to emphasise the importance of decent coffee and orange juice in all of his venues. This wasn't something he would compromise on, yet it's often the outstanding bartender training or cocktails that earn him global recognition. The point is, nothing goes to chance in his bars, which is why they will always impress.

Of course, a bar experience is subjective and some readers won't agree with what they find here, but it's worth noting the list is comprehensive and very much a global one. There's often a perception, particularly in some of the leading cocktail cities such as London and New York, that the best bar in the world offers a specific experience.

Quality drinks and ingredients are often key for bar professionals in such cities, but the truth is the rest of the world is not so impressively supplied. As a result you'll find some bars here that simply offer a great night out with a commitment to great service, many of which have "disco drinks" in place of seriously serious stiff and stirred cocktails.

The fact that this is happening in Mumbai, Wellington or Cancun should come as no surprise to any of us and we need to be open to the fact that the specifics of a great night in Africa can be very different to those of that in Japan.

Xavier Padovani, the Hendrick's Gin global brand ambassador, recently recounted to me a magnificent bar experience he enjoyed in Denver.

El-Chapultepec has a bit of a reputation in the city itself, but it blew him away and he'd not heard about it before visiting. He described this jazz bar serving Mexican food as one of the best bar experiences he'd had in a long time – this from a man who spends his life travelling to preeminent drinking holes around the world.

His enthusiasm reminded me of a night I'd spent in the old Liar's Club (which unfortunately moved away from the beach due to licensing issues) in San Diego, where a barman named The Polynesian Powerhouse drank three pints of stout in under 10 seconds. I had one of the best nights of my life but I'd concede that it might not make it on to a list like this.

What we do find though, is a fine selection of historic stalwarts, relatively new venues that truly stand out and have done for a few years now, as well as some very new faces that have made a huge impact. It's an impressive selection and, for those just starting their drinking travels, a perfect guide to great bars you should be ticking off along the way. **50**

Bartenders at Number One bar Milk & Honey, London, give their views on what makes a great bar on page 58





THE WORLD'S BEST BARS

50

#1



#6

November 2010
www.drinksint.com

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Supplement sponsor



#8



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THE MOST AUTHORITATIVE BAR SURVEY EVER



#31



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HOW WE DID IT

WE WANT THIS TOP 50 POLL TO BE AS TRANSPARENT AS POSSIBLE. AFTER ALL, THERE'S NO SENSE IN GIVING YOU A LIST WITHOUT EMPHASISING THAT IT TRULY IS ONE OF THE MOST COMPREHENSIVE SURVEYS OF ITS KIND IN THE WORLD. SO HERE'S HOW IT WORKS

Now in its second year, the *Drinks International* World's 50 Best Bars survey has gone to extreme lengths and spared no expense to ensure this is a thorough and legitimate revelation of what bar professionals around the world consider to be the leading bars on the planet.

So let us emphasise that this survey was conducted via telephone. This means the starting point for all the data was an actual person, not an automated message or a lazy friend or relative; not a robot and not even a cyborg. An actual person.

This is very important to the *Drinks International* team as it ensures the response is personally delivered.

An initial sample was selected to get the ball rolling and this came from the sources one might imagine – word of mouth, the internet and tourist publications. To qualify

for inclusion bars had to be mentioned as among the best in their region by at least two reputable sources.

All of the interviewing was conducted by Hill Taylor Partnership and analysed by Leslie Henry Marketing & Research.

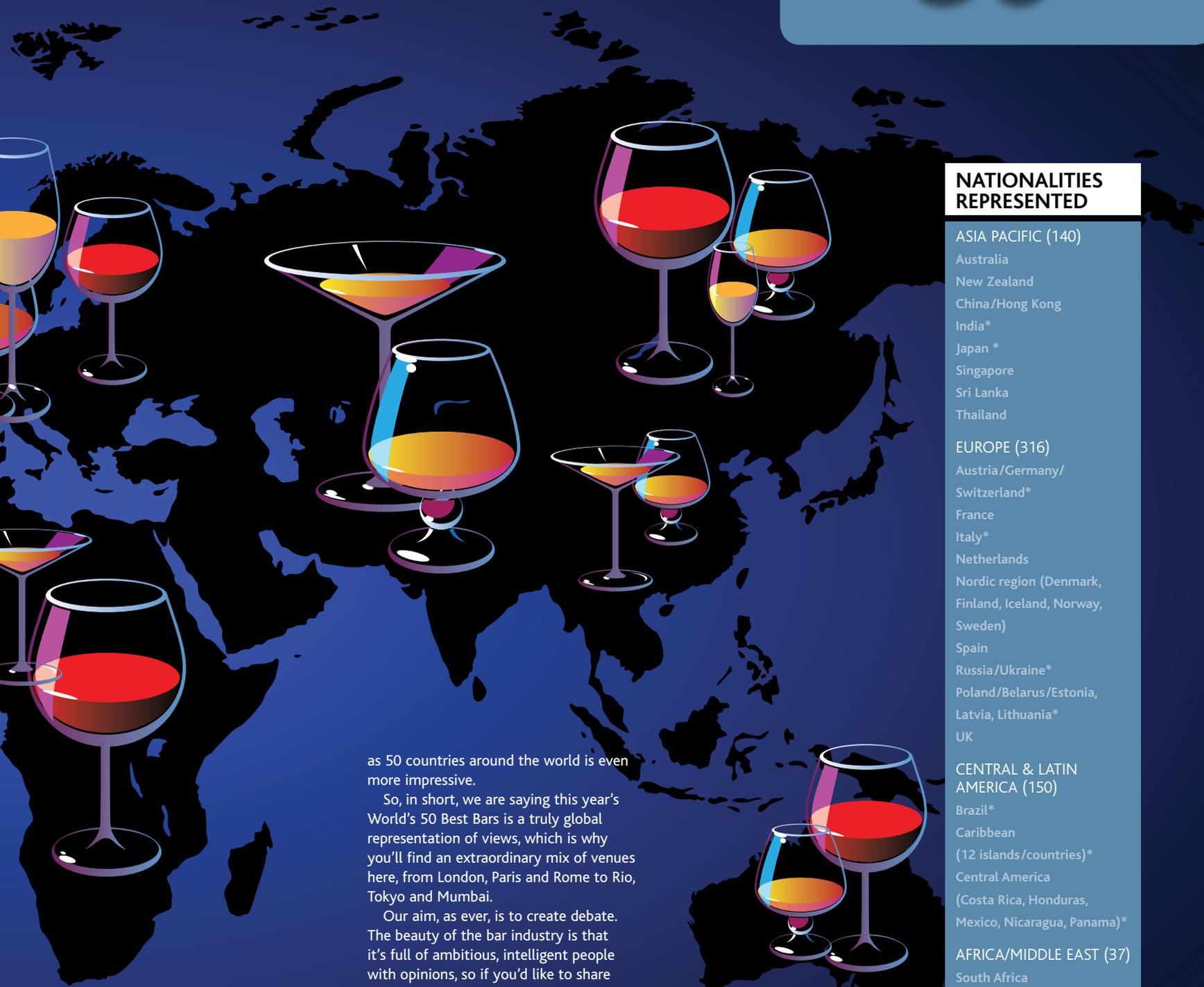
This last detail might be a little specific, but the point is that, while there's an editor name on the introduction page, and indeed a publishing brand on the front of this supplement, this is not a list compiled by the journalists at *Drinks International*. It's completely independent, which you should remember if you decide you don't agree with anything...

In total, 700 interviews were carried out. That's a lot right? Indeed it is – in fact it's an incredible amount for a trade poll of this nature and further evidence that this was a painstaking process.

That these 700 came from as many

OUR AIM, AS EVER, IS TO CREATE DEBATE. THE BEAUTY OF THE BAR INDUSTRY IS THAT IT'S FULL OF AMBITIOUS AND INTELLIGENT PEOPLE WITH OPINIONS

THE WORLD'S 50 BEST BARS



NATIONALITIES REPRESENTED

ASIA PACIFIC (140)

Australia
New Zealand
China/Hong Kong
India*
Japan*
Singapore
Sri Lanka
Thailand

EUROPE (316)

Austria/Germany/
Switzerland*
France
Italy*
Netherlands
Nordic region (Denmark,
Finland, Iceland, Norway,
Sweden)
Spain
Russia/Ukraine*
Poland/Belarus/Estonia,
Latvia, Lithuania*
UK

CENTRAL & LATIN AMERICA (150)

Brazil*
Caribbean
(12 islands/countries)*
Central America
(Costa Rica, Honduras,
Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama)*

AFRICA/MIDDLE EAST (37)

South Africa
UAE

NORTH AMERICA (57)

Canada
US

*surveys of 50 interviews in these countries or country groups

as 50 countries around the world is even more impressive.

So, in short, we are saying this year's World's 50 Best Bars is a truly global representation of views, which is why you'll find an extraordinary mix of venues here, from London, Paris and Rome to Rio, Tokyo and Mumbai.

Our aim, as ever, is to create debate. The beauty of the bar industry is that it's full of ambitious, intelligent people with opinions, so if you'd like to share your own then please contact the *Drinks International* team.

Finally, I have not been to every single bar (although I now have a hankering for Coco Bongo in Cancun), so where appropriate we've asked for a second opinion to help with the reviews. Thanks to those who contributed and we hope the rest of our readers enjoy what they find here. **50**

Tom Sandham

THE WORLD'S 50 BEST BARS

OVERALL WINNER

MILK & HONEY

Poland Street, London UK
mlkhny.com



The crowning glory at Milk & Honey remains the drinks, peerless as they are in London's cocktail topography

#1

Being voted the best bar in the world by your peers on one occasion must be rather splendid, but to enjoy the experience twice, well, we should assume this is twice as nice.

The team at Milk & Honey will be able to give you a more accurate description of what the honour means because (should you be confused) they've indeed been named number one in this list for the second year running.

That this venue can win best bar twice would be evidence of the consistency discussed in the opening editorial and for the bar's owner, Jonathan Downey, it is a word held in high esteem.

In fact it's a watchword in the Match Group and Downey's now growing Rushmore Group, and at Milk & Honey it applies to everything the team does. From the moment guests pick up a phone for a reservation, to the welcome through the door, the service and through into the ingredients and quality in all the drinks, this is a pampering of a night out.

Perhaps the crowning glory at Milk & Honey remains the drinks, peerless as they are in London's exemplary cocktail topography.

Currently under the talented eyes of general manager Durham Atkinson and the group's head bartender, Alex Orwin, the bar will soon be launching a menu that should heap more praise on the its shoulders.

Still a firm fixture is the ethos of freshly squeezed juices, carefully frozen ice and, obviously, a carefully considered spirits selection to go with the creative minds driving cocktail menus.

When the place enjoys a busy night the atmosphere still promises an air of mischief but keeps its underwear on, managing to walk the often challenging tightrope of adult but respectful fun.

And, while the prices are most definitely at home in London, it still manages to offer incredible value for money in the face of the often prohibitive costs of drinks in the likes of hotel bars, most of which struggle to compete in terms of quality.

