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A New Wave of Miami Cocktail Lounges Refines the Quaffs

Heads Up

By ELAINE
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On a sultry Tuesday night in [Miami](#), plaid-clad and boho-chic hipsters gathered around the pool at Broken Shaker bar, sipping herb-filled cocktails under strings of soft light bulbs. There was nary a bouncer or bikini in sight, replaced by a neighborly mix of artists, professionals and off-season tourists drawn to this denlike bar in a candlelit alcove by the pool.

The seeds of Miami's cocktail renaissance were sown in 2007, observers say, at the now-defunct Florida Room, then run by John Lermayer, in the Delano, the seminal South Beach boutique hotel. He went on to design the original menu at the **Regent Cocktail Club** (regentcocktailclub.com), a retro gem that opened in 2013 in the back of the 1940s-era Gale South Beach hotel with intimate booths, swagged drapes and fresh daiquiris that come frothing from the shaker.

“Regent Cocktail Club is rooted in classics,” said Mr. Lermayer, who has since left the club. “Miami needed a classic cocktail bar as a foundation for everything else to grow off from.”

Back in South Beach, Mr. Lermayer, formerly of the Regent Cocktail Club, opened **Sweet Liberty Drinks & Supply Company** (mysweetliberty.com) last fall. This 75-seat bar, near the [Bass Museum of Art](#), has a vintage vibe and a drink menu rooted in Americana. “The cocktail is America’s first epicurean contribution to the world,” Mr. Lermayer said.

Excellence, he added, has replaced attitude when it comes to cocktailing in the city. “You don’t need to get past a velvet rope or a big doorman to enjoy Miami any longer,” he said.