

Social Setting

At Zinc Cafe & Market in Los Angeles, Demetrëa Dewald connects through cocktails

When Demetrëa Dewald moved to Los Angeles from Taos, New Mexico in 2014, she was in need of immediate employment. “Like so many liberal arts graduates, I found myself looking for restaurant work,” she says. “There was a Craigslist ad for an open call at Zinc Cafe & Market, which was opening in the Arts District in a couple of weeks.” This would mark the third California outpost of Zinc, which also has locations in Laguna Beach and Corona Del Mar. Dewald went in for a server position. “It was my first interview after moving to LA—and my last,” she says. “I got very lucky. I didn’t just find a job; I found a family.”

Dewald fell in love with the social aspect of her server job and within three months was promoted to management. “But I desired a more creative outlet,” she says. And so, a little over a year after she started as a server, Dewald went from manager to lead bartender of The Bar at Zinc. “I know it’s kind of an unusual change of positions, but bartending turned out to be the perfect fit.”

Indeed, as lead bartender Dewald is able to flex her creative muscles while still connecting with guests. “Zinc is at its



As lead bartender at The Bar at Zinc in Los Angeles, Demetrëa Dewald looks to foster community by highlighting fresh, local ingredients.

heart a cafe serving and fostering its local community, and we honor that with our bar program,” she says, noting that they strive to use local products and the freshest ingredients in their cocktails (\$12-\$16). For instance, her District A cocktail (\$15) features two local California products—Amass Dry gin and Greenbar Distillery Fruitlab Jasmine liqueur—as well as fresh lemon juice, simple syrup, muddled fresh strawberry, and a rinse of Fernet-Branca. Her drink The New Normal (\$14), meanwhile, comprises serrano pepper-infused Cimarron Blanco Tequila, mango purée, fresh lime juice, and Cock ‘n Bull ginger beer. “I always try to create a perfectly balanced cocktail—never

too sweet, never too tart, always just right,” Dewald notes. “For me, the balance is where the magic lies.”

And she continues to appreciate the social, community feel that comes with working in hospitality. “I enjoy the ability to create a memory, whether through that first perfect sip or a random conversation,” she says. “I love the moment you make a connection with a new guest—some of my closest friends first sat on one of my bar stools.” **mw**

Sally Kral

Demetrëa Dewald’s Recipes



DISTRICT A

INGREDIENTS:

- 1½ ounces Amass Dry gin;
- ½ ounce Greenbar Distillery Fruitlab Jasmine liqueur;
- Splash Fernet-Branca;
- ¾ ounce fresh lemon juice;
- ½ ounce simple syrup;
- Strawberry;
- Lemon wheel.

RECIPE:

Rinse a Collins glass with a splash of Fernet-Branca, then put aside. In a cocktail shaker, muddle the strawberry with simple syrup. Add gin, liqueur, lemon juice, and ice. Shake and pour into the rinsed Collins glass. Garnish with a lemon wheel.



THE NEW NORMAL

INGREDIENTS:

- 2 ounces serrano pepper-infused Cimarron Blanco Tequila¹;
- 1 ounce mango purée;
- ½ ounce fresh lime juice;
- Top Cock ‘n Bull ginger beer;
- Lime wheel;
- Mango slices.

RECIPE:

In a copper mug, build Tequila, purée, and lime juice. Top with ginger beer and give a quick stir. Fill mug with pebble ice. Garnish with a lime wheel and mango slices.

¹Add 7 chopped serrano peppers to 1 bottle of Tequila. Let sit for 10 minutes, then strain.

PHOTOS BY (TOP) JEFFREY FOUNTAIN; (BOTTOM) DEMETRËA DEWALD