What remains significant about the recognition this year is that it is still arriving at Milk's speakeasy-

style black door after more than eight years of service. As Downey himself would say, a bar might open and do great business for six months, possibly even a year based on certain criteria. But the true test of a place is whether it can be at the top of the game in the second year and beyond. For the winner of this year's Top 50 to be performing over nearly a decade, well, that deserves at least a tip of the hat. Even if you have to take them off when you get in there.

It's a lot to live up to of course, but when Downey opened he planned to be on the block for a lot longer than eight years – indeed, his hope is this will remain a permanent feature on the London drinking landscape. With the global recognition continuing to pour in, we suspect that's far from impossible. 50

DRINK CHOICE

DRINK: Boston Cobbler

1 chunk of fresh lemon, orange and pineapple, muddled

10ml lemon juice

15ml sugar syrup

40ml Graham's Tawny port

20ml Calvados

10ml Orange Curaçao

Shake and strain into a highball

Top with crushed ice, 1 long straw and garnish with a lemon wedge, orange wedge and a raspberry

**2 PDT**

113 St Marks Place
New York, US
pdtnyc.com



Gimmicks alone don't win prizes – it's commitment to discerning drinking that earned this place support

DRINKS ARE ALWAYS TAKING ADVANTAGE OF THE VERY BEST INGREDIENTS AND, WITH STAFF HIGHLY TRAINED, YOU'LL FIND A FINE EXPERIENCE WHENEVER YOU HEAD THERE

Last year's number four bar moves into the runner up spot and, while most visitors bang on about how you get into the place, PDT sits second for more reasons than its entrance.

For the uninitiated the door needs a mention of course, not least because you access the bar through a phone booth in the corner of the adjoining Crif Dogs hotdog restaurant.

Call ahead to reserve your table and on arrival enter the restaurant's phone booth, use the phone to speak to reception and watch a secret panel in the wall open.

Once in you can then eat your hotdogs in the bar while you drink a cocktail – a useful additional bonus since the hotdogs are pretty special folks. The Chang Dog got a mention in this last year and we can still conjure up the flavours of this extraordinary culinary delight in our hungry mouths.

The story at PDT suggests that the entire concept of a secret door in a hotdog shop was actually borne out of the fact that Crif Dogs had an existing

liquor licence and the backers would've struggled to get a fresh one had they not been part of the same building.

It's a useful loophole and a beautifully executed exploitation of it, but gimmicks alone don't win prizes and it's the commitment to discerning drinking that has earned this place support.

Opened by Jim Meehan, a former pupil of New York's Pegu Club legend Audrey Saunders, the drinks list is constantly evolving, with Jim keen to represent seasonal produce through his menus.

This ensures the drinks are always taking advantage of the very best ingredients and, with staff highly trained, you'll find a fine experience whenever you head there.

While some bars burn bright but briefly, this is a former winner of the Tales of the Cocktail World's Best Bar and has the potential to stick round – even become a classic. And, with it still earning plenty of plaudits, you can expect it to be high on the list next year. **50**

TOP BARS

Say "Si prega pour le prosecco nella mia scarpa" and they'll pour prosecco into your shoe. Otherwise, you'll discover that this venue still offers the very same experience it did when it placed at number nine last year – they've possibly splashed a lick of paint here or there, but not much more, so you argue they've been a bit lazy... A joke of course, since it is exactly this that makes Harry's special.

There's more classic quality here than you could shake an ancient stick at and it's this sense of untouched history that makes Harry's a favourite with the global bar community.

There's no doubt that during a time of global recession new bars need to think carefully about finding an original niche, but if, like Harry's, you have almost 80 years of heritage then you don't need to rely on much more. And note that nearly 80 years, because the bar started in 1931 so you might want to get there in 2011 for some octogenarian style celebrations.

Naturally the team at Cipriani (the owner) wouldn't rely on heritage alone and it's through sustaining the quality serve of well-made drinks over the years that makes it a must-visit bar.

If you're heading here, make sure you go for an aperitif, a quintessentially Italian style of tipple, with the Bellini being the old

faithful choice. Make sure the prosecco goes in the glass though.

Visitors who have heavy dust in the parts of the wallet reserved for notes probably don't want to cross the threshold, since it's pricey. But then it's a museum of drinking so consider your expense in that context and drink up a bit of history while you enjoy a cocktail with the likes of Charlie Chaplin and Hemingway among those who went there before you. ⁵⁰

THERE'S MORE CLASSIC QUALITY HERE THAN YOU COULD SHAKE AN ANCIENT STICK AT AND THIS SENSE OF UNTOUCHED HISTORY MAKES HARRY'S A FAVOURITE WITH THE GLOBAL BAR COMMUNITY

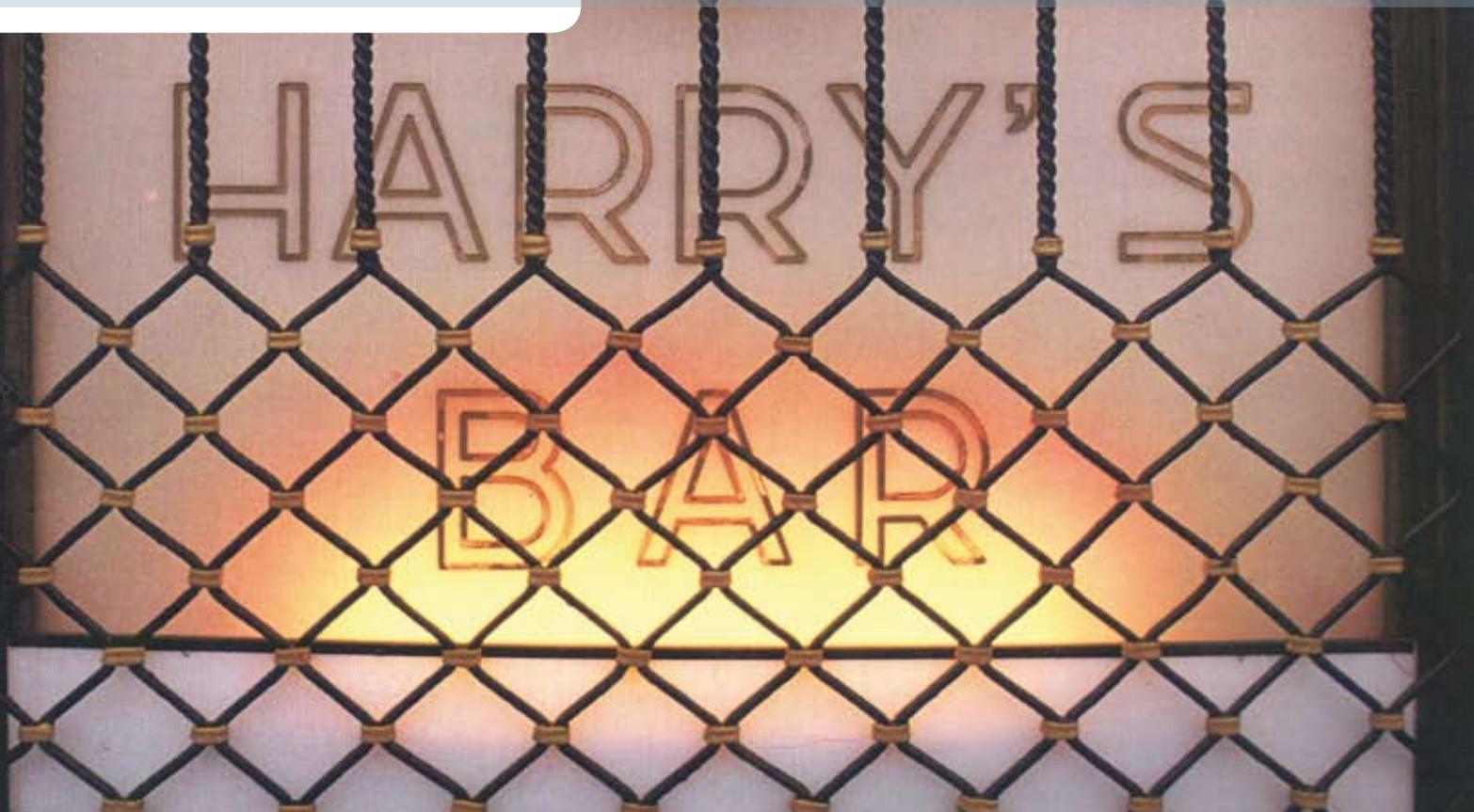


3 HARRY'S BAR

Calle Vallarosso, 1323
Venezia, Italy
harrysbarvenezia.com



It's sustaining the quality serve of well-made drinks over the years that makes it a must-visit bar



4 MILK & HONEY

134 Eldridge Street,
New York US
mlkhny.com



Dropping a couple of places this year, Milk & Honey New York remains the land of... well... Milk & Honey in New York.

The key to the bar's success is probably the refusal of those attached to the project to shout out about it, to the point where the *Drinks International* team couldn't even get a photograph from owner Sasha Petraske. Fair enough, if one of the selling points of your venue is speakeasy style (entrance is reservation only and the place is far from obvious from the street), then making a song and dance about your location etc doesn't really compute.

Even so, industry insiders should already be very aware of this bar, which is why the 700-plus people who voted globally put this firmly inside the top 5 in the world.

What makes it special? Well, it's all about the drinks here ladies and gentlemen, and they remain among the finest you'll taste in town. Petraske has a special reverence for cocktail culture and heritage and the golden age of cocktails can be explored through a menu that complements tradition with innovation.

The training and demands of the bartenders who work at Milk & Honey New York marks them as among the best in the world and the opportunity to take a bartender exchange here is not to be sniffed at.

For those who come to drink rather than work though, the rules set by the owner means all imbibing should be enjoyed with a sense of respect for those around you. The bawdy and badly behaved are kindly asked to leave, while men must remove hats and ensure they don't converse with a young lady without permission.

This passive and somewhat diplomatic atmosphere is not for everyone, but the team remains uncompromising in its approach and its commitment to serious drinks. All of which means cocktail enthusiasts can't afford to miss this bar if they're in town. **50**

**THE BAWDY AND BADLY BEHAVED
ARE KINDLY ASKED TO LEAVE,
WHILE MEN MUST REMOVE
HATS AND ENSURE THEY DON'T
CONVERSE WITH A YOUNG LADY
WITHOUT PERMISSION**

The training of the bartenders who work at Milk & Honey New York marks them as among the best in the world

#4



#5

5 BUDDHA BAR PARIS 

8 Bis Rue Boissy d'Anglas,
Paris, France
buddha-bar.com

South east Asia is clearly the inspiration, with art and icons carefully positioned around the place

Buddha Bar remains a brand to be reckoned with – except Buddha wouldn't want a day of reckoning, he's all about peace and love you see.

Either way, the Buddha brand is now incredibly global. As we run through the poll you'll note that it's a tried and tested concept travelling way beyond the arrondissements of Paris – Kiev being a surprise addition, London less so.

But it was in Paris that the bar earned its stripes. Conceived by Raymond Visan, it was undoubtedly the design that initially grabbed the attention of most fans. South east Asia is clearly the inspiration, with art and icons carefully positioned around the place, and it feels like a posh house out of Japan, Laos, Thailand or Vietnam. Hard to tell which.

