

Drink

Cocktail Revolution

Jiggers of gin will no longer cut it in this strange new world of mixologists.

BY TIFFANY MALESHEFSKI

In a city that claims to have invented the martini, possibly the most simply crafted drink in the world, the cocktails now being created at many San Francisco bars mirror the sophistication and self-indulgence of its world-renowned culinary scene. No longer are the men and women who staff our city's bars simply bartenders. Instead, they have become mixologists, bar chefs, and cocktailians.

There's good reason for that. These days, drinks in San Francisco fall more along the lines of a well-rounded, five-star meal than the hair of the dog usually slung to you at a local watering hole.

Jeff Hollinger, general manager at **Absinthe**, waits every year for a staff member to return from a mushroom-hunting expedition, the bounty of which will find its way into a mushroom liqueur.

At **Absinthe**, Hollinger knows that a beet or mushroom cocktail won't necessarily fly off the bar, but since his background is in cooking, he's inspired by the kitchen, and can't help but get creative.

THE BARTENDING ALL-STARS

Unknown to many, there's a core group of bartenders and consultants dominating San Francisco's drinking scene. Call them the A-Team or call it bullshit, but wherever you stand on that declaration, these folks are largely responsible for the way many San Franciscans have been drinking for the past few years. Some of the major players include H. Ehrmann, Reza Esmaili, Jeff Hollinger, Daniel Hyatt, Duggan McDonnell, Jackie Patterson, Jonny Raglin, Todd Smith, Dominic Venegas, Thad Vogler, Neyah White, and a few others.

Nightclub