

Ten Best Cocktails Bars in Palm Beach County

BY NICOLE DANNA

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Photo courtesy of HMF

5. HMF

1 S. County Road, Palm Beach. Call 855-237-3452, or visit hmf-palmbeach.com.

HMF, which opened in 2012, is Palm Beach's first (and only) craft cocktail bar. Located at the Breakers lobby, it's named for the hotel's founder, Henry Morrison Flagler, the railroad magnate who helped to pioneer the development of South Florida. To keep with tradition, HMF is a sophisticated lounge meant to evoke playful decadence once made famous by the Palm Beach Jet Set. That means a feast for all senses, a collection of classic cocktails that pay loving tribute to the originals. Here, the long and elegant bar is matched with a sprawling lounge area where both locals and resort guests can drink and dine in secluded style. HMF offers a full menu of signature, handcrafted drinks ranging from the traditional concoctions to the experimental, with innovative twists that include all the usual trends like freshly made ingredients, elixirs, and sodas. Another unique touch you won't find anywhere else: the cigarette girl, inspired by the social cocktail clubs of the '50s and '60s. Think of her as a sort of high-end server offering various tastings of specialty items, be it an aperitif, specialty dessert sample, or anything to enhance the cocktail party experience.



Photo by Nicole Danna

4. Brulé Bistro

200 NE Second Ave., Delray Beach. Call 561-274-2046, or visit brulebistro.com.

Although the food makes this restaurant among the top spots in Delray Beach to dine out, a concise craft cocktail list and well-curated selection of wines and rotating craft beer makes Brulé one of the best places to stop for a drink at the bar as well. Here, the bar program and kitchen go hand-in-hand, chefs and bartenders both using an arsenal of fresh, high-quality ingredients to craft unique offerings. Of the ten handcrafted cocktails on the menu, among the most popular offerings is the Spiced Pecan Old Fashion (Bullet bourbon, pecan simple syrup, and chocolate bitters). Have a hankering for something more original? Options aren't limited by the menu. Instead, a team of talented barkeeps will whip up anything you like, drawing from a bar stocked with dozens of craft spirits; a colorful lineup of house-made infused syrups like lavender, lemongrass, and vanilla; and homemade garnishes including candied oranges and brandy-soaked, black cherries spiked with an organic spice blend. Simply ask and you shall receive.



Photo courtesy of [Lukas G. Photography](#)

3. Le Rendez-Vous

221 Datura St., West Palm Beach. Call 561-273-5441, or visit trendyparisianrestaurant.com.

Brothers Olivier and Edouard Delrieu have brought a touch of Parisian sophistication to downtown West Palm Beach with their bar-restaurant Le Rendez-Vous located off Datura Street. The industrial-chic lounge space has a bit of a hipster vibe to it, offering patrons a chance to sip drinks from a well-rounded cocktail menu that includes signature vodka, gin, whiskey, and cognac-based libations. A shelf behind the bar also houses a number of homemade infusions, everything from a fig-infused cognac to lychee vodka – even a homemade cinnamon-heavy fireball. On Tuesday from 11 p.m. to 2 a.m., the bar transforms into Ma Maison, the restaurant's alter-ego club, where you can sip cocktails to the beat of the music. The drink menu changes often, but the inspiration is always compliments of bartender Vincent Toscano, a talented mixologist who will gladly whip you up whatever you like. The sky's the limit.



Photo by Nicole Danna

2. Tiki-Ono

10 S. Ocean Blvd., Lake Worth. Call 561-315-7963, or visit tiki-ono.com.

If you like your tiki cocktails on the beach, look no further than the beach pier in Lake Worth, where a new pop-up tiki bar dubbed Tiki-Ono has set up shop several days a week at the entrance to Benny's on the Beach. Here you can order a number of potent, tiki-styled libations, mixed drinks, and rum flights – some served from fresh, shaved coconuts – several days a week. The men behind Tiki-Ono are local bartenders Rob Husted and Josh Gates, who developed the tiki beach-side concept where they make it possible for you to "enjoy tiki drinks in paradise." The bar operates out of a pop-up tent open Wednesday through Monday from noon to 7 p.m., weather permitting. No need to get fancy, either; the clientele keeps it casual as beachgoers order in bathing suits or bikinis from a chalkboard menu that presents a short list of rotating and signature tiki-styled drinks. That includes the Lota Colada, a basil-infused piña colada that uses real cream of coconut; or the Virgin Sacrifice, vodka mixed with strawberries, blood-orange juice, and ginger beer with a fancy Bols Blue Foam topper.



Photo by Brandy Sue Willoughby

1. Sweetwater/Saxon

1507 S. Federal Highway, Boynton Beach. Call 561-509-9277, or visit sweetwater33.com.

A half-decade ago, as new wave cocktail culture swept the nation, South Florida lagged behind. While people in cities like Chicago, New York, and San Francisco were already discovering the joy of a well-made Aviation, perfect Manhattan, or a solid Negroni, most South Floridians were still making do with frozen, premade mixes served in plastic cups. In 2011, Sweetwater Bar & Grill founders Clint Reed and Sean Iglehart helped change that when they opened the area's first Prohibition-style speakeasy in Boynton Beach. Today, Reed and Iglehart are shaking things up again with the recent debut of their latest concept, Saxon, a 30-seat bar and lounge accessible through Sweetwater. The name is reference to early-fifth-century Great Britain, the space accented with rustic touches from large pieces of driftwood to a stag antler trophy plaque. At newly opened Saxon, the scene is a little different; the bar isn't fixed by any one theme or concept but instead offers an ever-evolving experience. In place of seasonal menu changes based on rotating ingredients, think of each cocktail as an ode to the menu's overall theme – one that will change frequently and can range from a specific time period or city to a historical event or even a popular TV show. Drink up.

Nicole Danna is a food writer covering Broward and Palm Beach counties. To get the latest in food and drink news in South Florida, follow her [@SoFloNicole](#) or find her latest food pics on the BPB New Times Food & Drink [Instagram](#).

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