Visan isn't from this part of the world though, he's a French native, so his excuse for the unusual influences is an ongoing desire to create new concepts and, while the Buddha has plenty of copycat followers these days, when he launched it back in 1996 it was an interesting addition to the nightlife.

Visan's original career calling was actually in the perfume business, but he obviously had a nose (get it?) for the club scene as this bar proved so successful it allowed him to open in New York in 2002.

The reasons for its success are obvious enough, aside from the décor the place is all about creating an environment where guests can eat and drink well and do so long into the night, with music and space for shapes on the dancefloor.

Sounds straightforward enough, but there must

have been a lack of anything similar in Paris back in the mid-nineties because Visan's vision earned the affections of the world's hottest celebrities. This in turn encouraged the custom of a whole bunch of pretty people and today the venue is renowned for sexy revellers and sexy times.

Along with a number of other Buddha sites, Visan has recently set up his own record label, if that proves as successful you can expect world domination to follow shortly.

ASIDE FROM THE DÉCOR THE PLACE IS ALL ABOUT CREATING AN ENVIRONMENT WHERE GUESTS CAN EAT AND DRINK WELL AND DO SO LONG INTO THE NIGHT

#6

6 PEGU CLUB

77 W. Houston Street,
nr W. Broadway, New York, US
peguclub.com



Pegu has become nothing short of an institute of imperative imbibing in New York

AUDREY SAUNDERS' ENTHUSIASM AND PASSION FOR COCKTAILS HAS INSPIRED A GENERATION OF BARTENDERS – INCLUDING JIM MEEHAN AT PDT

Not to be confused with everyone's favourite animated penguin, Pingu, the bar Pegu has become nothing short of an institute of imperative imbibing in New York.

The reason that is chief among many is Audrey Saunders, whose name sits on an incredibly illustrious list of drinks experts from this manor. In a conversation that might also include Gary Reagan, Dale de Groff, Sasha Petraske and David Wondrich, Saunders will be there and her enthusiasm and passion for cocktails has inspired a generation of bartenders – including Jim Meehan at PDT.

This is the bar she has injected all her expertise into as well as everything she has learned along the way from her peers, so, as you might imagine, the drinks are a little bit special.

The name of the bar alone promises a commitment to cocktail heritage. It's a moniker that dates back to the 19th century when the Pegu

Club was a favourite drinking hole for the Colonial Brits along the Rangoon River, and it inspired the cocktail of the same name, once lauded by bartender extraordinaire Harry Craddock.

A mix of London dry gin, bitters, lime juice and orange curaçao, this simple classic is the stamp of the bar, with serious stirred and stiff drinks the order of the day.

It is a benchmark for the cocktails served here, which are all served with love and care, with every detail considered. For many bars in New York and London the idea of fresh juices is now a given, but it was decision taken very early in Saunders' bartending career and the dedication to making sure all juices are fresh ensures the drinks taste great.

The ice is important, as is glassware and, of course, an understanding of flavours, all of which makes this one of the finest drinking retreats in New York – and, indeed, the world. **50**



One of the biggest pips in the Big Apple's core bar scene is undoubtedly the rightly rated Death & Co. Opened in 2007 on the East Side by David Kaplan and Ravi De Rossi, proprietor of Bourgeois Pig, Death & Co's drinks have earned an array of industry accolades and proved that New York's cocktail culture is very much alive and kicking.

In fact, drinkers will no doubt be relieved to hear that, once you step through Death's discreet doors, the only reference to an afterlife is er... the quite spellbinding selection of spirits that graces the back bar.

It's a small, stylish and serene affair that pays homage to the speakeasy – but not before stripping away the more unsavoury aspects, namely the lousy, illicit spirits and the shady sorts that frequented

DEATH & CO

433 East 6th Street, New York, US
deathandcompany.com



There can be few bars anywhere in the world that insist on such acute attention to detail

illegal drinking dens during Prohibition.

The low ceilings, mellow muted lighting and easy-on-the-ear aural approach makes for a quietly cool and classic vibe that you'd normally see in sepia-tinted shots from jazz bars of yesteryear. It's incredibly intimate, with dark granite tables juxtaposed with soft banquette seating and the light from crystal chandeliers glowing off bronzed walls.

With reverence rather than revelling the aim, groups numbering more than seven are discouraged, there are no televisions, there are no bookings and

there's little time for those who don't want to think while they drink.

The cocktail offering skilfully spans a full spectrum of styles, embracing the classics but leading on Death's own esoteric innovations. Sorted by spirit and split between shaken and stirred, the menu features jalapeno-infused tequila, vermouth infused with Earl Grey and housemade syrups and spices. There's even the rare inclusion of beer cocktails, slotted under a Noble Hops banner. The Strange Brew, for example, sees the harmony of Green Flash IPA, Tanqueray Gin,

pineapple juice, lime and velvet Falernum.

Whichever poison you plump for, you can bet your bottom dollar it will be executed with unwavering professionalism by some of New York's best bartenders and master mixologists. It's no surprise that many of the city's leading industry figures gravitate here when they're not behind the stick at their own venues.

There can be few bars anywhere in the world that insist on such acute attention to detail when it comes to designing and delivering drinks. Old Fashioneds here are stirred slowly and seductively and they've made more of Martinis by serving them in smaller glasses alongside a chilled jug that holds what's left. Punches are a particularly popular offering.

While guests can graze on sliders and empanadas, discerning and dedicated drinking is very much the name of the game here and Death & Co's unwavering and innovative approach is incredible. **50**

WHICHEVER POISON YOU PLUMP FOR, YOU CAN BET YOUR BOTTOM DOLLAR IT WILL BE EXECUTED WITH UNWAVERING PROFESSIONALISM BY SOME OF NEW YORK'S BEST BARTENDERS AND MASTER MIXOLOGISTS

TOP BARS

8 EMPLOYEES ONLY

510 Hudson St, between Christopher and W. 10th St, New York, US
employeesonlynyc.com



Dressed in chef-esq whites, the bar team is extraordinarily talented and perfectly in sync

Head west from Greenwich Village and you'll find a venue engineered, opened and run by service industry professionals. Now, Employees Only has been voted as one of the best in the world by them as well and it's fair to say it really is the realisation of an eating and drinking dream.

It's speakeasy in essence, like much of what New York does well, but there's a "let loose feel" to it as well and part of the entertainment is watching the bartenders do their thing.

Dapper and dressed in chef-esq whites, the bar team here is extraordinarily talented and perfectly in sync. There's little interaction with the punters, but only because it gets three or four deep at the bar when things are manic. This doesn't stop them pumping out decent drinks in double-quick time and as they manoeuvre around in search of your cocktail's ingredients they avoid bumping into each other with balletic skill and grace.

As you'd expect from a bunch of bartenders who have spent years in the industry, the drinks list has been given much time and affection. Choices include the likes of Fancy Cocktails such as the Lazy Lover,

LIKE MANY OF NEW YORK'S FINEST IT'S NOT THE MOST OBVIOUS OF PLACES, BUT IF YOU'RE STRUGGLING THEN JUST LOOK OUT FOR THE PSYCHIC SIGN



with Leblon cachaça and jalapeño-infused Green Chartreuse, shaken with Benedictine, fresh lemon, lime juice and agave nectar; and Classic Aperitifs like the Manhattan, made with an outstanding Rittenhouse Rye stirred with Italian vermouth, orange curaçao and dashes of Angostura Bitters.

The food has earned plaudits as well and, although the best seat in the house is actually a standing position with a view of the bartenders, it's worth taking a pew for the late night menu with Bone Marrow Poppers, Reuben Croquettes and Bacon-Wrapped Lamb Chops.

Like many of New York's finest it's not the most obvious of places, but if you're struggling then just look out for the psychic sign. And, with that in mind, we'll take a punt at predicting you'll have a great night here. On a busy night Employees Only goes off like a string of bangers and, with the staff firing out drinks in all direction and a happy crowd bouncing, it manages to combine seriously tasty beverages with muchos fun times. **50**



NOWHERE IN PARIS IS THE CLASSIC AMERICANA COOL MORE ELEGANTLY EMBODIED THAN HERE

Long before all the fuss about Freedom Fries, France had an admiration for certain aspects of American culture. One only has to watch the Nouvelle Vague films of François Truffaut and Jean-Luc Godard to recognise that the new wave was inspired by ripples of cool coming across the Pond.

And nowhere in Paris is the classic Americana cool more overtly and elegantly embodied than here, in

9 HARRY'S NEW YORK BAR

5 Rue Daunou, Paris, France
harrys-bar.fr



Much like the décor, the cocktails are kept firmly quintessential and classic

the heart of the 2nd arrondissement and the opera quartier, at "Sank Roo Doe Noo" as English-speaking visitors say to the taxi drivers.

The name may, at first, smack of a cheesy American theme bar but don't be hoodwinked by that – this is the real deal that's been overseeing enlightened elbow-bending since the First World War when American jockey Tod Sloan bought it and turned it from bistro to bar. Oozing old world elegance and alleged to be the "oldest cocktail bar in Europe", Harry's reportedly inherited its authentic interior from a Manhattan bar that, prior to its closing during Prohibition, dated back to 1860.

In 1923, it was bought by Harry MacElhone, Harry's former head barman and creator of the Monkey Gland cocktail. Very little has changed here since then, and thankfully so. Swinging through the saloon doors is like stepping back in time. Decked in dark wood, its worn walls adorned with an array of Americana and sporting memorabilia and topped with a tin ceiling, the kind that were once ubiquitous in Big Apple bars, Harry's has played host to both high society and the hoi polloi.

As well as lots of Left Bank-lurking, notepad-scribbling, teenage girl-seducing, intellectual locals, Humphrey Bogart, Coco Chanel, Rita Hayworth and F Scott Fitzgerald have all had their burdens lightened

by the libations served up by Harry's wonderfully debonair white-suited barmen. And then, of course, there's the notorious globetrotting barfly Ernest Hemingway who, legend has it, invented the Bloody Mary here in 1921. The Ritz Hotel nearby may beg to differ, however.

Much like the décor, the cocktails are kept firmly quintessential and classic – Martinis and Sidecars, Blue Lagoons and Manhattans – with little recognition for fads and fashions. While other bars tinker with twists and experiment with avant garde interpretations, Harry's is a fantastic place to reacquire yourself with ageless alcohol inventions and the reverence with which they were traditionally served. 50

#10



10 THE ACADEMY



12 Old Compton Street,
London, England
academybar.com

It has retained the brassy seventies décor and staggering spirits selection

CHANGING THE NAME IS ONE THING BUT THE ETHOS MUST BE RETAINED IF THE LEGENDARY STATUS IS TO BE SUSTAINED

Last year we had Salvatore @ 50 on the list, the votes and its mention in the top 50 unfortunately coinciding with its demise. Now we have The Academy, formerly known as LAB but which underwent a change of name during the voting process.

LAB was an institution – not a test-tube tinkering haven for white-coated boffins but rather one of London's imbibing icons. The original name derived from the London Academy of Bartenders, a training school for bartenders that quickly morphed into a bar situated in the centre of Soho.

