

Good libations

Cosmopolitan? Been there. Corona with lime? Done that. Mojitos? Bought the T-shirt.

The staying power of chic drinks in South Florida is about as long as the life expectancy of your average South Beach nightclub. Those *Sex and the City*-inspired Cosmos that South Beach vixens made so popular just a few seasons ago are now out of the question; we defy you to order one with a straight face. Martinis? Only if you're James Bond sleek. And unless you're at a Cuban restaurant, don't order a mojito: the once-popular concoction of rum, fresh mint leaves, sugar and seltzer water is as tired as one of Gloria Estefan's songs.

So what's new? Depends on which bartender you ask. At the Townhouse Hotel's **Bond St**

Lounge (see p41), Saketinis are all the rage. These Japanese-ish versions of Martinis come in two versions: dry, made with dry sake and vodka, or sweet, made with plum wine sake, triple sec, lemon-flavoured cream, grapefruit juice, fresh lime and a splash of cranberry juice. Also popular here are the Green Tea Martini, made with lemon vodka, triple sec and green tea, and the Bond St

Bloody, a Bloody Mary spiced with wasabe and soy sauce. They might look harmless, but after a few of these, you won't remember which hotel is yours.

Otherwise, the choices are many and varied. Looking for a jolt of energy? Red Bull, Sky Vodka and cranberry juice will probably do the trick, though it'll cost you. For something south of the border, try a Brazilian Caipirinha, a mojito cousin made with Pitu Cacha liquor, fresh lime juice and raw sugar. If you want to

appear mature, try an Absolut Kurant kamikaze, at the **Hotel St Augustine** (347 Washington Avenue, 532 0570) and made with triple sec, Absolut Kurant vodka and lime juice. And should you find yourself at the bar at the



Hotel Astor (see p37), don't leave without trying the Key West Martini, which contains coconut rum, orange liqueur and lime juice, or the Stoli jolt, which is little more than a shot of espresso in a White Russian.

But above all, before you try and sneak a quick Bud while no one's looking, remember: in style-conscious Miami, it's not just what you wear and where you go that matters.

Coconut Grove

Flanigan's Laughing Loggerhead

2721 Bird Avenue (SW 40th Street), at SW 27th Avenue (446 1114). Bus 22, 27, 42. Open 11.30am-5am daily. Credit AmEx, Disc, MC, V.

A Grove institution, the Loggerhead stocks some 200 brands of bottled beer and serves up an interesting menu of eats and includes a delectable blackened dolphin (no, not *that* kind of dolphin) sandwich among its basic but good selections (which also includes splendid ribs and juicy, two-fisted burgers). Naturally, a fishing motif prevails, with aged wooden walls plastered with Hemingway-esque photos of anglers and their prodigious catches. Kitschy? Yep. But it's also the heart of the Grove.

Monty's

2550 S Bayshore Drive, at Aviation Avenue (858 1431). Bus 48. Open 10am-11pm daily. Credit AmEx, DC, Disc, MC, V. Map p312 A3.

An outdoor raw (read: seafood) bar located next to a marina, Monty's has been popular with Grove-ites for decades. Thatch-roofed, open-walled miniature tiki huts surround a stage where tasteful reggae and calypso bands do their best to persuade the floral-print-shirted drinkers to dance. It's within walking distance of Miami City Hall, too, so you can register your praise or complaints there. See also p139.

Taurus Ale & Grill

3540 Main Highway, at Charles Avenue (648 1525). Bus 42, 48. Open 11.30am-11pm Mon-Thur, Sun; 11.30am-1am Fri, Sat. Credit AmEx, MC, V. Map p312 B2.

Just down from the Coconut Grove Playhouse (see p232), Taurus serves some of the area's best steaks, and the adjoining bar boasts more colourful old-timers per barstool than any other bistro. Taurus is a Grove mainstay, but it's not nearly as honky-tonk as it used to be: in recent years, it's been forced to spruce up in order to co-exist with the new posher,

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