

LIQUID ASSETS

LUSH SPRING FLUSH

A healthy crop of new bars blossoms.

BY ST. JOHN FRIZELL

Recent months have seen a bumper crop of notable new bars in the borough. Here's where we're cultivating hangovers.

Beer Table

427B 7th Avenue (between 14th and 15th Streets)

718.965.1196, www.beertable.com

The New York Times reported in January that Justin and Tricia Philips of Park Slope's Beer Table had been waiting six months for the State Liquor Authority to approve their liquor license. Curiously, their conditional license was approved the day after a *Times* reporter called the SLA for comment. No matter—the keg at Beer Table is now tapped, the beer is flowing, and the extra time allowed the Philipses to get everything in their little storefront just so. The handmade tables are sanded satin-smooth, and perfectly spaced jars of homemade pickles line the shelves—the atmosphere is more wine bar than beer hall. There's a wide and idiosyncratic selection of bottles available, but the real draw is the draft—the taps feature



beer from brewers rarely met in New York (like Denmark's Wintercoat and England's Burton Bridge). The kegs are small so the brew is always fresh, and the selection changes daily. At present, a generous charcuterie plate is the only food available, but housemade fresh sausages and other beer-friendly bites should be on offer imminently.

Radegast Hall and Biergarten

13 North 3rd Street (at Berry Street)

718.963.3973

Where Beer Table is small and soigné, Williamsburg's Radegast Hall is big and blowsy. From the dirndl-like dresses of the barmaids to the faded mural of burly satyrs, Radegast is a sprawling

paean to Teutonic excess. One of the owners, Ivan Aohut, helped open the Bohemian Beer Hall in Queens, and the set-up is similar here: on one side, drinkers lift steins around an immense barbell-shaped bar and order hearty entrées like braised rabbit with “Viennese gnocchi”; on the other, a grill-man piles plates with brats and kielbasa for crowds seated at picnic tables under a retractable roof that will open to the air in good weather. The German, Austrian and Czech beers on tap are served fresh and cold in half-liters, liters and pitchers; ask for the crisp Radeberger Pilsner, or the slightly sweet BrouCzech Dark, flavored with roasted malt.



Huckleberry Bar

588 Grand Street

(at Lorimer)

718.218.8555

This sleek spot has its act together—an elegant patio, a considered menu of small plates, and a custom sound system that's crystal clear and never too loud—so it's no surprise that owners Stephanie Schneider and Andrew Boggs met under the wing of uber-restaurateur Danny Meyer while opening America's fanciest 'cue joint, Blue Smoke. The choices here be-



Photographs: Nick Hall

wilder: 12 wines by the glass, five beers on tap, espresso drinks, and a list of original seasonal cocktails with names so obscure you'll wish for footnotes (we're happy to oblige): a recent menu featured the aggressively herbal François Hannibal d'Estrées¹ and the tarragon-spiked Grass of Fafnir². Nevertheless chef Seth Johnson's simple, wholesome bar snacks, sandwiches and specials—like

¹ Legend has it that d'Estrées, a French diplomat and general, gave the Carthusian monks the formula for Chartreuse liqueur in the 17th century.

² A translation of the Icelandic word for tarragon, named for a mythological dragon.

Quarter

676 5th Avenue (near 20th Street)

718.788.0989

In a small, candlelit room on a humble stretch of 5th Avenue near 20th Street, bartender David Moo proves that you don't need arm garters or attitude to make a masterful martini. Customers at this pocket-size bar feel equally at home nursing highballs, High Lifes, or high-quality cocktails like the Two Bits, a twist on the Old Fashioned comprising equal parts Maker's Mark and Wild Turkey bourbon, a bit of amaretto, and, of course, two bitters—Angostura and Peychaud's. Moo has logged 12 years behind the stick all over the city, from white-tablecloth Ouest to Brooklyn's own Last Exit, so you're safe to stray from the menu—just put a fiver in the well-stocked jukebox, order a hot DUB pie from the bar, and let Moo do what Moo does best.

Weather Up

589 Vanderbilt Avenue (near Dean Street)

The cocktail blogosphere was all abuzz when it was revealed that Sasha Petraske, proprietor of the Lower East Side's legendary Milk and Honey, would be training the bartenders at this new Prospect Heights drinking den. But could the drinks possibly live up to Petraske's famously high standards? Early indications are very good—a recent visit found spot-on interpretations of classics Petraske helped revive, like the Floridita daiquiri, the Presbyterian, and the Sazerac, prepared with care by the impeccably tattooed Liza. The tiled ceiling recalls the old-time charm of the Grand Central Oyster Bar, and owner Kathryn Weatherup plans to start serving the bivalves in her backyard this spring.

Hotel Delmano

82 Berry Street

718.387.1945

Hotel Delmano may be the most beautiful bar in Brooklyn. From the marble counter and foxed mirrors to the bartender's well-coiffed moustache, every detail speaks of the faded glory of cocktail culture. And they don't just look the part—the mixologists here ably shake their way through a menu of classics like the Corpse Reviver and the Seelbach, and they'll stir-not-shake your Old Fashioned to perfection. But is it a little much? Every surface so perfectly distressed, every fixture so exquisite, the effect is a bit calculated, as if Epcot opened a cocktail pavilion. Big crowds on weekends will tell whether that well-weathered patina will flake off or improve with age. [e](#)