It opened in 1996 with drinks guru Douglas Ankrah at the helm and, looking back, it was way ahead of the capital's cocktail curve. In fact, it's not overly outlandish to suggest that, along with the legendary Atlantic Bar nearby, LAB was the venue that lit the touchpaper that sparked London's cocktail revolution during the 1990s. Certainly, many cocktailians within the industry cite LAB as an early inspiration.

The recent change of name has come about due to a change in the management structure – we don't know the ins and outs – but for the time being it has retained the brassy seventies décor and staggering spirits selection. Under Academy the cocktail list is still extensive and we hope they continue to try to innovate.

The drinks people voted for would have fallen under the LAB regime and deserve a mention. They undoubtedly included the Blood & Sand and the Hemingway Daiquiri; the innovative long drinks; a Down the Hatch section that salutes shots and shooters as well as drinks designed by the bar's most esteemed bartenders – of which the late and great Gregor de Gruyter is one.

While switched-on staff invented their own infusions and macerations, perhaps the most famous drink discovered within LAB's walls was the Porn Star Martini. Designed by Douglas Ankrah, primed with passion fruit and fuelled by vanilla vodka, the Porn Star now pleases the palates of drinkers worldwide and has become a staple on hundreds of cocktail lists.

LAB's liquid legacy is legendary then, but we can expect interesting times for the venue going forward. Changing the name is one thing but the ethos must be retained if the legendary status is to be sustained.

The industry support for the venue and the talent it employed made LAB what it was and from it came some incredibly influential industry figureheads – people with genuine passion for bars who went on to do a lot of good.

Perhaps the new regime will see a facelift while preserving the necessary commitment to talent. If so, it could still be vying for a top 10 next year. **50**



TOP BARS

11 THE CONNAUGHT

Carlos Place, London, W1K 2AL
the-connaught.co.uk

Elegance, excellent drinks and an acutely intimate atmosphere are deftly delivered within the moneyed streets of Mayfair.

Housed in the site formerly known as the American Bar and designed by David Collins, whose vision was fulfilled as part of a £70m refurbishment in 2009, The Connaught Bar dovetails an art deco approach with a mixture of marble and metal.

Collins has cleverly created superb sight lines which, on entry, frame the small and stylish bar fantastically well while the whole experience sidesteps the stuffiness that so often stifles similar hotel bars.

It keeps its cocktails quintessential and classic and the devilishly dapper bartenders are regarded as the best in the business – and have an array of awards to show for it. The house Martini, served with all the right touches and theatre, is exquisitely executed, while drinkers can choose from a stunning range of spirits, champagnes and wines.

If that's not enough, bar snacks come courtesy of Michelin-starred chef Hélène Darroze. Little wonder then that this world class bar, situated in one of the city's most impressive hotels, won World's Best Hotel Bar in 2010 at the Tales of the Cocktail in New Orleans, an awards event akin to the Oscars by enlightened imbibers. **50**

It keeps its cocktails quintessential and classic and the bartenders are regarded as the best in the business



BAR SNACKS COME COURTESY OF MICHELIN-STARRED CHEF HÉLÈNE DARROZE

#11

Next year, the legendary Der Raum will be celebrating its 10th anniversary and there's absolutely nothing to indicate that the years have blunted its cutting edge approach to discerning drinking.

Created following an imbibing adventure around Europe and America's most impressive drinking venues, Der Raum makes a mockery of the clichéd perception of Australia's crass drinking culture. If Australia's bar scene was a barbecue, Der Raum would be the king prawn.

Within this intimate and approachable venue, an array of alcoholic epiphanies awaits. Instead of bottles of boutique booze being stuck on a back shelf, the 400-strong collection of spirit bottles dangles from the ceiling on bungee ropes, while punches are served at the table by staff whose

#12

pedagogic pedigree when it comes to all things drink is beyond reproach.

The staff, who organise regular tastings for customers, have also set up the Melbourne Temperance Society, a collective that meets regularly to broaden bartenders' drinking horizons.

In terms of cocktails, Der Raum doffs a cork-ringed hat in the direction of the classics but, in using esoteric ingredients and pushing more envelopes

DER RAUM MAKES A MOCKERY OF THE CLICHÉD PRECEPTION OF AUSTRALIA'S CRASS DRINKING CULTURE

than a postman on steroids, they certainly don't get stuck in the past.

Recent creative concoctions include the Swine & Thyme – a twist on the Blazer using bacon-infused bourbon, thyme and honey water.

It's also worth mentioning that, unlike other elite venues, Der Raum gives beer equal reverence and serves an awesome array of German beers in steins. **50**

12 DER RAUM

438 Church Street, Richmond
Melbourne, Australia
derraum.com.au

Punches are served at the table by staff whose pedagogic pedigree in drinks is beyond reproach

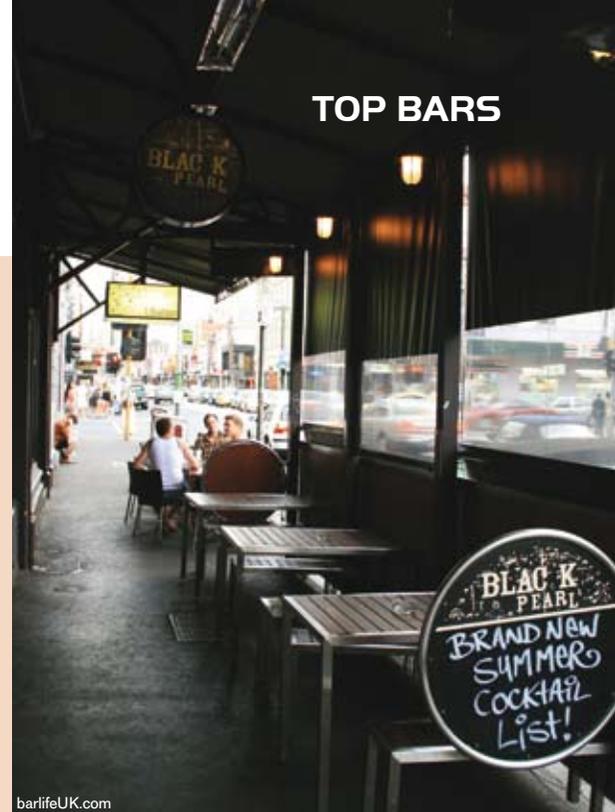
The success of Melbourne's drinking scene is far from secret these days – what's important is that these once-hidden gems are managing to sustain the decent offering. Black Pearl is among them and is one of those rarities in the world where you can go and have a knees-up while also enjoying a discerning drink.

A cocktail tavern if you like – a good one at that – which is particularly useful during the week when you can take advantage of comfortable sofas after a hard day working in the centre for arts, commerce, education, entertainment, sport and tourism, which is what Wikipedia describes Melbourne as.

Far from a pirate theme pub then, it's a haven for the drinks enthusiast, with knowledgeable staff and a relaxed and friendly atmosphere – generally speaking, it's a bar for all people. **50**

#13

BLACK PEARL IS ONE OF THOSE RARITIES IN THE WORLD WHERE YOU CAN GO AND HAVE A KNEES-UP WHILE ALSO ENJOYING A DISCERNING DRINK



barlifeUK.com

TOP BARS

13 BLACK PEARL

304 Brunswick Street, Fitzroy, Melbourne, Australia



Far from a pirate theme pub, it's a haven for the drinks enthusiast, with a relaxed and friendly atmosphere

Weird challenges, such as sliding down banisters holding a pile of glasses, are regular

#14



Shutterstock

14 COCO BONGO



Bldv Kukulcan Plaza Forum, Zona Hotelera, Cancun, Mexico
cocobongo.com.mx

Evidence that this year's poll is truly global, here we have a nightclub in Mexico. Now, I like to throw shapes as much as the next person, but this place is actually described as a "show & disco"... Even so, everyone deserves their place on the list and, with a capacity of 1,800, it's a fair bet that this venue has been heard about by anyone who has been to Cancun (pictured) – and, from the look of the website, probably had a hell of a lot of fun.

Set in the middle of the hotel complexes, it's perfectly located for tourists, so expect plenty here, particularly Americans who seem to go c-raaaayzee for the place. The music policy refuses to pin its badge on anything in particular, other than the decades, so expect seventies, eighties and nineties tunes mixed with some salsa and trance, apparently. All of which is gulped down as voraciously as the spirits and mixers that fly off the bar.

With people suspended from the rafters and a congo line on the bar top actually advertised rather than being an exuberant and occasional happenstance, you should go with plenty of energy in the bank. Fancy dress is also a regular, as are weird challenges, such as sliding down banisters holding a pile of glasses and, with Coco Bongo being named after an insane fictitious bar in Jim Carrey vehicle *The Mask*... well, you should be getting the point. **50**



15 Q'BA



Radial No 7, E Block, Connaught Place, New Delhi, Delhi, India
qba.co.in

The owners have prided themselves on a design that plays to the strengths of the space

Today's episode of the World's 50 Best Bars is brought to you by the letter 'Q'. That's right folks, say the name of this bar quickly and you'll muster thoughts of Daiquiris with Hemmingway, but look closer and you'll see it's spelled with a Q, all because the bar itself is in the shape of, well, the letter Q of course. Isn't that clever? Less clever but perhaps more impressive is the

size of this place. It stretches over 1,400sq ft and the owners have prided themselves on a design that plays to the strengths of the space. It's spread over four levels, complete with roof terrace.

Drinks quality might vary but, considering this is

in the heart of New Delhi, you won't be complaining when you realise you're surrounded by some of the more beautiful people in town.

Which is possibly why it keeps picking up Indian best bar awards. **50**

Matterhorn consistently earns accolades as New Zealand's finest imbibing retreat

16 MATTERHORN



106 Cuba Street, Wellington, New Zealand
matterhorn.co.nz



Things that were good in the 1960s include French New Wave (or La Nouvelle Vague for multilingual readers), walking on the moon, English football and the Matterhorn Bar.

Cinema seems to have gone a bit mainstream since then, the moon is a bit passé (assuming anyone ever really did walk on it) and as for English football? Well, the less said the better really.

But the Matterhorn in Wellington continues to thrive and, surprising though it might be to find it in Wellington, this remains one of the best bars in the world.

Its charms are manifold. Set up by two brothers in 1963, the place had the feel of a continental Swiss café (for the brothers were Swiss), with traditional garb for the waitresses and Swiss cheese on the menu.

It has changed hands a couple of times and enjoyed a few facelifts, but today it retains the ethos of decent food and drink and consistently earns accolades as New Zealand's finest imbibing retreat.

