

SWEET SUMMERTIME

PAIR THESE SIPS WITH SUNSHINE AND OCEAN VIEWS, AND YOU'VE GOT THE RECIPE FOR A GOOD TIME.

BY ASHLEY RYAN

Summer isn't just a season—it's a mood. A rhythm. A way of life. From burgers on the grill, flip-flops on pavement and a cool breeze on a hot day to sunsets that linger with an endless golden hour glow, summertime holds a certain magic that can't be bottled. And few things capture its essence quite like a refreshing cocktail.

Seaside restaurants and rooftop bars are embracing the season by offering fresh libations filled with bold flavors. Indulge in fruity or frozen concoctions or treat yourself to imaginative sips that catch you by surprise. Either way, Newport Beach is the place to be—with a drink in hand—all summer long.

Lighthouse Cafe, Frozen Pina Colada



CasaDamí, Bellini Damí

Lighthouse Newport Beach

Reminiscent of a lighthouse with stunning nautical decor inside and alfresco patios overlooking the marina, this laid-back locale screams summer—and so does its cocktail menu. Opt for a frozen classic: a delicious pina colada. "It's summer, it's vacation time, the sun is shining, so why not enjoy a fun cocktail?" poses Travis LeCompte, general manager of Lighthouse Newport Beach. Light rum is blended with coconut, pineapple and sugar cane, a natural sweetener, then topped with a dark rum float for a tropical concoction will leave you feeling as if you're out of office on an island getaway. Add raspberry puree to jazz it up even more, then sit back, relax and watch the sun sparkle on the water outside. (949-933-1001; lighthousenb.com)

CasaDamí

Embrace la dolce vita at this European-inspired cafe, where every day feels as if you've just added a stamp to your passport. The flavors of summer shine bright in the Bellini Damí, an elevated take on a classic peach bellini. White peaches are sous vide and blended with basil oleo for a base that is both silky and aromatic. Shaken with fresh lime juice and sour cherry wine, it is then topped with prosecco from a historic estate in Veneto, Italy, and garnished with brandied cherries and fresh basil. "Bellini Damí is a true expression of our identity," says Allan Camarena, CasaDamí's beverage director. "... One of our co-owners is from Milan, where stone fruit and sparkling wine are part of everyday culture. The other is a Newport Beach local who ... fell in love with all things Italian. ... We strive to honor that legacy right here in our little 'Italy' on the Southern California coast." (949-781-4644; casadami.com)

COURTESY OF LIGHTHOUSE CAFE; OUTSHINE PR



CLOCKWISE, TOP LEFT TO RIGHT: COURTESY OF BALBOA BAY RESORT; COURTESY OF VEA NEWPORT BEACH; OUTSHINE PR

A & O Restaurant & Bar

After a day spent out on or in the water, visit this waterfront restaurant at Balboa Bay Resort for a sunset sip with a view. Nestled on the edge of Newport Harbor, the relaxed patio is home to fireside fondue experiences, live music and a tequila bar. But the true standout is the unique matcha martini, which will offer up some added energy before a luxurious dinner or a night on the town. The martini combines organic matcha with Belvedere Vodka, creamy oat milk and raw local honey for a touch of sweetness. Finished with a dash of white chocolate, this perfectly balanced cocktail offers a little indulgence paired with a whole lot of luxury. (949-645-5000; balboabayresort.com)

Topside

Few places in Newport Beach are as captivating as the Topside rooftop bar at Lido House hotel. With views of the peninsula stretching to the ocean, it's also the perfect place to unwind with a cocktail. "The Devil to Pay brings a bold twist to summer sipping—cool cucumber and fresh lime offer crisp refreshment while the smoked and spicy blanco tequila keeps it exciting," says chef-partner Riley Huddleston. "It's the kind of drink that turns heads and keeps conversations going long after golden



Clockwise, Top left to right: Balboa Bay Resort, Matcha Martini, Edge Bar, Captain Ron, Topside Devil to Pay

hour." The complex, easygoing drink features Flecha Azul blanco tequila, muddled cucumber, fresh lime juice, and a touch of agave for balance, served over the rocks in a glass rimmed with a unique spice blend. "This cocktail isn't just a crowd favorite—it's also my personal favorite," Huddleston adds. "... It's a drink that feels at home in Newport's only rooftop bar: confident, bright and just a little bit daring." (949-524-8500; lidohousehotel.com)

Edge Bar

With expansive views of the Pacific Ocean in the distance and a lively atmosphere offering a warm welcome, Edge Bar at Vea Newport Beach is a local hot spot where you can unwind throughout the summer. The island-inspired Captain Ron, named for a 1992 comedy-adventure film starring Kurt Russell and Martin Short, masterfully combines Planteray pineapple rum, St. Elizabeth Allspice Dram and Giffard's Creme de Banane liqueur with sherry, coconut cream, lemon juice and orgeat syrup for a drink that showcases the richness of tropical fruit, the warmth of spices and the creaminess of coconut. "Its complex flavor profile makes it a standout choice for those seeking a luxurious and flavorful drink experience," reveals Stacie Nishikawa Garcia, director of restaurants at Vea. (949-640-4000; edgeatvea.com) NBM