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DINING + NIGHTLIFE / LOVE ME (BAR)TENDER: TOP COCKTAIL CREATORS

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Love Me (bar)Tender: Top Cocktail Creators

BY HILARY WEISSMAN



Fiola's well-stocked bar

Poste Moderne Brasserie

Jason Wiles has been putting the "pro" back into Prohibition-style cocktails at Poste since 2009. His Geaux Figure cocktail boasts unexpected hints of fig, while other creations feature vodkas infused with kumquat, bacon, or chili peppers. *555 Eighth St. NW, 202-783-6060*

Hank's Oyster Bar

Hank's Oyster Bar mixologist Megan Coyle packs quite the punch: Her signature drinks include several punches, like the Fish House, with peach brandy, rum, cognac, sugar, and lemon, and the Church Lady, with vodka, sparkling wine, sherbet, and fresh fruit juices. *1624 Q St. NW, 202-462-4265*

Bibiana Osteria Enoteca

Francesco Amodeo, Bibiana's wine director and general manager, specializes in aged cocktails. One of his aged-spirit specialties is his version of a Negroni, made with Bombay Sapphire, Luxardo bitters, and Cocchi sweet vermouth. *1100 New York Ave. NW, 202-216-9550*

PX

Todd Thrasher's speakeasy has made quite a few short lists as the ne plus ultra of artisan cocktails in the metro area. Try Las Ramblas, with house-made cola and Barbancourt rum, and the tropical Holly-hocktail, with hibiscus, coconut water, Cruzan rum, Canton ginger, and cognac. Of course, there is also the famed Smoker's Delight, a delightfully scorching mixture of steeped tobacco, bourbon, honey, and lemon juice. *728 King St., Alexandria, 703-299-8384*

Eamonn's A Dublin Chipper

Clinton Terry is Thrasher's right-hand man at this shared location. He is also the champion of the 2011 Quill Cocktail Competition, thanks to his Tommy's Apple of Grenada, and was recently recognized at the Peruvian Embassy's Pisco Stand-off for "most creativity." *728 King St., Alexandria, 703-299-8384*

AKA White House

Look to bartenders Jennifer Girardi and Melani Mennella to serve you tasty tipples at a.lounge. Girardi's signature cocktail, Penicillin, contains Japanese whiskey, a smoky Scotch float, ginger, and honey. *1710 H St. NW, 202-904-2500*

The Gibson

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White House Correspondents' Dinner Afterparty

Capitol File hosted its seventh annual WHCD afterparty with guests including Claire Danes, Ginnifer Goodwin, and more.

Bartender Alex Hecht describes the drink menu here as a nod to turn-of-the-century libations, but with a modern twist. He's known for turning concepts into creative tipples, like his signature creation, Vinnie's on 187th, a mix of Peruvian pisco, Fernet Branca, egg white, Carpano Antica formula, lime juice, and pineapple syrup. *2009 14th St. NW, 202-232-2156*

Oyamel

The president and founder of the DC Craft Bartenders Guild, Owen Thompson is also the lead bartender at José Andrés's Think Food Group, for which his "Farm to Bar" series of weekly cocktails features ingredients from the Penn Quarter market. Here at Oyamel, try the Joven Avocado: avocado, grapefruit juice, Cocchi Americano, kosher salt, and Hellfire bitters. *401 Seventh St. NW, 202-628-1005*

Off the Record

Ask barkeep David Metzner for his namesake David's Washington, a sugar-rimmed glass of Absolut Citron, limoncello, Chambord, and sour blend, and the apropos Presidential Martini, made with Belvedere vodka and blue-cheese-stuffed olives, at this elegant spot. *800 16 St. NW, 202-638-6600*

Fiola

Bar manager Jeff Faile is never far from the counter, often creating original drinks for his customers that rely heavily on gin and rye whiskey. He has also crafted a cocktail tasting menu of dishes paired specially with his libations. *601 Pennsylvania Ave. NW, 202-628-2888*

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