On the menu today you'll find treats ranging from the refined The Lavender Vesper, with Beefeater Crown Jewel gin, 42 Below vodka and lavender-infused Lillet Blanc, to the raucous Bling Bling, a \$111 Beachbum Zombie with Ron Zacapa 23 Year Old, Flor de Caña 21 Year Old and Wray & Nephew OP rums, Licor 43, chargrilled lemon, grilled pineapple, freshly pressed orange juice – all served in a silver trophy. And there's a healthy menu including bar snacks of the highest order, such as the tuna sashimi with wasabi cream & wakame and yellowtail kingfish with shaved rhubarb, grapefruit, ginger buckwheat & radish shoots. With a nice cozy atmosphere and excellent service on top, it remains one of the gems of the southern hemisphere. **50**

THERE'S A HEALTHY MENU INCLUDING BAR SNACKS OF THE HIGHEST ORDER

17 SKYE BAR

Unique Hotel, Av. Brigadeiro Luis Antonio, 4700 São Paulo, Brazil
unique.com.br

There's always something to celebrate about a rooftop bar with a swimming pool



A MARTINI WITH THE SUNSET IS A BEAUTIFUL THING

#17

There's not a lot that's unique about a rooftop bar with a swimming pool, yet there's always something to celebrate about it. Particularly when the rooftop is in a country where the weather is often found accommodating to a long drink and a couple of lengths. So Skye Bar deserves its plaudits, if only for the visionary who realised sunshine, views,

water and cocktails are a match made in (and in this case near) heaven.

And the views up at the Skye Bar are stunning. São Paulo is an incredible city, densely packed with high rise towers making Manhattan look spacious. The pool is framed with screens so you can take it all in and by night the lights are breathtaking.

Cocktails are another less than unique proposal when you get up here and they're priced accordingly – that is, they're pricey – but when they come with the view it's difficult to complain and a Martini with the sunset is a beautiful thing. There's also an award winning restaurant, though views means booking is essential. **50**

Zeta takes imbibers through classic cocktails and twists, as well as injecting some tiki fun



AMONG THE STAND-OUT TREATS ARE THE EXPERIMENTAL MOLECULAR EXPERIENCES

#18

18 ZETA BAR

Hilton Hotel, Level 4, 488 George Street, Sydney, Australia
zetabar.com.au

Sydney was pretty sexy already but they keep offering up even sexier bars in a bid to hammer home the point. Zeta is one of them and, as it takes residency in the Sydney Hilton, you should already be thinking about something rather grand. And you'd be right, this has five star luxury written all over it.

The drinks list was engineered by Grant Collins, one of *Drinks International's* favourite drinksmiths Down Under, and he knows his cocktail onions so expect a very competent array of drinks.

Among the stand-out treats are the experimental molecular experiences found in a palate cleansing "deconstructed" Mojito, Long Island Iced Tea Wine Gum and refreshing Pina Colada Sorbet with a roasted coconut foam, all served on a platter.

As well as these more unusual jaunts into the drinks world, Zeta takes imbibers through classic cocktails and twists, as well as injecting some tiki fun.

And this is all happening above street level – there's even a terrace to boot, so sexy people can feel sexy in a sexy alfresco environment. **50**

#19

WORTH A SECOND LOOK IS THE HUGE GLASS CHANDELIER THAT TAKES CEILING CENTRE STAGE

19 ENIGMA MARRIOTT

Juhu Tara Road, Mumbai
Marriott.co.uk



This remains a true nighttime experience for the Mumbai massive and faithful to the tunes of Asia

Part of the Marriott group, the venue brings a dose of luxury and prestige to Indian shores with the Juhu hotel perfectly positioned by the Arabian sea.

It has enjoyed a heyday or two in its time and for some it's not quite what it was, but if you fancy shaking your bits to some Hindi pop then this is the place to head for. This remains a true nighttime experience for the Mumbai massive and faithful to the tunes of Asia.

Described by its owners as "the ultimate hotspot

for Mumbai's party enthusiasts" it doesn't fall far from such ambitions with luxurious décor, plush seating and private booths delivering the standard club feel. Meanwhile, the spacious dance floor can accommodate those with the most aggressive

dance moves. Worth a second look is the huge glass chandelier that takes centre ceiling stage.

Meanwhile, drinks are as you'd expect of a hotel bar with a bit of glitz, so champagne and cocktails all the way. [50](#)

Despite the glamour and blue drinks, Schumann's American Bar is a no frills place

SCHUMANN BEGAN HIS LIFE IN FASHION AND HIS REPUTATION IN HIGH SOCIETY MIGHT WELL HAVE ENCOURAGED A FOLLOWING FROM FASHIONISTAS

#20

20 SCHUMANN'S BAR



Odeonsplatz 6, Munich
schumanns.de

A legendary haunt for legendary German names such as the wunderbar tennis player Boris Becker, but also celebrated by German drinks enthusiasts for its unwavering commitment to quality spirits.

Charles Schumann, whose name is on the bar, is a bit of a big deal when it comes to cocktails and has authored books on the subject, including the excellently illustrated American Bar.

Schumann began his life in fashion and his reputation in high society might well have encouraged a following from fashionistas, but he's come a long way since and his cocktail creations have been raising eyebrows along the way – the Swimming Pool being particularly noteworthy thanks to its blend of vodka, rum, coconut and blue curaçao.

Despite the glamour and the blue drinks, Schumann's American Bar is a no frills place beyond the drinks on offer.

Simple as it is though, everything is very effective and the bar is as polished and sophisticated as the guests, something that is exhibited in the prices on the 200-plus cocktails on the menu. [50](#)

WITH THE RECENT REFURBISHMENT, IT'S SURE TO ATTRACT NEW FANS IN THE FUTURE

TOP BARS

#21

21 LONSDALE



48 Lonsdale Road, Notting Hill
London, UK
thelonsdale.co.uk

Much of the glory at Lonsdale was earned through an incredible bar team and some masterfully mixed drinks

A mainstay on the West London bar trail this iconic venue has recently enjoyed a facelift and is slowly being restored to its former glories.

That awesome spacey ceiling has been given a clean but stays, as does the lengthy banquette – now dressed in a lush red snakeskin – while the bar offers up American diner-style seating so you can observe the team at work.

Much of the glory at Lonsdale was earned through an incredible bar team in fact, and some masterfully mixed drinks. The innovation and passion remains and what's interesting is the constant celebration of modern classics. The Loretto Lemonade for example was a winner in the 1997 Maker's Mark competition, won by its creator Jamie Terrel. It comprises bourbon shaken with melon liqueur, lime and apple juice,

served long and topped with ginger beer.

Elsewhere the Quiet Storm was created by Jason Fendick at Zeta in 1998 and shakes vodka with guava, lychee and pineapple juices, coconut cream and a squeeze of lime.

And, lest we forget, the outstanding Henry Besant's name is still a permanent fixture on the menu here. Besant worked with Charles Vexenat on a previous menu to create a quintessentially English list that went on to be globally celebrated.

While he is now better known for his penchant for tequila if you make it along to Lonsdale try the Elderflower Martini he created in 1997 -Bison Grass Vodka stirred with apple juice and elderflower cordial.

With drinks like these on the list it's no wonder Lonsdale remains a favourite for cocktails with the chic Notting Hill set and, with the recent refurbishment, it's sure to attract new fans in the future. 50

That you can sit by a pool in stunning South American sunshine and order a daiquiri is an asset

#22

THE BUILDING ATTEMPTS TO PAY HOMAGE TO THE PERIOD BEAUTY OF THE EARLY 20TH CENTURY

22 FOUR SEASONS



Posadas 1086 C1011ABB
Buenos Aires, Argentina
fourseasons.com/buenosaires

Another number and we have another hotel bar. Perhaps it should come as no surprise since those not native to Argentina may well have stayed at the Four Seasons if they've visited. Assuming they're pretty wealthy of course.

Naturally this is a bar that owes a lot to the hotel, opulent as it is and consistent on delivering you a drink with the service levels that have made the brand famous.

That you can sit by a pool in stunning South American sunshine and order a daiquiri is certainly an asset. And if you get to do it in one of the hotel's robes then all the better.

The building itself attempts to pay homage to the period beauty of the early 20th century and it's a French-style mansion of a place. The Dome bar is a touch more contemporary in feel, it's swirly-patterned carpet something that has become rather familiar in hotel bars around the world. Dark woods and expensive-looking fabrics catch the eye elsewhere, and well-manicured bartenders make sure all needs are catered for. Well, almost all. 50

More evidence the respondents to this poll don't simply expect the most discerning drinking experience from a bar, because Bubba's is about burgers, beer and basketball.

Bubba's could easily be something out of middle America, its familiar modern design a beacon for burger shack rather than cocktail den and the satellite dishes on the roof – so large they could

BUBBA'S COULD EASILY BE SOMETHING OUT OF MIDDLE AMERICA, ITS FAMILIAR MODERN DESIGN A BEACON FOR BURGER SHACK RATHER THAN COCKTAIL DEN

#23

23 BUBBA'S SPORTS BAR & RESTAURANT



Christ Church, Barbados
bubbassportsbar.net

Some people's idea of hell it might be, but if you're into sport and burgers then this is the place for you

probably be seen from space – are a fair indication of the visual commitment to something taking place on the other side of the world.

The carpet is as epic as the devotion to screens and the bar is lined with seats for the single man.

On a busy evening the place is packed with sports fans watching everything from Formula 1 to Premier League Football. Some people's idea of hell it might be, but if you're into sport and burgers then this is the place for you.

Talking of burgers, you need to try the Master Blaster burger and wash it down with one of the interesting cocktails – a Bubba-licious, which is essentially a Pina Colada or Bubba Floater, or Daiquiri. Or perhaps a Carib shandy... 50

The investment in the DJs and the sound system keeps the locals coming back for more each week



24 F BAR



50 B, The Ashok, Chanakyapuri, New Delhi, Delhi 110021, India
fbardelhi.com

With enough glitz to burn a hole in the retina, this place sparkles for Delhi's elite drinking squad. So much sparkle is there in fact that they need to spread the venue over three floors, the F Bar being the chosen favourite of the elite-ist.

Based towards the back of the Ashok Hotel it's clearly a club, although there are areas set aside for standing and drinking as well.

As you might expect then, the drinks are club standard rather than a Milk & Honey, so prepare yourself for a Malibu and Cointreau collection, but the investment in the DJs (including the sexiest DJ in the world apparently) and the sound system keeps the locals coming back for more each week.

It's said to be the favoured haunt of Indian A-listers and Bollywood stars, so they must be doing something right. If you make it then, expect disco drinks, a late night and aching joints or eardrums in the morning. 50

IT'S SAID TO BE THE FAVOURED HAUNT OF INDIAN A-LISTERS AND BOLLYWOOD STARS, SO THEY MUST BE DOING SOMETHING RIGHT

#24

25 BRAMBLE

16a Queen Street, Edinburgh, Scotland
bramblebar.co.uk

Edinburgh has, in the past few years, emerged as one of Europe's most dynamic drinking destinations and Bramble, burrowed in a basement beneath Queen Street, has played no small part in the imbibing revolution here.

Part Prohibition era and part labyrinthine lounge, it's only been open for four years but in that short time it's been awarded a host of industry gongs in recognition of its enlightened approach to drinks and, in particular, gin.

"Juniper juice" is the jewel in Bramble's crown and its influence, be it London, sloe or otherwise, is apparent in a number of the lovingly crafted cocktails including the bar's liquid namesake – created by Dick Bradsell in the 1980s. Bramble has also breathed life back into a number of forgotten classics, while the Teatime Toddy Martini – using Hendrick's gin, honey and chamomile flowers – is an exquisite antidote to Edinburgh's less than accommodating climate.

