

THE
TAKEOUT

EXCLUSIVES

We Asked 10 Bartenders For The Strangest Drink Requests They Ever Made



There is an adage that if you want to know the truth about a town, don't ask the mayor, ask the bartender. So, when we wanted to learn about strange and uncanny happenings in the cocktail world, we asked 11 bartenders about the most unusual orders they have received. Their answers revealed a modern cocktail culture that has shunned rigid rules and embraced a spirit of creativity. Strange is not a word these bartenders fear — they welcome unique orders. "When it happens, I love it," Cynthia Mazzini Noble, lead bartender at **Kapow Noodle Bar**, told us. "It's a chance to learn something and shows the guest is genuinely passionate about cocktails."

Today, **pre-Prohibition vintage cocktails** share the menu with new inventions, and customers are exposed to a more diverse array of options than ever before. They discover a cocktail they like in one bar and carry that knowledge with them to new locations, where bartenders work with them to recreate something similar. Customers are also emboldened to swing for the fences, and while some of their bizarre orders were whiffs, others were home runs that found a place on the bar menu.

If there is a lesson to take away from these bartenders, it is to not fear the unknown, and to trust the bartender to lead you in an interesting direction. "We're not just pouring drinks — we're creating experiences," Noble said. Some of the orders they told us about sound strange, but they might inspire your new favorite cocktail.

Martinis with unusual twists



"While I was living and bartending in San Diego, someone ordered a martini with mezcal and oyster brine," Katherine Ramont, a bartender at **Jack Rabbit at Okana** in Oklahoma City, told us. "I did straw taste [...] safe to say, not for me!" While a mezcal oystertini will overpower some palates, another bartender was complimentary about a similar variation. Hector Borges, director of food and beverage at **MacArthur Place**, mentioned that a guest ordered a dirty gin martini with a splash of mezcal. "It sounded unusual," he said. "But surprisingly, it worked. It gave the martini a smoky edge that was really interesting."