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HOW TO BE A MAN

2011
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OF OUR
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The **BEST**  **BARS** in AMERICA

Over the last five years, we have celebrated bars all over the country. Mostly well-established places. A hall of fame, really. This year, we're doing it differently. New places. Most less than two years old.

Which is trickier than it might sound. So many bars come and go. Or are uninteresting. Or are "mixology" places that don't know what they're doing exactly. The places on this list, we vouch for. And we think they'll stick around. As always, the project is overseen by David Wondrich, Esquire's drinks correspondent and the foremost cocktail historian in the world. So, the best new bars in America, along with some humble suggestions for how to be a man—who drinks.

PHOTOGRAPH BY GRANT CORNETT
ETCHING DESIGN BY LIKE-MINDED STUDIO



**BAR
CONGRESS**
AUSTIN

YOU'RE HAVING: SOMETHING TO GO WITH THE CHICKEN-FRIED OLIVES

In the late '90s, a cluster of martini bars popped up just west of Congress to cater to Austin's new-money, just-out-of-college weekend warriors flush with Dell stock. Those bars mostly busted with the bust, and five years ago, the most inventive and celebrated bartenders in town migrated to the newly gentrified Eastside, serving old-timey craft cocktails. But now downtown is making a comeback—twice as many people are actually living downtown as did ten years ago, and the demand for a spot in one of the half dozen new condo towers has, along with most of Austin, defied the economic downturn. At the base of one of those new towers, the Austonian, is the super-cozy, 22-person-capacity Bar Congress. Curtained off in a narrow space separating a three-tiered collective's prix fixe fine-dining side, Congress is the creation of one of the bartenders who first put the Eastside on the map, the East Side Show Room's Adam Bryan, a craft cocktail historian/savant whose Montegomaticas—overproof rum, Fernet-Branca, Velvet falernum (a syrup), and lime—has already inspired imitations back on the Eastside. 200 Congress Avenue; 512-827-2760 —ANDY LANGER

art of mixing drinks past its conventional categories, traditions, and self-imposed limitations. What's more, they weren't going to do this by using thousands of dollars of lab equipment or ingredients so rare as to be essentially unobtainable, either. They were going to do it with imagination and the guts to try something weird and then convince someone else to pay to try it, too. In this, they, along with the rest of the crew at Cure, have succeeded more often

than they have failed, and tried more than almost any bar I can think of. Cure isn't for everyone, as it'll willingly admit. But sip a Gunshop Fizz at the (handsome) bar, a drink made with a full two ounces of Peychaud's bitters rather than the standard two or three dashes, and you'll definitely come away with something to remember, for good or ill. (Hint: Not all of its drinks are so challenging.) 4905 Freret Street; 504-302-2357 —D.W.



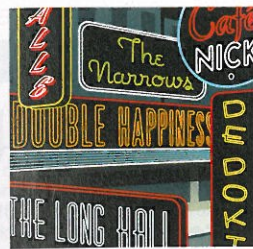
**The Chandelier bar
at the Cosmopolitan**

LAS VEGAS

YOU'RE HAVING:

WHATEVER YOU WANT

Whereas many casino bars feel like sad, removed, half-empty afterthoughts lined



**THE ULTIMATE
CRAWL**

BY DAVID WONDRICH

BEGIN AT 4:55 P.M. (I always like to start during what are technically working hours) at Tuja-gue's [A], with one of Paul's fine Sazeracs. Chat for a bit while that settles, then off to the Tender Bar [B] for a King's Valley; they're made with Scotch and they're green and yet I love 'em. Then on to Café De Dokter [C] for a fine cheese plate and a shot of chilled old genever and a short beer to go with it. Then nip into 69 Colebrooke Row [D] for a perfect daiquiri. Okay, two. But only because dinner's next. On a crawl like this, you want a whole, deep-fried pork shank and a liter of Schneider dark. For that, it can only be Zur Kleinen Markthalle [E]. Although I don't smoke as a rule, after a feed like that I'll make an exception. Café Nick [F] is a low-key, neighborhood joint where smoking is still allowed, and it's got little shots of aquavit to cut the grease. On to the Narrows [G], an intimate place, elegant but not stuffy, and it's got whiskey. And as long as I'm doing intimate, late-night bars, I might as well hit Double Happiness [H] next, for something on the rocks. Okay, one last stop, but only because no bar crawl can be called truly perfect without a closing Powers and pint of Guinness amid the Victorian-living-room surrounds of the Long Hall [I].

- [A] 823 Decatur Street, New Orleans
- [B] Nogakudo Building, 6-5-15 Ginza, Tokyo
- [C] 4 Rozenboomsteeg, Amsterdam
- [D] 69 Colebrooke Row, London
- [E] 32 Legiendamm, Berlin
- [F] 20 Nikolajgade, Copenhagen
- [G] 1037 Flushing Avenue, Brooklyn
- [H] 21 Liverpool Street, Melbourne
- [I] 51 South Great Georges Street, Dublin

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WE'D DRINK

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MIRANDA KERR
Fine, a mojito if
she insists



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EXCEPT ANDREW
ROSS SORKIN

11 WORDS ON MANHOOD FROM... JOHN OLIVER, THE DAILY SHOW: You're not a man unless you own at least three monocles.