

Home Away From Home

Marissa Mazzotta rises through the ranks at The Shanty in Brooklyn

In 2013, a 21-year-old Marissa Mazzotta had been living in New York City for about a year when she walked into The Shanty, the full-service bar within New York Distilling Co. in Brooklyn. “I ended up going on an impromptu tour with the distiller and had a few drinks,” she says. “The joke around here is that I never left!” Within six months, Mazzotta joined The Shanty team as a barback, and while she did eventually put in time at other venues—including renowned Manhattan cocktail bars Death & Co. and Flatiron Lounge—she returned to The Shanty in January 2017 to take on the role of bar director. “I remember hearing that they were looking to fill the position, and I just knew it had to be me,” she says.

Naturally, cocktails at The Shanty (all \$12) highlight New York Distilling’s line of craft spirits, which includes Dorothy Parker American gin, Perry’s Tot Navy Strength gin, Chief Gowanus New Netherland gin, Ragtime rye whiskey, and Mister Katz’s Rock & Rye rock candy-flavored rye whiskey. “Our beverage program is an ode to the classics, and we try to keep bottle pickups to a minimum—no 8-plus pickups here,” Mazzotta notes. “It was drilled into me early on that there’s almost always a simple way of creating an intended



At The Shanty in Brooklyn, Marissa Mazzotta began as a barback before rising to bar director four years later.

flavor profile in a cocktail, which is why you won’t see a lot of flair and hype from me.” This straightforward and classically influenced approach is clear in Mazzotta’s recipes, such as the Lipstick Lady, which blends Dorothy Parker Rose Petal gin—a new expression released last year—with Noilly Prat dry vermouth, house-made grenadine, lemon juice, and Peychaud’s bitters; and the Fast Car, comprising Ragtime Bottled-in-Bond rye, Aperol aperitif, Fernet-Branca amaro, and Angostura bitters. “I like to think of our drinks as approachable riffs on classics that everyone across the board can enjoy,” Mazzotta adds.

Mazzotta has grown to feel right at home at The Shanty. “So much of my adult life so far has been spent here that I sometimes feel like I’m working in my living room—in a good way,” she says. “We still get a lot of the same regular guests from when the bar first opened—even people who’ve moved away make a point to visit us, and I think that says a lot. We’re a safe haven for locals, where young families feel comfortable bringing their kids after work and old friends love to catch up.”

Sally Kral

Marissa Mazzotta’s Recipes



LIPSTICK LADY

INGREDIENTS:

1½ ounces Dorothy Parker Rose Petal gin;
½ ounce Noilly Prat dry vermouth;
½ ounce grenadine¹;
½ ounce lemon juice;
Peychaud’s bitters.

RECIPE:

In a cocktail shaker, combine gin, vermouth, grenadine, and lemon juice. Dry shake, then add ice and shake again. Double-strain into a coupe glass. Garnish with Peychaud’s bitters in a leaf design².



FAST CAR

INGREDIENTS:

2 ounces Ragtime Bottled-in-Bond rye whiskey;
½ ounce Aperol aperitif;
½ ounce Fernet-Branca amaro;
1 dash Angostura bitters;
Orange twist.

RECIPE:

In an ice-filled mixing glass, combine rye, aperitif, amaro, and bitters. Stir, then strain into a coupe glass. Garnish with an orange twist.

¹Combine 2 cups Pom pomegranate juice and 3½ cups turbinado sugar in a pot. Heat to a simmer, then add 3-4 orange twists, expressing them into the pot first. Stir until sugar is dissolved, then strain and let cool.

²Draw one line vertically across the drink with bitters, then, using a bar spoon or garnish tongs, zig-zag the bitters in the foam to draw the leaf design.