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Drinkable History Lessons at Lantern's Keep

by James Mulcahy

Cocktail lovers have a lot to like about Midtown these days, which has gone from a no-man's-land of tourist traps to an excellent area for a little lounge hopping. The latest entry (joining nearby [Lambs Club](#) and [Rum House](#)) is [Lantern's Keep](#) (49 W 44th St.; 212-453-4287). Tucked in the back of the Iroquois Hotel, the list at this small bar was designed by [Meaghan Dorman](#), head bartender at [Raines Law Room](#).

The room pays homage to Paris in the 1920's. Many US bartenders headed to Europe during Prohibition to keep their trade alive. We sat with Dorman, and she gave us a quick history lesson about some of the libations. Here's a quick historical primer on three offerings. Use it to impress your drinking companions, or to justify another round.

Drink: Poet's Dream (pictured above)

Ingredients: orange bitters, gin, dry vermouth, Benedictine

Dorman's History Lesson: "I found this in the Café Royal bar guide, which was an extended version of the United Kingdom Bartender's Guild book – which was published a long time ago and is now out of print. The UK bar guild was really well organized – they kept their recipes all together, and the drinks involved the U.S. bartenders who went overseas during temperance and Prohibition. So – a cocktail like this would have been served to people traveling overseas during that time."

Appropriate For: You wanna pour one out for the Prohibition days.

Drink: Floradora

Ingredients: gin, fresh raspberry, lime & lemon juice, ginger syrup & club soda

Dorman's History Lesson: "It's from 1901 and it was born in New York City. It was named after these girls in a Broadway show, known as the Floradora girls. The story is that one would not drink, and they'd all go out, and the men would want to buy them all cocktails. The one that wouldn't drink finally said that she would – as long as she could have something different. So, the bartender made her a gin and ginger ale, with fresh raspberries. This is along those lines....The girls were really well-known, and as the story goes, they all ended up marrying well."

Appropriate For: Husband hunting; when you want to pretend you're not a lush even though you know you are.

Drink: Wildest Redhead

Ingredients: Scotch, lemon juice, honey, allspice dram and a dash of cherry heering.

Dorman's History Lesson: "I found a drink – I was reading Stan Jones' bar guide. It was really a good bar book for its time – the 60's and 70's. They had a drink called the Wild Redhead, which was really very simple. Just Cherry Heering and lemon juice. Not wild at all. Being a redhead, I thought I could improve the cocktail a bit. It still has the original ingredients, but I added blended Scotch, a little honey and allspice dram. It's different, and definitely higher proof than the Wild Redhead."

Appropriate For: When you're buying drinks for the Floradora girls, and they're feeling especially wild after a few raspberry cocktails.

