

The best Bloody Marys in New York City

Brunchtime bastion and New York icon the Bloody Mary turns a cool 80 years old—and she’s never looked better

By Rheanna O’Neil Bellomo Wed Oct 1 2014

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Bloody Mary at James *Photograph: Paul Wagtomicz*

The origins of the Bloody Mary, that [hangover-cure](#) godsend of vodka and tomato juice, are as murky as its contents. But the modern-day iteration, a [brunch](#) favorite redolent with horseradish and hot sauce, was perfected right here in Gotham, by French barman Fernand Petiot at the [St. Regis](#) Hotel 80 years ago this year. Since then, the cocktail has been tweaked with abandon, from subtly upturned flavors to outright spirit swapping. Whether classic or with a cool twist, these Bloody Marys are bloody good.



Photograph: Courtesy The King Cole Bar

Red Snapper at The King Cole Bar

- 4/4
- Critics choice

The quintessential

Fun fact: When Petiot introduced his vodka-and-tomato concoction to the St. Regis's King Cole Bar in 1934, the name Bloody Mary was deemed too vulgar for the hotel's chichi clientele, and it was thus rechristened the Red Snapper. The bar's signature drink hasn't changed much in those eight decades: It's still silky smooth with rich tomato, but a delayed kick of smoky cayenne pepper leaves lips tingling. Though heavy-handed on the booze—not that we're complaining—a thick lemon wedge is wrung for full-force tang to cut both the spirit and sweet veg juice. \$24.

1. *The St. Regis New York, 2 E 55th St, (between Fifth and Madison Aves), 10022*

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Photograph: Paul Wagtuicz

Green (Bay) Bloody Mary at Bar Sardine

- 2/4

The Mary of a different color

This striking chartreuse glass will catch you by surprise twice: first with a punch of tart tomatillo, more sour than its sweet red cousin, and then with a hit of house-made serrano hot sauce that slow-burns down the throat. Bright, cooling cucumber water helps quell the heat and freshens up the potent, earthy celery notes. \$14.

1. 183 W 10th St, (between W 4th St and Seventh Ave South), 10014

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Photograph: Paul Wagtouicz

[Spicy Bloody Maria at James](#)

- 2/4
- Critics choice

The South of the border shake-up

Jalapeño-jolted tequila gives vodka a rest at this Brooklyn bistro, quaking the cup with both fiery wrath and crisp green flavor. The glass is lanced with house-pickled purple and yellow carrots and pepped with anise, coriander and a sprig of fresh basil or dill, depending on the bartender's mood. \$9.

1. 605 Carlton Ave, (at St. Marks Ave)

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Photograph: Paul Wagtouicz

[Lobster Claw Bloody Mary at Lobster Joint](#)

- 2/4

The nautical swill

Toppling with trimmings—a garlicky pickle spear, giant green olives and a tender lobster claw—this saucy tippie is like good gazpacho, spiced with horseradish and bolstered by a secret blend of peppers. \$11.

1. 201 W Houston St, (between Sixth Ave and Varick St), 10014

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Photograph: Paul Wagtouicz

[Bloody Mary at Estela](#)

- 2/4

The Asian bent

House-made Thai chili hot sauce electrifies the thick tomato sipper at Ignacio Mattos's modernist eatery. The pepper's slow-and-steady spice gets a briny blast of fish sauce, a clever stand-in for the standard Worcestershire, and an herbal pop from the celery-salt-and-fennel-swiped rim. \$14.

1. 47 E Houston St, (between Mott and Mulberry Sts), 10012

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Photograph: Paul Wagtouicz

[Danish Bloody Mary at Prune](#)

- 2/4

- Critics choice

The Scandinavian stunner

A pair of skewered marinated anchovies plays up Worcestershire's fishy backbeat in the house mix at this neighborhood brunch favorite. The hair of the dog is fired with horseradish and Tabasco and then spiked with the anise-tinged Aquavit. The Nordic spirit comes forward strongest, echoed in the fresh fennel fronds and amped up with a spritz of lemon. \$12.

1. 54 E 1st St, (between First and Second Aves), 10003

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Photograph: Courtesy The Brooklyn Star

Bloody Bull at The Brooklyn Star

- 2/4

The meat lover's mix

Instead of biting bouillon, this savory potable gets its meaty flavor from fresh beef broth. To top it off, the bartender at these Southern digs dunks a handful of pickled green beans and sprinkles the cup with salt and pepper. With a bit of beefy heft, you could probably sub this one in for a meal. \$9.

1. 593 Lorimer St, (at Conselyea St), 1211

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Photograph: Courtesy The Dutch

Bloody Mary at The Dutch

- 2/4
- Critics choice

The smoked spin

A hot and salty chorizo garnish sets the tone for this chipotle variation. The smoky pepper warms up without overwhelming and adds earthy tones to the saucy glass. A smoked paprika salt rim adds another layer of subtle, heat while zippy, house-picked cornichons offer a crisp cool-down. \$13.

1. *131 Sullivan St, (at Prince St), 10012*

<http://www.timeout.com/newyork/food-drink/the-best-bloody-marys-in-new-york-city>