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**10 MUST-VISIT PHILADELPHIA COCKTAIL BARS**  
*Speakeasies, Lounges, Even A Distiller Top Philadelphia's Cocktail Bar Scene*

**PHILADELPHIA, June 25, 2018** – Philadelphia, long known as a beer drinker's town, has an exceedingly strong, proudly underground, contemporary cocktail scene. Cocktail lovers have their pick of a diverse lineup of bars, from slick Center City perches (**a.bar**, **The Franklin Mortgage & Investment Company**) and tucked-away, speakeasy-inspired joints (**Hop Sing Laundromat**, **Ranstead Room**), with plenty of neighborhood destinations in between (**Dock Street Cannery + Lounge**, **Philadelphia Distilling Company**) and exciting new options on the way (**The Thirsty Soul**).

1. **a.bar** – A sleek, understated room delicately anchors one of the most desirable corners of Center City—with libations that live up to the location. The all-day Rittenhouse Square spot offers a refined collection of drinks that spotlight hard-to-find spirits, house-made ingredients and ambitious flavor combinations. The daiquiri-like Monsoon Season (white rum, sweet vermouth, black tea syrup, lime) stands out, as does the Good Night & Good Luck, a full-throated Manhattan riff with additions like absinthe and a zingy habanero shrub. 1737 Walnut Street, (215) 825-7035, [akitchenandbar.com](http://akitchenandbar.com)
2. **Hop Sing Laundromat** – Pouring since 2012 behind an unmarked gate situated along a nondescript stretch of Race Street, Philly's most distinctive speakeasy comes courtesy of the Chinatown bar's unforgettable mononym'd proprietor, Lê, whose idiosyncratic reputation precedes him. The spacious, high-ceilinged, mood-lit room has decor that really must be experienced to be fully grasped (truly—there's a no-photos policy once inside); the bar squeezes fresh fruit juices to order and offers high-end spirits at supremely fair prices at certain junctures of the evening. 1029 Race Street (no phone/website)
3. **Dock Street Cannery + Lounge** – Craft beer pioneer Dock Street Brewery has been a big name in Philadelphia brewing since 1985. Recently, the Cedar Park brewpub and restaurant has made formal forays into the cocktail game. In 2017, it expanded with a mixed-use canning facility-cum-cocktail lounge with a truly unique beverage program featuring creative mixed drinks such as the Fairmount Trails (bourbon, locally made triple sec, citrus and touches of two Dock Street ales) and a cogent clarified milk punch made using the brewery's Bohemian Pilsner, banana liqueur and three kinds of rum. 705 S. 50<sup>th</sup> Street, (215) 726-2338, [dockstreetbeer.com](http://dockstreetbeer.com)
4. **The Franklin Mortgage & Investment Company** – Borrowing its workaday name from a cover business operated by the infamous South Philly mobster Boo Boo Hoff, the Franklin cranks out high-end tipples across two floors. The original, dimly lit subterranean bar specializes in complex, flavorful, ever-changing drinks with options such as the Fern Gully, made with yogurt-washed drum, cognac, vermouth, chilies and a garden of fresh garnishes. The Franklin's upper bar, The Upstairs Tiki, offers more of a Polynesian experience, mixing classics, island-adjacent house specialties and beer-and-shot setups. 112 S. 18<sup>th</sup> Street, (267) 467-3277, [thefranklinbar.com](http://thefranklinbar.com)  
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5. **The Ranstead Room** – This surreptitious Center City cocktail bar hides in an alley behind Stephen Starr’s popular Mexican restaurant El Rey, with an unmarked door that opens to a moody lounge, replete with red leather booths, kitschy décor and edgy artwork. The menu leads with timeless classics, like the Old Fashioned and Eastside, before moving into house originals like the Johnny Bravo (blanco tequila, Green Chartreuse, jalapeno, blackberry, lime) and Bartender’s Choice selection, for which the bar’s skilled drink makers customize cocktails based on guests’ tastes. 2013 Ranstead Street, (215) 563-3330, [elreyrestaurant.com](http://elreyrestaurant.com)
6. **Charlie was a sinner.** – Along the hopping 13<sup>th</sup> Street corridor, this cozy yet glam vegan lounge belongs to the same local team that’s behind the rising vegan fast-casual brand HipCityVeg. Accompanying a food menu of seasonal plant-based plates are cocktails crafted with similar care, featuring fascinating house-made elements (farro-infused bourbon; tea-infused vermouth) and cheeky picks that split the difference between virtue and vice (wheatgrass shots layered with the alpine liqueur Genepy des Alpes). 131 S. 13<sup>th</sup> Street, (267) 758-5372, [charliewasasinner.com](http://charliewasasinner.com)
7. **Oyster House** – Satisfying Philadelphia’s bivalve cravings for more than 40 years, the Mink family’s landmark Sansom Street seafood restaurant has quietly become one of the most consistent and well-stocked cocktail bars in town. The friendly-fast barkeeps here can really do it all, fixing a proper martini to accompany a fresh-shucked half-dozen oysters just as skillfully as they mix more modern sippers (the Firing Squad, with jalapeno-infused tequila and house-made grenadine). The bar here is also paradise for gin fanatics, stocking more than 50 varieties of that spirit alone. 1516 Sansom Street, (215) 567-7683, [oysterhousephilly.com](http://oysterhousephilly.com)
8. **Philadelphia Distilling Company** – Established in 2005, Philadelphia Distilling was the first craft distillery to debut in the state of Pennsylvania since the Prohibition Era, with headquarters in a handsome Fishtown production facility with an elegant bar and tasting room pouring a versatile portfolio of premises-made spirits. The brand’s flagship Bluecoat Gin works its way into a number of signature drinks, like the Under the Elm, which also features a house-made pistachio orgeat (orangeflower water) with flavors of lavender, lime and honey. Vieux Carré, their award-winning absinthe, comes in the traditional French manner with an ornate drip fountain and sugar cube. 25 E. Allen Street, (215) 671-0346, [philadelphiadistilling.com](http://philadelphiadistilling.com)
9. **Writer’s Block Rehab** – A literary theme informs the proceedings at this Gayborhood hang, which mashes up the relaxing reverence of an academic library with the fun-loving atmosphere of a well-loved bar. The three-floor space is bedecked in writerly details like word-jumble wallpaper in which famous author names hide. Head bartender Charles Griffin’s signature drinks include Bitter Queen (Fernet Branca, Campari, lemon, green tea) and Spanish Romance (gin, mint, cucumber, fennel). 1342 Cypress Street, [facebook.com/writersblockrehab](https://facebook.com/writersblockrehab)
10. **The Thirsty Soul** – On deck for summer 2018, veteran bartender Billy Hines’ concept will introduce some welcome energy to West Passyunk Avenue in South Philly. As far as the vibe goes, expect some truly holy spirits—Hines humorously nods to houses of worship, with church pew-style seating, a “confession booth” doorway and a drink menu split between “Old Testament” and “New Testament” cocktails. A Southern-inspired kitchen, featuring hearty eats like jambalaya mac-n-cheese, will round out the offerings. 1551 W. Passyunk Avenue, [thethirstysoulphilly.com](http://thethirstysoulphilly.com)

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*Note to Editors: For high-resolution photos and high-definition B-roll of Greater Philadelphia, visit the Photos & Video section of [visitphilly.com/mediacenter](http://visitphilly.com/mediacenter).*