It's worth noting too that founders Jason Scott

Bramble has only been open four years but in that short time it's been awarded a host of industry gongs

#25

and Mike Aikman haven't lost themselves in drinking nostalgia. Late on and at the weekends, this gin joint gets jumping with DJs, dancing and a music policy restricted to "tunes with soul".

They've also opened the equally impressive Saint, also in Edinburgh and with more of a gastropub vibe. They are clearly able to deliver a discerning experience for a wide range of customers. 50



This Catalan cocktail bar, occupying a corner of the Eixample, does exactly what it says on the tin.

Founder Javier de las Muelas is mad about the Martini and his bar, considered by many to be Barcelona's best, is a Mecca for Martini-lovers and attracts an older, more assured and appreciative crowd than most.

It recently announced that more than a million Martinis had been stirred, not shaken, behind its bar. Quite something when you witness the incredible attention to detail with which they're crafted.

While you can certainly ask for a Martini drier

#26

IT RECENTLY ANNOUNCED
THAT MORE THAN A
MILLION MARTINIS HAD
BEEN STIRRED, NOT
SHAKEN, BEHIND ITS BAR

than a camel's flip-flop, it's by no means the only way it's served. In addition to the traditional, well-trodden twists, bartenders play around with jellies to create new angles on the classic while other cocktail creations are delivered to drinkers in a host of unusual receptacles.

These El Bulli-style adventures aside, the bar is quintessentially classic with impeccably trained, white-coated bartenders, plush leather seats surrounded by dark wood and a wealth of martini memorabilia adorning the walls.

Annexed at the back of the bar there's an entrance to a fabulous restaurant called Speakeasy where bottles are stacked high and wide. 50

26 DRY MARTINI BAR

Aribau 162 Barcelona, Spain
drymartinibcn.com

The bar is quintessentially classic, with impeccably trained, white-coated bartenders

TOP BARS

27 CAFE CAPRICE

37 Victoria Road, Cape Town
8005, South Africa
cafecaprice.co.za



A pot of gold on the edge of the rainbow nation, Café Caprice does everything with unprecedented beauty

It's sad but true, there are some people in the world who have to rely on their inner rather than their outer beauty. If you're one of them, if you fell out of the ugly tree and hit all the branches on the way down, then perhaps you should think twice before checking out Café Caprice in arguably Cape Town's most affluent suburb.

A pot of glamorous gold found on the edge of the rainbow nation, Café Caprice is a bar that does everything with unprecedented beauty. Expect celebrities, models, sports stars, chiseled jaws and bronzed bodies, designer threads and Gucci sunglasses. Heck, even the bartenders are easy on the eye – one of them was recently voted the hottest bartender in South Africa by *Cosmopolitan*.

But the beauty of the voluptuous visitors, and those working in the venue, is more than rivalled by the incredible vista. There can be few settings more stunning than this. Perched on the immaculate white sands of Camps Bay, fringed by palm trees and almost touching the turquoise waters of the Atlantic, it's a spectacular spot to sip a cocktail and watch the sun slide down the back of the horizon.

It's little surprise that the cocktail collection leans heavily towards the easy-drinking, thirst-slaking sort. The Mojito is well represented with two twists on the original – the Rockstar Mojito uses vanilla vodka and is charged with champagne. Long Island Ice Teas are pimped up too while the shorter drinks are kept quite classic – be it a Margarita or a Cosmopolitan. 50



THE BEAUTY OF THE VOLUPTUOUS VISITORS, AND THOSE WORKING IN THE VENUE, IS MORE THAN RIVALLED BY THE INCREDIBLE VISTA

#27

The Buddha Bar blueprint has been pocketing prophet-themed profit for quite some time now with venues scattered all over the world. But in terms of unashamed and unadulterated opulence, no other outpost comes close to this one in Dubai. Opened back in 2005 within the grounds of the Grosvenor House Hotel, it's still rightly regarded as the leading drinking and dining destination for Dubai's movers and sheikers.

It's an enormous endeavour that overlooks the marina jutting out into the Arabian Sea and incorporates a restaurant, a bar and a lounge spread over two floors. It's dripping in decadence, with deep, dark mahogany and funky plush fabrics. Exotic art

#28

and ornaments from the Orient abound alongside Khmer statues – all set to a chilled soundtrack of funky house tunes. And, of course, a giant Buddha overlooks the whole opulent operation.

A globetrotting gastronomic journey awaits diners with dishes inspired by both exotic and

IT'S DRIPPING IN DECADENCE WITH DEEP, DARK MAHOGANY AND FUNKY, PLUSH FABRICS

European cuisine while drinkers can sip on a wide choice of cocktails dispatched from a busy and bustling bar filled with Dubai's well-heeled beautiful people.

Unsurprisingly, to big it up in Buddha Bar you need to be in a position to dish out the dirhams – and plenty of them. 50

28 BUDDHA BAR

Grosvenor House, Dubai Marina, Dubai
buddha-bar.com



A globetrotting gastronomic journey awaits diners with dishes inspired by exotic and European cuisine

#29

If you don't like heights then get out of the kitchen. Or something like that. Whatever, this place is high, it's 200m above sea level in fact, which is, like, really high.

Bars that suspend themselves at such a distance from the ground are always likely to enjoy plaudits, simply because you can see loads of stuff while you enjoy a drink. The idea that you'd build something this tall then plonk a bar on top of it is a serious testament to drinking, so it's no surprise to see more than one bar of this style in the Top 50.

Skyview Bar doesn't rely on loftiness alone though,

THE IDEA THAT YOU'D BUILD SOMETHING THIS TALL THEN PLONK A BAR ON TOP OF IT IS A SERIOUS TESTAMENT TO DRINKING

it also mixes one or two cocktails and reports are they're some of the strongest in town. So worth facing your fear of tall things if you needed a reason. Another is the adjacent Al Muntaha restaurant, which tends to pop up in decent eating polls. Meanwhile, they've been known to have live music and, of course, the luxury of the place attracts the wealthy and pretty people like moths to a flame.

All good then, but there's a no-trainers rule to be wary of – it'd be annoying to get to the top and be told you can't come in, so make sure you wear shoes. We'd go with a pair of Pradas. **50**

29 SKYVIEW BAR

Jumeirah Beach Road, Dubai,
PO Box 7414
jumeirah.com



the luxury of the place attracts the wealthy and pretty people like moths to a flame

The Mount Nelson is a bit of an epic freckle on the face of Cape Town. It's pink, which is obviously a lovely colour for it, if a little startling, and it has enjoyed its residency in the South African city for more than 100 years now.

In terms of drinks heritage the Nelson should have a fair share as it was opened in 1899 and, as cocktail enthusiasts will tell you, this was a golden age for the mixed drink.

Among the many food and drink offerings is the Planet Bar, an intimate little space towards the back of the building with reasonably useful cocktails and a beautiful terrace to enjoy out the back. Lovely if you're looking for a laid back but luxurious retreat in the sunshine.

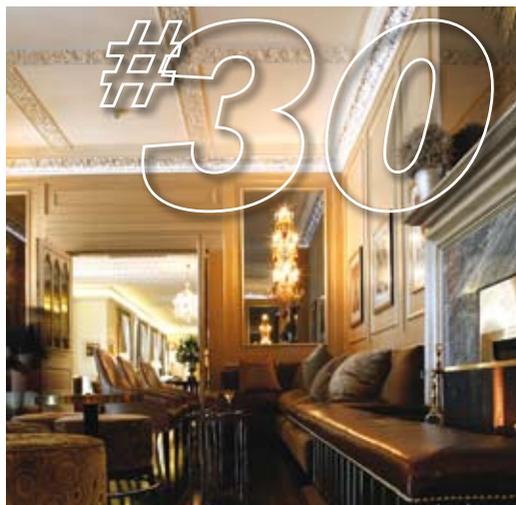
If you make it in you'll be drinking in a bar where some fairly illustrious feet have trod – His Holiness

30 PLANET BAR



Mount Nelson Hotel, 76 Orange Street,
Cape Town, South Africa, 8001
mountnelson.co.za

the Dalai Lama, Mr Nelson Mandela and Sir Winston Churchill to name but three. What will you drink? Well, champagne fans will enjoy themselves – there's gallons of the stuff here. Cocktail fans might prefer it served in an Absinthe Makes the Heart Grow Fonder, complete with a slug of absinthe and some sugar. **50**



Planet Bar's terrace is lovely if you're looking for a laid back but luxurious retreat in the sunshine



IF YOU MAKE IT IN YOU'LL BE DRINKING IN A BAR WHERE SOME FAIRLY ILLUSTRIOUS FEET HAVE TROD – HIS HOLINESS THE DALAI LAMA, MR NELSON MANDELA AND SIR WINSTON CHURCHILL TO NAME BUT THREE

THE WORLD'S **50** BEST BARS



#31



#32

Completing the list of The World's 50 Best Bars 2010



#34



#35

31 BLUE FROG, MUMBAI

Tulsi Pipe Rd, Mumbai, Maharashtra
400013, India
bluefrog.co.in

With a production company and record label the Blue Frog sets out its stall in music firmly. Head to the bar though and you'll also find a few drinking choices to accompany the tunes.

32 CITY SPACE, MOSCOW

Swissotel Krasnye Holmy, 52
Kosmodamiansky Embankment,
swissotel.com

Featured as one of the best bars in

Moscow in *Drinks International's* recent Russia feature this is a swanky and high bar. Benefiting from the touch of class Bek Narzi brings to proceedings, it is proudly offering some of the best drinks in town.

33 STANDARD BAR

550 S. Flower St, Los Angeles, US
standardhotels.com

Los Angeles is fast becoming a city to watch when it comes to discerning drinking and the Standard Bar fits in with a host of excellent hotel bars, with sixties chic and fantastic views.

34 1806

169 exhibition Street Melbourne,
Australia
1806.com.au

It takes its name from the year the word "cocktail" first appeared in print and doesn't disappoint. Sebastian Reaburn set the drinks standards and previously earned the Tales of the Cocktail Best Cocktail List award for his efforts at 1806.

35 CHARLIE'S BAR

Pilestræde 33, Copenhagen, Denmark
charlies.dk

No great surprise to see this bar in the

Top 50 – it was named number one in the entire Nordic region when *Drinks International* ran a regional poll there earlier in the year. The reason for it's success? It serves beer and they like beer here in Copenhagen. With more than 100 craft breweries throughout Denmark and brewers behind ales from the likes of Norrebro and Mikkeler gaining international repute, it's an exciting time for artisan beer and Charlie's celebrates the budding local scene. It's a fantastically cosy little beer haven, and one for true drinks aficionados.



Completing the list of The World's 50 Best Bars 2010

#38

36 BARASTI BAR

Le Meridien Mina Seyahi Beach Resort & Marina, Al Sufouh Road, Dubai
starwoodhotels.com

It's all about the beach with this one and, thanks to the hotel's location, that's about all you'll have on your mind. Barasti is a mainstay of the Dubai coast and one of the best places to sip a drink, smoke a shisha pipe and indulge in some decent bar food.

