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HOW IT'S MADE



Cocktail by Tomas Delos Reyes

INSPIRED BY MONKEY BAR

For this drink, I wanted to play with the juxtaposition of the interior and the view of the zoo. Based on the design of the space, I decided the cocktail should be a bit obscure and have a light and savory mouthfeel. The Aviation gin—a clear spirit with light floral and citrus notes—acts as an excellent base. The addition of celery juice was inspired by Monkey Bar's view and how the foliage in the space generates an outdoorsy ambiance. The rice wine vinegar brings a counterbalance to the cocktail, adding a light burst of acidity and a savory touch.

- 1½ ounces Aviation gin
- ¾ ounces celery juice
- ½ ounces lime juice
- ¾ ounces agave nectar
- ¼ ounces rice wine vinegar

Tomas Delos Reyes is a mixologist and partner of the gastropub Jeepney in New York's East Village.



Room With Zoo



A panoramic view of an adjacent wildlife park gives Berlin's Monkey Bar a playful twist.

BY ELLA RILEY-ADAMS

Naming a cocktail lounge Monkey Bar is both apt and misleading, since the title connotes wilderness, silliness, and the idea of an adult playground. Numerous venues have used the moniker, but only one overlooks an actual zoo: the new Monkey Bar in Berlin, on the 10th floor of the 25 Hours hotel in the city's new Bikini Berlin commercial complex.

Guests can peer down into the monkey enclosure of the adjacent Berlin Zoo from the glass-walled bar, which sits atop the recently renovated 1957 building. On warm nights, the venue's window panels slide open to transform the space into a terrace, bringing in the murmur of the city—and, at times, the sounds of the zoo's animals. The whole concept for Monkey Bar was “urban jungle,” designer Werner Aisslinger says. “We tried to do something that’s basic and honest but with a certain cosmopolitan character.”

The focal point of the room is an architectural block that serves as the main bar and

counter, with dark wooden terraced seating on one end. Interior designer and stylist Sibylle Oellerich added brightly printed pillows to soften the structure, and provide a cozy counterpoint to black bar stools designed by Tom Dixon. Splashes of color continue with Moroso's Bikini Island furniture collection, which was custom-designed by Aisslinger for the hotel and includes blue, yellow, and red seating modules as well as round brass tables. The designer's oblong Tree lamps for B. Lux also adorn the space. “When you use only professional products from design brands, at a certain point it looks too slick, too designed,” Aisslinger says. “We wanted to have some elements inside the bar that look a bit more improvised.”

Adding to the bar's jungle vibe are potted palms, hanging plants, and stumplike side tables. Brown glass pharmacy bottles hanging above the bar serve as lampshades. Aisslinger was partially inspired by a now-defunct Berlin bar called Dschungel (the German word for jungle), formerly located less than a mile from Monkey Bar, and popular with musicians like David Bowie. The design team, also responsible for the hotel's interiors, was inspired by Oscar Niemeyer's midcentury architecture. “We looked at the materials and tried to adapt some of the South American flair into our building,” Aisslinger says. For Berlin's west side, the success of Monkey Bar and Bikini's development signal the area's shift from conservative to cool.