



# Toasting To 4 Hot New San Francisco Bars

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Wildhawk

*Photo Courtesy of Matthew Millman*

San Francisco is a cocktail lover's paradise. From speakeasies with secret passwords to industrial hangouts with seasonal menus, you can find virtually any type of bar imaginable. There are so many amazing places to get a well-crafted libation made with artisanal ingredients that it's almost impossible to go to a bar and get a bad drink.

The key words in that last sentence are "almost impossible" — you do need to know which places have the city's top mixologists before hopping in your Uber.

Bartenders are a mobile breed and often jump from one hot spot to the next recently opened cocktail haven. In the past couple of months, in fact, a handful of thrilling new places have opened up. Wondering where to find the best drinks right now in San Francisco? Head to one of the following four bars.

### **Wildhawk**

Walk into Wildhawk at 19th and Lexington streets in the Mission District, and it's hard to believe that the space used to house a dive bar. Magically remodeled by PlumpJack (lieutenant governor Gavin Newsom's hospitality group) and local interior design star Jay Jeffers, the décor at the lounge-like space that debuted in April is wildly sexy.

There are zebra-print bar stools, a silver-tiled ceiling and black-and-white, thorn-and-rose print wallpaper. Green velvet armchairs and plush leather couches further invite you to relax and stay awhile.

The extensive drink menu was created by industry veterans Jacques Bezuidenhout and Ken Luciano. There is an assortment of vermouth libations, cocktails (a delicious sazerac is made with Martell Cordon Bleu, 101 Wild Turkey Rye, absinthe and Peychaud's Bitters) and a house martini so big it's like two in one.

Since all the best bars these days have some sort of food component, Wildhawk has a curated nibble menu from chef Howard Ko. Ko is the executive chef at one of PlumpJack's other restaurants, Balboa Cafe, where he serves up traditional American fare.

At Wildhawk, his inventive side and his Spanish culinary training are demonstrated. Tiny vegetables are delightfully arranged on a wood platter and served with a rich black garlic ranch. Goat cheese is combined with harissa and rose petals to make an addictive spread for olive-oil-drenched tartine bread. Plump, meaty sardines are cheekily served in a tin can topped with giardiniera and horseradish.