37 BERT'S BAR

Rockley, Christ Church, Barbados
bertsbarbados.com

For \$14 you can get a Toasted Almond

– Kahlua, Amaretto & ice cream. They also sell burgers here. And show live sport. And it's in Barbados, where the sun is usually found to be shining. And sometimes, that's all you need for a good bar.

38 SLING IN

Mikonkatu 8, Helsinki, Finland
slingin.fi

Set up by Jacek Piasecki and Kalle Alajoki this is a longtime refuge for bartenders and a mainstay of the Helsinki imbibing scene for 11 years. In that time it has been a home to more flair experts than a 70s disco and the cocktails here

have always inspired good times. The namesake Singapore Sling takes top spot on the menu and is kept company with some feverishly fun drinks, the Golden Shower, Smooth Criminal, 69 Ice Tea and BB Colada.

39 BUDDHA BAR

Kreschatyk St, 14, Kiev, Ukraine
buddhabar.com.ua

More Buddha Bar fun and games, this time in the Ukraine. Expect the trademark south east Asian décor, complete with religious statues watching over you as you commit various acts of indecency on the dance floor. Disco

drinks and sexy people complete the picture.

40 HEMINGWAY BAR

Hotel Ritz, 15 Place Vendôme, 75001 Paris, France
www.ritzparis.com

Named after the writer who whiled away so many hours in the hotel, this is a bar rich in heritage and quality alike. It's a piano bar, so expect some music from the ivories while you're sipping a cocktail and it's quite a small space so you might have to wait your turn for a drink, but then when they come in over €20 you'll possibly only have time for one.

THE WORLD'S **50** BEST BARS



Completing the list of The World's 50 Best Bars 2010



41 BAR DO COPA

Copacabana Palace, Avenida Atlântica, 1702, Rio De Janeiro, Brazil copacabanapalace.com

Found in one of the best hotels in Rio, this place stands out in particular for its 10,000 fibre-optics that make it look like a room full of stars. They suggest the Fred Astaire Martini, made with bourbon and blackberry cream, or a Ginger Rogers of gin, apricot and lime. But a Caipirinha should do just fine.

42 LE LION

Rathausstraße 3, Hamburg lelion.net

Put together by the globally renowned bartender Jörg Meyer, this bar delivers

some of the best drinks in Hamburg, Germany, and indeed the world. It should come as no surprise that it was recognised in the prestigious Tales of the Cocktails as Best New Bar two years ago and since then it has delivered on all the promise. A delight for discerning drinkers, all the bartenders are expertly qualified in the history of spirits and can deliver a mix to please just about anyone.

43 BUDDHA BAR

8 Victoria Embankment London, England buddha-bar.com

Another city another Buddha – he's more omnipotent than Allah and God

put together. Indeed this brand is so popular they've even managed to get two of them on consecutive pages in this supplement. So, you know the drill – big spend on décor, amazing space, disco drinks, party people. The only real question is why this venue didn't rank as highly as Paris, or Kiev for that matter.

44 STAR BAR

Sankosha Building B1F 1-5-13 Ginza, Tokyo starbar.jp

As all sensible men tell their lady friends, good things come in small packages and Star Bar is no exception. This bar's reputation grows year on year and the

Japanese set would no doubt expect it to have placed higher had more bar professionals from the western world made it out there. It's all about the drinks here, so sit and savour should you make it.

45 MANGO'S

900 Ocean Drive, Florida, US mangotropicalcafe.com

Evidence that the voters have a truly eclectic taste, Mango's big claim to fame is the cabaret night and Mojitos room, so expect a party. Sat on South Beach you can expect a full-on crowd who, it would seem, have very little to do on a Sunday morning. Not even putting shelves up by the looks of it.

THE WORLD'S **50** BEST BARS



Completing the list of The World's 50 Best Bars 2010



#46

46 QUO VADIS

London

quovadisoho.co.uk

Fast becoming one of the number one haunts for visitors to London, this has for a long time boasted one of the finest bar teams in town. Although it's moderately easier for bar professionals with good contacts in London, this one remains a members' bar so it's not always the easiest to get into. If you do though, rest assured you'll have an outstanding drink.

47 BOÈME

Via Velletri, 13, Rome, Italy

boeme.it

Previously called Alien, this bar placed highly in the *Drinks International* special on Italian bars earlier this year so it comes as no surprise to see it sneak into the Top 50. Like a number of venues to feature this year, it earned many of its plaudits thanks to the vibrant club scene and, rather than alien, it seems most of the regular patrons feel right at home.

48 NOTTINGHAM FOREST

Viale Piave, 1, Milan, Italy

nottingham-forest.com

With between 400 and 500 rums or whiskies and a devotion to modern mixology this is a must-visit for bar professionals. Dario Comini, bartender, author and owner, has become one of the most revered voices in drinks culture across his native land and is helping to take Italian bartending beyond the hotel style that the natives here have perfected and exported over the years.

49 SALOTTO 42

Piazza di Pietra 42, Rome, Italy

salotto42.it

The Italians are coming through thick and fast at the end of this poll and here's another. A fine example of modern style, Salotto delivers a coffee bar during the day, before coming alive for the cocktail crowd in the evening. That it's owned by Swedish model Malin Persson possibly helps with the aesthetics, both the design and the patrons.



#48

50 THE IVY BAR & LOUNGE

320/330 George St, Sydney, Australia

merivale.com

It's one of the biggest venues in Sydney so if you've managed to miss it when visiting you possibly need to get those specs sorted. Big doesn't necessarily mean good of course, but as it happens the voters think this place is both. Bar and lounge get separate titles because they are separate places, the bar being the modern sister space to the lounge's 1950s chic. There's also a den that brings up the rear with some art deco decadence.

TOP 50 BARS

- 1 Milk & Honey, London
- 2 PDT
- 3 Harry's Bar, Venice
- 4 Milk & Honey, New York
- 5 Buddha Bar, Paris
- 6 Pegu Club
- 7 Death & Co
- 8 Employees Only
- 9 Harry's New York Bar
- 10 Academy
- 11 The Connaught
- 12 Der Raum
- 13 Black Pearl
- 14 Coco Bongo
- 15 Q'Ba
- 16 Matterhorn
- 17 Sky Bar Unique Hotel
- 18 Zeta Bar Sydney Hilton
- 19 Enigma Marriott Hotel
- 20 Schumann's Bar
- 21 The Lonsdale
- 22 Four Seasons
- 23 Bubba's Bar
- 24 F Bar
- 25 Bramble
- 26 Dry Martini Bar
- 27 Cafe Caprice
- 28 Buddha Bar, Dubai
- 29 Skyview Bar
- 30 Planet Bar
- 31 Blue Frog
- 32 City Space
- 33 Standard Bar
- 34 1806
- 35 Charlie's Bar
- 36 Barasti Bar
- 37 Bert's Bar
- 38 Sling In
- 39 Buddha Bar, Kiev
- 40 Hemmingway Bar
- 41 Bar do Copa
- 42 Le Lion
- 43 Buddha Bar London
- 44 Star Bar, Tokyo
- 45 Mango's
- 46 Quo Vadis
- 47 Bòeme
- 48 Nottingham Forest
- 49 Salotto 42
- 50 The Ivy

Behind the figures

The global bar scene is constantly evolving. Last year, only seven countries received more than one vote in the Top 50. All seven of them appear on the list again this year but they are now joined by India, Italy, Brazil, Barbados and Germany. In 2009, Australia and England shared the top spot. This year, the US and the UK share the spotlight in the top 50, though if we were to break this down, it's more like New York and London that share the spotlight, with six votes for London bars and five for New York bars. The additions are one for Edinburgh, one for LA and one for Miami.

Latin America

A new region for 2010, Latin America is a powerhouse when it comes to consumption and the big spirits companies, including Diageo, are spending a lot of time and money there. Brazil features the most consistently on the 2010 list and it will be interesting to see which countries rise in next year's ranks. This is definitely a region to watch and, even better, go drinking in.

LATIN AMERICA

- 1 **Coco Bongo**, Cancun
- 2 **Skye Bar (Unique Hotel)** Sao Paulo
- 3 **Bubba's Bar**, Christ Church
- 4 **Bert's Bar**, Worthing, Barbados
- 5 **Milk & Honey**, London
- 6 **Bar Do Copa (Copacabana Palace)**, Rio de Janeiro
- 7 **Harry's Bar**, Venice
- 8 **Mango's**, Miami
- 9 **PDT**, New York
- 10 **Bar D'Hotel (Marina Palace)**, Rio de Janeiro

REGIONAL FAVOURITES

The Top 10 bar choices from each of the four regions

Asia Pacific

Milk & Honey London is top of the Asia Pacific pops again this year, though the rest of the region's choices are rather different. It's good to see a selection of New Delhi and Mumbai bars on the list and they are joined by some of last year's favourites, including Black Pearl in Melbourne and The Ivy in Sydney.

North America

This year's North American list is hugely different to last year's. Not one of the 2010 Top 10 votes went to New York. Last year, seven of the 10 went to the so-called cocktail capital. An exciting newcomer to the list, the Franklin Mortgage & Investment Company, is one to keep an eye on.

Europe

There are a few changes to the top spots here. Last year, PDT took pole position, with Milk & Honey New York second and its London namesake third. Largely though, the transatlantic love affair continues and the European respondents fell for all things west.

Africa, Middle East

With only one exception, Dubai and Cape Town take the spotlight. This was a similar story last year, though the actual bars were different and, in 2009, Buddha Bar Dubai took the top spot. The new names could be down to the rate of growth and bar openings in these regions.

ASIA PACIFIC

- 1 **Milk & Honey**, London
- 2 **Q'Ba**, New Delhi
- 3 **Enigma (Marriott Hotel)**, Mumbai
- 4 **F Bar**, New Delhi
- 5 **Hard Rock Café**, Mumbai
- 6 **Blue Frog**, Mumbai
- 7 **Harry's New York Bar**
- 8 **Black Pearl**, Melbourne
- 9 **Star Bar**, Tokyo
- 10 **The Ivy**, Sydney

NORTH AMERICA

- 1 **Skybar**, Los Angeles
- 2 **Drink**, Boston
- 3 **The Franklin Mortgage & Investment Company**, Philadelphia
- 4 **Shakespeare's Pub**, San Diego
- 5 **Seven Grand**, Los Angeles
- 6 **XS**, Las Vegas
- 7 **A Single Pebble**, Burlington, Vermont
- 8 **Adobe's Gilas**, Orlando
- 9 **Alembic**, San Francisco
- 10 **Big Star**, Chicago

EUROPE

- 1 **Milk & Honey**, London
- 2 **PDT**, New York
- 3 **Harry's Bar**, Venice
- 4 **Milk & Honey**, New York
- 5 **Buddha Bar**, Paris
- 6 **Academy**, formerly LAB, London
- 7 **Pegu Club**, New York
- 8 **Harry's New York Bar**, Paris
- 9 **Death & Co**, New York
- 10 **Le Lion**, Hamburg

AFRICA & MIDDLE EAST

- 1 **Cafe Caprice**, Cape Town
- 2 **Barasti Bar**, Dubai
- 3 **Buddha Bar**, Dubai
- 4 **VU's Bar**, Dubai
- 5 **Chevelle**, Cape Town
- 6 **Tiger Tiger**, Cape Town
- 7 **Mitchell's**, Cape Town
- 8 **Nelson's Bar**, Dubai
- 9 **Nicci Beach**, Johannesburg
- 10 **The Fez Club**, Cape Town

Last year, New York had nine in the Top 50 list and four in the Top 10 and was crowned style bar capital of the world. It's a similar story this year with five of the Top 10 bars in the undisputed bar hub, the Big Apple.

