

# Food & Drink

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## Hopped cocktails

The beer-cocktail trend has been simmering for years, but lately, we've spotted a surge of boundary-pushing quaffs that integrate hopped ingredients in innovative ways. **The Tippler** (425 W 15th St between Ninth and Tenth Aves, 212-206-0000) offers the boldest application in its Gin and Chronic (pictured, \$11). Riffing on the classic two-ingredient highball, bartenders combine herbaceous Plymouth gin, pimento-dram-spiced lime juice, and a house-made tincture crafted from grain alcohol and a mixture of pelletized hops. A splash of tonic water and a whole-leaf hops garnish—an in-your-face touch—reinforce the nip's earthy profile. Barkeep Michael Klein, a fixture at **PDT** (113 St. Marks Pl between First Ave and Ave A, 212-614-0386), has also been dabbling in the bitter buds. For his Ace in the Hole (\$15), he revises the classic Vesper cocktail: Employing an iSi canister (the same type of metal charger used for whipping cream), Klein forces the lemony flavor of Japanese Sorachi Ace hops into Purity Vodka, in a speedy process known as a nitrogen infusion. To the resulting elixir, he adds citrusy Lillet Blanc and Hitachino beer schnapps to give it a malty backbone. A more subtle deployment of hops can be found in the tiki-leaning R.M. Grog (\$16) from Eben Freeman and Michael Longshore at **Ai Fiori** (400 Fifth Ave between 36th and 37th Sts, 212-613-8660). The barmen speckle their mix of rich Ron Zacapa Solera rum, raisiny Cocchi Vermouth di Torino, orgeat, ginger syrup and Meyer lemon juice with a constellation of fragrant grapefruit bitters—spiked with Bavarian hops—from the Bitter Truth. With other local watering holes, including Williamsburg bar-distillery hybrid the Shanty, also tinkering with suds-inspired potions, the next-wave beer-cocktail seems to be hitting its stride. Hops heads and spirits geeks never shared so much common ground.—Sarah Bruning

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