



Setting the Bar

Story | HALEY SHAPLEY

£10 - MONTAGE BEVERLY HILLS

From the taverns where revolutions were plotted to the speakeasies where illicit drinking went down, bars have been part of our history for ages. Today, the most important characteristics include the quality of the drinks and the atmosphere, as these bucket-list bars prove.

DESCEND INTO A WORLD OF WHISKY IN BEVERLY HILLS

Most bars are generalists, offering up a menu that will have something that speaks to everyone. At £10 (known as “Ten Pound”) inside Montage Beverly Hills, it’s all about specialization in one coveted spirit: The Macallan single malt whisky.

Hailing from Speyside, Scotland, distillery The Macallan was founded in 1824 and has spent the past two centuries building a reputation as the best of the best. For the casks, The Macallan sources distinguished, mature oak from North America and Europe that is seasoned with sherry in Jerez, Spain. Every bottle they produce is high quality, and £10 has some of the rarest and most vaunted—including ones that have been aged more than 60 years.

Drink your Scotch the way you like—inside a handcrafted cocktail served in a Lalique crystal glass, perfectly poured over a

sphere of ice made from water that comes straight from the Scottish Highlands, or in a flight of three, with themes ranging from “Teens” (whiskies aged 17 or 18 years) to “Rare.” The atmosphere is dark and rich, designed by Nina Petronzio and accented with bespoke furniture and artwork that pays tribute to the bar’s namesake, the £10 Scottish note.

ELSEWHERE IN TOWN

Dramatic chandeliers and dim lighting create the atmosphere for a bloody good time at the Vampire Lounge & Tasting Room, Beverly Hills’ first wine tasting room. Try one of the Trueblood wines or the Fangria, with grapes from Spain.



GO FOR THE GREEN IN LONDON

Steeped in history but always experimental, the Green Bar inside London's Hotel Café Royal takes its inspiration from the Café Royal cocktail book created in 1937. Along with the classics that have stood the test of time, bar manager Derren King and his team of mixologists create inventive botanical tastes by combining hand-picked tonics with lesser-known spirits. Gin and tonic fans have seemingly endless options of combinations to choose from, garnished with accompaniments like cranberries and grapefruit or fresh chilies and lemon peel.

The name, of course, comes from the bar's collection of absinthe—the “green fairy,” as it's known—that somewhat mysterious spirit that was a favorite of the bohemian artists and writers who frequented the Café Royal (Oscar Wilde and painter Walter Sickert among them). Drink it as is from a stylish fountain, or try it in a cocktail like Doctor's Orders, combining absinthe with rye, buchu leaf reduction, lemon zest and star anise, or La Bohemian, which adds mint and multiple forms of lemon.

ELSEWHERE IN TOWN

You'll need a good case to get into Evans & Peel Detective Agency, which you'll be grilled about when you arrive at this themed bar behind a secret bookcase. The drinks are memorable, as is the experience.



GET A HANDLE ON HISTORY IN HANOI

Bars harbor their fair share of secrets, but not every drinking establishment is perched directly over an air raid shelter, the way Le Club at the Sofitel Legend Metropole Hanoi is. Folk legend and activist Joan Baez took refuge here during the Christmas Bombings in 1972, and she ended up recording a portion of one of her albums in the subterranean space. Visit the shelter, which was excavated in 2012, every day at happy hour.

Then head upstairs to Le Club, where you'll find a bar with a vibe that's described by the hotel as “aristocratic smoking rooms with a hint of 1920s speakeasy.” It oozes sophistication, befitting of its status as the social hub for the legendary Metropole. Live jazz performances take place six evenings a week, but it's not just nighttime that steals the show—the “Afternoon Indulgence” from 3 to 5:30 p.m. includes High Tea and the Chocolate Library, which adds 20-plus types of chocolate to afternoon tea—think ganache, éclairs, mille-feuilles, a chocolate fountain and much more. For a drink, try the Joan Baez Toddy, prepared with lemon tea, Bacardi rum, a slice of lemon, a stick of cinnamon, and local honey. ♡

ELSEWHERE IN TOWN

Cross a torchlit bridge to get to the Sunset Bar at InterContinental Hanoi Westlake, where you can sip cocktails lakeside. Signature offerings include the Passion Martini (vodka, triple sec, passionfruit juice) and Pomelo Fizz (gin, Cointreau, pomelo juice).

