

★ The Southern Foodways Alliance Guide to Cocktails

Sara Camp Milam

Jerry Slater

Andrew Thomas Lee, Photographer

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A passion for cocktails as they exist in the American South translates through this work.

The Southern Foodways Alliance Guide to Cocktails is full of tantalizing recipes, beautiful photographs, and wonderful stories of the people and places that helped cocktails flourish in the American South.

The book is very thorough, even including recipes for interesting food items to complement the drinks. Brief introductions, one for each of the contributing bartenders, add a nice touch.

The book journeys through a rich Southern landscape with drink recipes that will make anyone thirsty. It clearly takes the cocktail seriously, down to instructions for very specific brands of alcohol to use. Recipes often include the length of time something should be shaken, the size or style of ice cube to use, and the particular drinking vessel that is most appropriate. Photographs by Andrew Thomas Lee are beautiful and show off the cocktails as more than drinks—they are also works of art.

There's also a wonderful sense of humor to the text, and an understanding that there may not be one perfect way to serve any drink. Sara Camp Milam, who cowrote the book with Jerry Slater, discusses her favorite drink:

I'm just fully prepared to enjoy whatever version of a French 75 you'd care to serve me. Life is too short to be doctrinaire about my cocktails or deliberately set myself up for disappointment. At least not when there are bubbles to be drunk.

Though this book is filled with tempting recipes, it is the history of the South, and the stories about how various cocktails came to be, that make this book so fascinating and a pleasure to read. Information on prohibition dance caves, the association between the mint julep and the Antebellum South, or why New Orleans can be considered the center of Southern cocktail making fill the pages of this luscious book.

Those with a passion for cocktails will appreciate learning the origins and history of some of their favorite drinks, not to mention the tips on where to find the best drinks in the South. Those who do not have a passion for cocktails may very well develop one after reading *The Southern Foodways Alliance Guide to Cocktails*.

CATHERINE THURESON (University Press 2017)

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