

805

LIVING



THE DRINKS ISSUE

Pulse

TRACKING THE BEAT OF THE 805



DRINK WITH THE EYES FIRST

Thanks, in part, to the influence of Instagram, these days craft cocktail designers, like the creators of fine cuisine, aim not just for enticing flavor but also for over-the-top visual presentation. Although a seemingly inexhaustible font of fresh ideas keeps the intrigue constant, recent eye-candy-in-a-glass has taken form in intricately arranged floral garnishes, ingredient color play, foam art, and dissolving rice-paper graphics. Here are works from four area establishments serving drinks that look as delightful as they taste.

Nonna, Westlake Village nonna.restaurant

All by owner Jacopo Falleni and cocktail specialist Lerone Howard
TRASTEVERE (left) Catcher's rye whiskey, Averna, Punt e Mes vermouth, Angostura bitters, and Scruppy's chocolate bitters

The artistic wow factor A flower-shaped garnish is fashioned from orange peel and a Luxardo cherry and held in place with a cocktail pick.

WOULD YOU RATHER (back) Kaffir lime-infused pisco, fresh-squeezed lime juice, egg white, Italicus, passion fruit puree, prosecco, Angostura bitters, and optional spice

The artistic wow factor A sprig of baby's breath is attached with twine to the stem of a frozen coupe that has been coated on the outside with powdered sugar before the foam-topped drink gets its fade-to-white tinge with a spray of Angostura bitters.

99% LOVE (right) Haku Vodka, fresh-squeezed grapefruit juice, fresh-squeezed lime juice, egg white, Aperol, elderflower, and prosecco

The artistic wow factor A foam art design features Angostura bitters hearts and rosemary needles centered around an edible rosebud. >

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Sidecar, San Luis Obispo

sidecarslo.com

Both by owner and mixologist
Josh Christensen

KISSING IN THE DARK (below, left glass)
hibiscus-infused Angelisco Tequila, Dolin Blanc
Vermouth, lime juice and pineapple juice

The artistic wow factor The drink's delicate
pink color is set off with an edible-flower
sugar-shard garnish made by Whitnie
Burke Elrod of Paper Cake Events
(papercakeevents.com) in Atascadero.

WELCOME TO FABULOUS (below, right
glass) Spring 44 Old Tom Gin, Sipsmith Sloe
Gin, Maraska Maraschino Liqueur, and hop-
infused MCT (medium-chain triglyceride) oil

The artistic wow factor A festive red-and-
gold highball glass delivers this coral-colored
libation with a flourish, and a garnish of *brûléed*
lime and edible flower petals tops it off.



Glass House Cocktails, Santa Barbara

glasshousecocktails.com

By owner and mixologist Alvaro Rojas
BEETY AND THE BEAST Cutler's Gin,
candy cane beets, Pacific Pickle Works
beet brine, pink peppercorns, celery
bitters, Fever-Tree tonic, and an ed-
ible viola and beet slice garnish

The artistic wow factor Ice holds thinly
sliced beets against the inside of the glass
in a dazzling display of the vegetable's
brightly colored stripes.

—Kathy Tomlinson

Alcazar Tapas Bar, Santa Barbara

alcazartapasbar.com

By owner and mixologist Alvaro Rojas
GINSPIRATION POINT Cutler's Gin, green
chartreuse, Bénédictine liqueur, Nostrum
pineapple-turmeric-ginger shrub, lime
juice, and egg white

The artistic wow factor A lime zest-
stemmed edible-viola garnish decorates
the drink's frothy top.



HEY, BAR LENDER

Monogrammed ice, vintage crystal highballs, edible flower garnishes: These are just a few of the special touches that Camarillo locals Nicole and Mark Valdivia, the couple behind The Cave restaurant in Ventura, are using to jazz up the party via their new **Rocks & Drams mobile bar** (rocksanddrams.com; rental from \$3,000). The 19-foot shiny silver trailer is available for events with up to 500 guests. "It's not just a table setup and a bartender standing behind it," says Nicole, who sources cool cocktail essentials like kumquats and caviar limes from King & King Ranch in Fillmore and microgreens from Rio Gozo Farm in Ojai. For smaller celebrations, there's also Ava, a rose-gold-and-white beach cruiser with a two-tap *kegerator*.

—Erin Rottman



The Rocks & Drams
trailer (right) brings
the bar to you,
pouring cocktails
with embellishments
like monogrammed
ice (above).



NOW POURING

The new **Margerum Wine Company** (margerumwines.com) tasting room in Santa Barbara's Hotel Californian offers more to taste than Santa Barbara County wines. After making his own *amaro*, a digestif of 40 herbs, roots, and barks infused with estate brandy, winemaker Douglas Barden Margerum found himself mashing it into ice cream at a dinner party. That led to a partnership with local confectionary company Rori's Artisanal Creamery and an original creamy, bittersweet ice cream flavor, which is among the tasting room's offerings.



Unveiling the latest extension of its organic family farm, vineyard, ranch, and winery, **Folded Hills** (foldedhills.com) recently opened Montecito's first wine-tasting room, which features grenache and syrah wines produced

from grapes grown at the Gaviota-based estate.

In Los Olivos at the new **Liquid Farm Tasting Room & Mercantile** (liquidfarm.com), visitors can try the neutral oak chardonnays created at the Lompoc winery while shopping from among locally made food products and an assortment of farmhouse-



chic home accessories, such as pillows and throws.

Farther north, **Broken Earth Winery** (brokenearthwinery.com) in Paso Robles has a new 23,000-square-foot facility with a tasting room, wine lockers for patrons to store selections, and adjoining spaces in which seminars and Wine & Spirit Education Trust certification courses are held. Visitors can enjoy wood-fired pizza fresh out of a brick oven that was handmade in Italy or stock up on picnic fare, including meats, cheeses, breads, and jams, from the artisanal market.

—E.R.

The team at Margerum Wine Company's new tasting room (top) serves ice cream made with the winemaker's amaro by Rori's Artisanal Creamery (above, left). Having recently opened Liquid Farm Tasting Room & Mercantile, winery owner Jeff Nelson and winemaker James Sparks enjoy a taste themselves (above).



ART ON DECK

Using recycled skateboard decks as her medium, **Inga Guzyte** (ingaguzyte.com) transforms her passion for skateboarding into sculptural art. Her new *#RebelWomen* series spotlights women from around the globe—Ruth Bader Ginsburg, Malala Yousafzai, Frida Kahlo—emphasizing their strength, courage, fearlessness, and wit.



"I am hoping to share rebellious and empowering stories," says the 34-year-old artist, who lines her Santa Barbara studio with floor-to-ceiling stacks of skateboard decks (recycled from the nearby Lighthouse Skateshop) and waits for the right colors to show up to create her sculptures. Born in Lithuania and raised in Germany, she came to Santa Barbara at age 21 to learn English and immerse herself in the California skateboarding culture. Making her way into the male-dominated sport influenced her work.

"Inga's work is an exciting combination of vision, originality, and high craft," says Nathan Vonk, owner of Sullivan Goss gallery (sullivangoss.com) in Santa Barbara, where a solo show of Guzyte's work appears from June 1 through July 23. "While her pieces are made from brutal, broken materials, the finished products are both sophisticated and delicate," he says. "With her *#RebelWomen* series, she has added to that appeal by including a message that is powerful, important, and uplifting." ♦ —Leslie Dinaberg