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TACOMA'S CRAFT COCKTAIL HOTSPOTS

BY ADAM SAWYER

Bar 960 Hotel Murano

© Bar 960 Hotel Murano

IN KEEPING WITH THE GROWING TREND of once overlooked Northwest cities become legitimate travel destinations, Tacoma, Washington, has transformed into a place you'll want to rediscover. Many folks are already aware of some of the town's cultural attractions, anchored by LeMay - America's Car Museum and the Chihuly-inspired Museum of Glass. But for many of us, the burning question is what can I do when Happy Hour rolls around? The answer is: a lot.

Tacoma has every base covered when it comes to ways to enjoy a cocktail. Options include elegant inns for after-work drinks, high-end craft cocktail bars with elevated small plates, late-night lounges, and even a tiki bar. Here's a primer on some of the best spots to drop in and imbibe.

Bar 960 Hotel Murano

Bar 960 (hotelmuranotacoma.com/food-drink), inside the city's premier lodging facility, the Hotel Murano, ascends above the "We're staying here, might as well drink here" category and into the rarified air of "It's Friday, where are we going first?" Named for the temperature of a glass cooling oven, Bar 960 has a clean, modern aesthetic. It's bright, open and incorporates the glass art theme that's established in the lobby. The Spanish Gin & Tonic with Hendricks gin, cucumber, orange peel, and peppercorns is the perfect start to the evening. Food options include a charcuterie and cheese tray that's heavy on local ingredients but light on digestive burden.

Devil's Reef

Some would say if your town can't lay claim to a tiki bar, it doesn't have a cocktail scene. The Devil's Reef, located in the Theater District's Opera Alley, meets tropical-themed muster and then explores the space a little further. Fresh and house-made ingredients go into an inventive menu where every drink has a story to tell—literally. The bar dabbles on the darker side of the tiki experience with H.P. Lovecraft inspiration, exotic spiced rums from afar and mugs straight from Davy Jones' Locker. Try the namesake Devil's Reef—a tropical punch that packs a sneaky wallop.



Matriarch Lounge

© Matriarch Lounge

En Rama

En Rama (enramatacoma.com) is where the true craft of cocktail comes to life. Thoughtful and inventive drinks—like the Chilcano, comprised of seasonally infused pisco, house-made ginger beer and ghost pepper-infused amontillado sherry—can be found up and down the menu. The food offerings range from eclectic tapas to large plate dinner options that qualify En Rama for destination-dining status. It is cozy, with a non-exclusive and inviting ambiance that belies the magic transpiring in the kitchen and behind the bar.

The Matriarch Lounge

The Matriarch Lounge (almamatertacoma.com/matriarch-lounge-2) resides in Alma Mater, which is, among other things, an artist studio during non-drinking hours. But when the art ceases, the mixology takes over from behind a formidable, warmly lit and well-stocked bar. A drink list of steady standards, like the Walkin' After Midnight—featuring Monkey 47 gin, pisco, green chartreuse, Pamplemousse and dry vermouth—is augmented with rotating seasonal offerings. And if this is your finishing act for the evening, the kitchen menu has a robust lineup of starters, mains and sweets to send you home happy. 🍷



En Rama

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