First Look: Stylish Cocktail Lounge
The Wooly Public Arrives in the Woolworth Building

BY MARGARET SUTHERLIN | FEBRUARY 22, 2017

Inside The Wooly Public

The Gist: David Tobias and Eric Adolphsen, the brains behind popular event space and exclusive FiDi hangout The Wooly, have added a new chic cocktail lounge and restaurant to their roster. The Wooly Public, opened Wednesday, is a stylish spot serving bites and craft cocktails inside the historic Woolworth Building.

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Peking Duck Tots

The Food: Tobias and Adolphsen tapped Jeff Strole, formerly sous chef at Williamsburg’s Maison Premiere, to create the menu. Expect upscale riffs on bar food like tots piled with pulled duck, hoisin and housemade queso; deviled eggs with house-smoked trout; and poke with tuna, grapefruit, yuzu and avocado. Mains include classics like confit chicken with charred broccoli rabe or steak with potato galette and onion jam. Big salads and a number of filling sandwiches, including a house-ground Angus burger, round out the menu.
Wooly Public private burger

History buffs should take note too: Srole plans to add one rotating item from the original Woolworth restaurant to the dinner menu. The team scoured the New York Public Library and found the building’s first restaurant menu (circa 1913), so expect some turn-of-the-century surprises. Up first: crisp frog legs with deconstructed tartar.

The Drink: Eryn Reece (formerly of Death & Co and Mayahuel) looked to tap the history of the skyscraper with a drink menu of “Old Souls” and “New Editions.” The list of lesser-known classics includes the Queens Park Swizzle (rum, Hamilton 151, mint, lime and angostura bitters). As for the newcomers, the signature Woolynesia blends gin, Ancho Reyes Verde, Aperol, passionfruit, cinnamon, lime, ginger and peach liqueur in a kitschy woolly mammoth mug, a nod to the spot’s mascot.

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The Space: The chic space nods to the architecture of the Neo-gothic historic skyscraper in playful ways, like incorporating the celestial mural from the lobby in colors and stencils in the dining room. Also, look for vintage details like old-school record players, turntables and board game tables (ask the bartender for the pieces to play). Dark woods and sophisticated lighting add polish, and the restaurant’s mascot, the mammoth, makes whimsical appearances throughout.

Inside Wooly Public

The Details: 9 Barclay St.; 212-571-2930

The Wooly Public is open Monday – Wednesday 11:30 a.m. – midnight, Thursdays and Fridays from 11:30 a.m. – late, and Saturdays 5:00 p.m. – late.