

TRENDS FOR 2022

Edgy Classics... Aware Drinking...



and Tequila... again



By: Travis E. Poling

Trendspotting in the drinks scene is an inexact science based on available data on what has already happened and getting observers and people on the ground (bar owners, managers and bartenders) to share what they are seeing day to day. What's happening NYC may be a far cry from emerging trends in the clubs of LA or the suburbs of Houston.

1. Cocktail demands includes what Food & Wine magazine describes as “classic drinks with an edge.” The Old Fashioned, negroni, fresh Margarita and martini are still in vogue, but bartenders are treating those drinks with twists such as locally made spirits or local honey or produce such as chiles.
2. Many of the prognosticators in recent years – and this year is no exception – have pointed to trends such as non-alcoholic offerings in bars, lower ABV, lower carb drinks and reduced calories. All of these have morphed into one overarching movement that could best be categorized as “awareness.” The seltzer trend that ramped up over the last five years was mostly about bubbly, low-carbohydrate and low-calorie alternatives. That awareness is now making its way into other drinks. Beer choices in that category were especially limited, but one of biggest brands in that space is now branching out with additional flavor profiles. Even the small and independent breweries are getting in on the action by making flavorful brews closer to German table lagers below 4% ABV and with two to four grams of carbohydrates per serving. points out several bars that are listing the ABV of craft cocktails on their menus to make it easier for patrons to better control their consumption.
3. Multiple sources say tequila sippers, shooters and mixers are going for another round. Drinks professionals polled by Wine Enthusiast say aged tequila has been well-positioned to replace other brown liquors in some drinks and the blanco or silver varieties standing in for vodka in some recipes. Tequila’s continuing rise in the spirits sector is a national trend, but this is Texas so... same as it ever was.
4. The ready-to-drink cocktail trend continues to grow. That includes batched cocktails, draft offerings of spirit-based drinks and canned cocktails.

What are some issues your bar or nightclub is facing? Do you have some tips for success you'd like to share with fellow TBNA members? Email Travis Poling at beeracrosstexas@att.net