700 bartenders from 50 countries voted in the poll and the changes and additions at the top are more likely due to increased global awareness of bar culture, more bar openings and countries becoming popular holiday destinations, rather than a drop in standards at previous top bars.

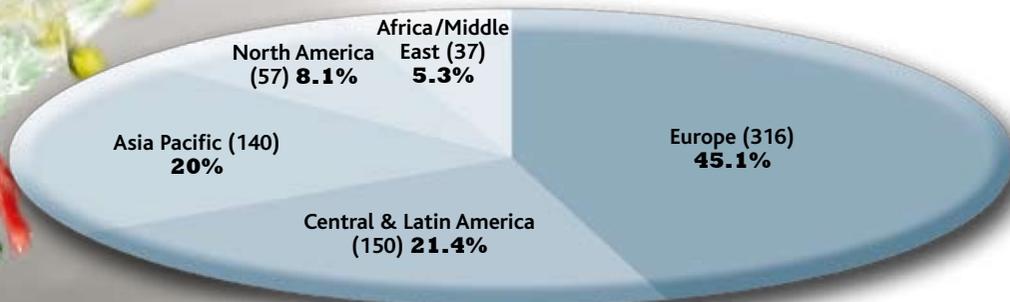
This year, most of the votes were collected in Europe, with new region Central & Latin America adding more than 20% of votes to the mix. The rate of growth in this region suggests we can only expect more from Central & Latin America next year. **50**

Lucy Britner

FLAG COUNT
NUMBER OF ENTRIES
IN THE TOP 50

- UK **7**
- US **7**
- Australia **5**
- India **4**
- Italy **4**
- France **3**
- Dubai **3**
- Brazil **2**
- Barbados **2**
- South Africa **2**
- Germany **2**
- 1 EACH:**
Mexico, Argentina, New Zealand, Russia, Denmark, Finland, Ukraine, Japan, Spain.

REGIONAL BREAKDOWN OF SURVEY RESPONDENTS



UP AND COMING

Ones to watch

The quality of bars featured in our survey is incredibly high and some deserving cases did not get a mention for one reason or another. We thought it only fair to include a few of the ones we expect to make the Top 50 in the future

iStockphoto



HEMINGWAY ↑
84 Victoria Park Rd, London England

Hemingway in Hackney is the brainchild of four friends who previously cut their teeth with Jonathan Downey at the Match Bar. Their new creation is a glorious reinvention of a down-at-heel pub, somewhere you could head for an incredibly discerning pint of beer, but with an excellent selection of bourbons and other spirits, as well as some incredibly tasty upmarket grub. As the Hackney area continues to evolve into some weirdly über-chic London hangout, these guys could be right on the money with their timing. Here you have all the ingredients for cool and we're delighted to say they deliver.

LANI KAI
525 Broome St., nr. Thompson, New York

At the time of going to print Julie Reiner, the force behind such New York luminaries as Flatiron and the outstanding Clover Club (how is that not in the Top 50 by the way?), opened the doors at Lani Kai. Taking on the old Tailor site, the bar has a Pacific twist which looked to be a bit more focused than a tiki party bar, with Reiner's own Hawaiian upbringing sure to have an impact. Based on what she has achieved before now, we'd suggest it's well worth a look.

FORTY FOUR AT ROYALTON

44 West 44th Street, New York City, US
royaltonhotel.com

Part of the Morgans Hotel Group, the drinks list in this place was put together by a group of bartenders known as The Cocktail Collective. In short, this includes Richard Boccato from Dutch Kills in New York City; John Lermayer from The Florida Room in South Beach and Woodward in Boston; Simon Ford, a global cocktail ambassador based in New York City; Willy Shine from Contemporary Cocktails Inc in New York City; Misty Kalkofen from Drink in Boston; and Eric Alperin from The Varnish in historic downtown Los Angeles. These dudes are pretty big hitters so we'll leave it at that and guarantee that, if nothing else, expect the drinks to be killer.

LA DESCARGA

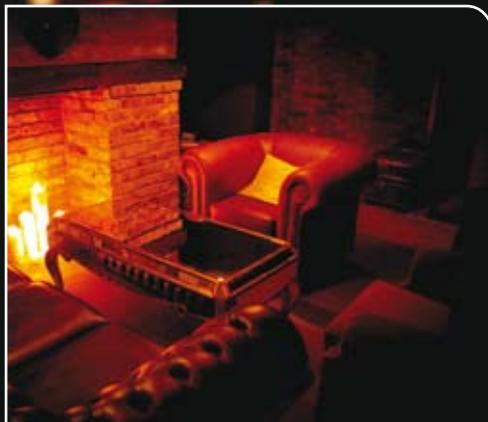
1159 North Western Avenue
Los Angeles, California
ladescargala.com

In a recent conversation with Jonathan Downey, the mastermind behind this year's winner and the new Starland Social Club in West London (also worth checking out incidentally), he expressed an interest in the LA bar scene. It is, he suggested, one of the most exciting cities for new bars right now and La Descarga could support this opinion. All reports indicate that this is a bar where you can get a decent drink and have an exceptionally good time.

SYDNEY

As in the entire city

Bartender Jay Decker recently returned from a stint of travel there and was working in the Ivy, an example of the big, brash hotel style bars that have been the standard offering in Sydney for some time now. But as Decker explained, recent changes in legislation make it possible to open new and smaller drinking holes there now and this has already seen a few interesting new bars pop up. Says Decker: "The pay out there is really great as well, and people tip. With the exchange rate as it is I'd encourage bartenders in London to consider heading out there, it's likely to become a very exciting scene in the coming years." Elsewhere in Oz, Mick Formosa of Mïet Hennessy advised readers to check out the Berlin bar in Melbourne. Not the easiest to find, it's described as "a timeless encapsulation of postmodern German culture". There's a focus on traditional craft drinks and an emphasis on classic customer service here and it already has them excited Down Under.



← PURL

50/54 Blandford Street,
Marylebone, London
purl-london.com

There is still a vivid captivation with science and drinks and this interest comes alive in Purl. With tiny balls of mango and pine caviar and nitrogen baths on the menu this is an ambitious project set up by a talented group of former bartenders. The space is as interesting as the menu, far from the often contrived décor of wannabe speakeasies there is a genuine sense of the lost and found here and you believe that, whatever else, these guys are at least doing exactly what they set out to.

And the ones that got away...

The appearance of a number of clubs and even sports bars in this year's Top 50 gives us a refreshing perspective on how the global industry perceives a good night out and is a reminder that, for many, the quality of drinks is not always what makes a great bar.

Even so, there were a number of venues we had still expected to see on there.

The **Experimental Cocktail Club** in Paris was an unusual omission, particularly as voters seemed to have been to Paris. It's a fantastic little bar with excellent drinks and can keep customers entertained from 7pm to 2am on a Friday or Saturday. There are whispers that a reimagining of the concept could be making its way to Covent Garden in London over the next 12 months, so keep your eyes peeled.

Elsewhere the London scene continues to set very high standards in the global bar world, **69 Colebrooke Row** and the **Portobello Star** (where else in the world would a discerning cocktail tavern cover the entire bar in chicken wire and have a Coors Light night?) are both well worth a visit if you're in town and Jonathan Downey has recently given the Match Bar a facelift to create **Giant Robot**, with more sprucing up planned for the Player as well. Legendary bartender Dick Bradsell opened the Player and he's recently been holding court around the corner in Soho's El Camion, also well worth a view. It has been argued by many that London offers the most exciting cocktail scene, plus there's the great pubs, so it was interesting to see London



Experimental
Cocktail Club

lacking in the poll.

In New York and LA the list of bars missed is also evident, and probably too long to mention, but certainly the lack of placing for The Varnish in LA is an oversight and it should be creeping on here somewhere.

Then there's the **Merchant Hotel Bar** in Belfast, voted at Tales as the Best Hotel Bar in the World two years ago and still an incredible example of its type.



Merchant Bar



69 Colebrooke Row

Berlin was also strangely absent from the list, the Berlin Bar Show has been well supported by global industry types and should be top of the list if you plan to get out there.

In Cape Town **Asoka** remains the best place for both a drink and a good night out and, although a worthy contender, it was a surprise to see it pipped by Planet Bar.

But that's what makes this such an interesting read and if we simply put together our favourite bars it wouldn't be particularly controversial. The list should spark debate and we look forward to hearing your own views should you get a chance to send them on.



Match Group founder Jonathan Downey told us in this section last year that a great bar is made by “the people who go there and the people who work there”. So, we thought it was time to talk to the men who mix the drinks at Milk & Honey

ADAM WYATT-JONES, BARTENDER, EIGHT MONTHS AT MILK & HONEY

Wyatt-Jones says he wanted to work at the bar for the experience. He said: “It’s a style of service I’d never experienced and I wanted to learn. We’re the best because of the attention to detail customers like but don’t necessarily have to pay attention to.”

RYAN WEAL, BAR BACK, FIVE MONTHS AT MILK & HONEY

“I’m the glue that keeps this place together,” jokes Weal, who keeps the bars going and does odd jobs around the venue. “It’s a welcoming place. The atmosphere, the team, the brilliant drinks all make it one of the best bars in the world.”

DURHAM ATKINSON, GENERAL MANAGER, 19 MONTHS AT MILK & HONEY

Atkinson says the lack of complacency keeps Milk & Honey at the forefront of bar culture.

“It’s important to our future success that we continue to question everything we do and give it meaning.”

BOBBY HIDDLESTON, BARTENDER, FOUR MONTHS AT MILK & HONEY

Previously at 64th & Social, Clapham, Hiddleston says he wants to continue improving standards in bartending.

When asked about his favourite cocktail, he replies: “I rarely say no to a Tom Collins.”

DAVID FISHER, ASSISTANT GENERAL MANAGER, ONE YEAR AT MILK & HONEY

Australia-born Fisher has worked at Sydney’s top drinking dens, the Beresford Hotel and the Loft.

He says: “So many things make this bar great but mainly it’s the attention to detail. People are happy to be here. So many people take hospitality for granted but it’s a real skill.”

ALASTAIR BURGESS, BARTENDER, THREE MONTHS AT MILK & HONEY

Burgess wants to brush up on his bartending skills before opening his own place. “The greatest thing about Milk & Honey is the lack of pretension and the honest approach,” he adds. 

(l-r): Adam Wyatt-Jones, Ryan Weal, Durham Atkinson, Bobby Hiddleston, David Fisher, Alastair Burgess