



7 Retro Cocktails, Back from the Dead

This year, bartenders are stirring (and shaking) new life into long-forgotten and misunderstood drinks like Cosmos, White Russians, and other drinks your mom and pop drank in the '70s and '80s. A Long Island Iced Tea you'd actually enjoy? That's a New Year's resolution we can all get behind.

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Recently, bartenders have taken it upon themselves to give a number of the lamest cocktails out there their own chance for self-improvement. Take the Long Island Iced Teas, Cosmopolitans, White Russians, and fruity frozen daiquiris of the world, which either fell (hard) out of style, became tainted over time, or simply come with too many flashbacks to underage raging and bad decisions. These are the cocktails that have been relegated to the philistines—that is, until these bartenders got their hands on them.

"Fashion repeats itself, and so do cocktails," says Kevin Peters, bartender at Golden Cadillac. As a new Manhattan bar dedicated to the practice of reviving concoctions from the least-celebrated cocktail period—the disco era—their menu is full of names you never thought you'd see again. "It's why people are always reading old cocktail books—to find something amazing to bring back."

Here, seven bartenders take on some of the most disrespected cocktails in history—most of which stem (surprise, surprise) from the '70s and '80s—for the chance to reclaim their place in the barroom canon.

"I believe every cocktail deserves a second chance," says Lonn Coupel-Coward, beverage director at Red Rooster Harlem. "It has evolved into what it is now, but that doesn't mean we can't break it down, start from scratch, and build it back into the amazing drink it was supposed to be."

If only people got the same break.

White Russian "The Buzzed Lebowski"

By Skye La Torre, Meatball Shop

Ingredients

1½ oz. vodka
1 oz. Grady's Cold Brew
¾ oz. Kahlua
¾ oz. cream
3 espresso beans for garnish

"We upgraded the coffee flavors to a level that a coffee liqueur couldn't pull off on its own. Grady's uses chicory in their blend, which helps to balance the overall sweetness of the drink and add a buzz boost from the caffeine. If the original is vanilla ice cream, this is a malted milkshake."

Directions

Add all ingredients to a mixing glass. Add ice, shake and strain over one large cube in a rocks glass. Garnish with espresso beans.