



Mirth of the Cool

In a place where even water can be intoxicating when consumed under a vermillion New Mexico dusk, it can sometimes be hard to know whether venue or menu makes a summer cocktail outstanding.

Apple margaritas on the patio at Rancho de Chimayó? Sangrias under the cottonwoods in the courtyard at La Casa Sena? Copasetic.

But the summer concoctions at two spots in Santa Fe put to rest any question of “Is this the best drink I’ve had in my life, or am I looking at the world through sunset-tinged shades?” For even though Inn of the Anasazi and Coyote Café are among the top places to imbibe alfresco, their new drink menus illustrate why the men behind them are helping to make mixology one of the town’s burgeoning art forms.

At Inn of the Anasazi, James Reis’s spicy mango margarita, a brilliant orange, proves that a colorful fruit-based alcoholic beverage doesn’t have to be frivolous or saccha-

rine. The head bartender was inspired by a locally found salsa to create his drink, which gets its tickling kick from hot sauce.

Likewise, Quinn Stephenson’s Manhattan sorbet walks the dessert/cocktail line without a chocolate liqueur in sight. Coyote Café’s mixologist/sommelier/co-owner not only discovered a way to freeze the classic ingredients of bourbon, vermouth, and bitters, but he also serves each burgundy-colored scoop with what he calls “black cherry caviar,” tiny balls of the fruit’s juice.

So this isn’t Tom Cruise in *Cocktail*; Reis and Stephenson contentedly spend hour upon hour behind the scenes creating each seasonal drink list. For his latest specialty, Reis landed on the final recipe after various experiments with infusions and flavors over a few weeks, copious notes in hand. His twist on the margarita isn’t “too far out of the mainstream,” he says, “but I want people to say, ‘Oh, that’s different.’”

—Heidi Ernst



SUMMER FEVER

1½ oz. Top-shelf vodka
 ½ oz. Lychee liqueur (order online)
 1 oz. Fresh watermelon juice
 ½ squeeze Lime
 Fresh mint leaves and sugar for rim

Combine the first four ingredients in a cocktail shaker with ice. Shake, then strain into a chilled glass rimmed with mint-infused sugar (combine mint leaves and sugar in a blender ahead of time, then let dry).

—created by Quinn Stephenson for *Trend*

New Baritone on the Block

Billy Budd, Sailor was a novella left unfinished at Herman Melville’s death in 1891. The opera of the book—with libretto by Benjamin Britten—was first performed at Covent Garden in 1951. And through the various ports of call and inland harbors where *Billy Budd* has set down, the opera has established a fine role for the baritone.

“What I like most about this character, about Billy, is his innocence. He’s naive, he’s gentle, and he absolutely believes that everyone is like him...that innocent, that sweet, and that gentle.”

If there’s an irony that the New Zealand–native baritone speaking these words, Teddy Tahu Rhodes, stands 6’4” and has the shoulder span of a football player, it’s an irony that he seems aware of, as he fidgets through a fitting in the purposefully raggedy garb that the costume shop has sewn for his tall frame. Rhodes, eager to return outside to the blue sky, seems to feel still slightly giddy—just a few days after first arriving in Santa Fe in June—about being here, on the floor of an inland sea so high.

Teddy Tahu Rhodes has been filling opera houses internationally. He stars in seven evening performances of *Billy Budd* between July 12 and August 21 (\$26 to \$170; santafeopera.org).



TOP: FRANCESCA YORKE; BOTTOM: BRIDGET ELLIOT