

# DRY JANUARY GUIDE 2022



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## BLOCKTAIL RECIPE

### The Glowjito

South Blocks Glow Juice | Sparkling lemon water | Fresh Lime

Mix 6 oz of South Block Glow Juice, 3 oz sparkling lemon water

& pour over ice in a glass. Garnish with a fresh lime wedge.

**SIP & GLOW!**





# 05

SOBER-CURIOUS 101

# 08

DEREK BROWN'S  
DESIGNER N/A COCKTAILS

# 15

INFOGRAPHIC: RELEASE  
YOUR INNER ZERO-PROOF  
BARTENDER

# 17

MAKE IT A LYRE'S

# 10

DO THE BOOZE-FREE  
HUSTLE AT DISCO MARY

# 13

INFOGRAPHIC: MINDFUL  
DRINKING FOR THE  
SOBER-CURIOUS

# 21

UNDER SAMANTHA  
KASTEN'S UMBRELLA



COVER IMAGE. Photo courtesy of Lyre's Non-Alcoholic Spirits. **THIS SPREAD.** Photo courtesy of "Mindful Mixology."



# SOBER-CURIOUS 101

WORDS BY LAURA SILVERMAN

I quit drinking in 2007 because I was on a fast track to total destruction. I had only just turned 24 and my life felt over without the so-called magic elixir of alcohol (so dramatic, I know). But I had to stop, even if it seemed impossible. I didn't have a road map or guide — Dry January didn't start in the U.K. until 2011 and didn't hit the American mainstream until a few years ago. All I knew was that I had to change.

It didn't happen overnight and it wasn't always easy, but the decision to get sober was the most solid and beautiful choice I've ever made. I vowed to help light the path for others who want to get sober-serious or sober-curious, and to give them resources and

options that weren't available to me at the start of my journey.

Maybe this is your first "dry" month or you routinely take breaks from the booze. Or, maybe you have a family member or close friend who doesn't drink much (or at all) and you want to alternate between, well, leaded and unleaded bevs. However you find yourself, you're here and you want to know what the heck everyone is talking about when they utter words like sober-curious, mindful drinking or Dry January.

From a glossary of terms and a roundup of local and national heroes to lists of books, bottle shops and bars (without the booze, of course), consider this your sober-curious 101.

Gigi Arandid. Photo by Tony Powell.

## Zero-Proof Glossary

**Sober-Curious:** A term coined by Ruby Warrington; curiosity about how and if alcohol serves one's life anymore; cutting back or cutting out booze due to health/wellness reasons; questioning alcohol culture; being a scientist in one's life and experimenting with nonalcoholic beverages as a replacement for boozy ones to see how one feels in body, mind and spirit.

**Mindful Drinking:** Paying attention to the amount of alcohol

consumed; being intentional, curious, and mindful about reasons why we drink; can result in experimenting with sobriety for a period of time.

**Dry January:** A one-month alcohol-free challenge started in the U.K. by nonprofit Alcohol Change UK in 2011 that has since grown to a global movement for people who want to start their year with a healthy reset.

## D.C.'s Local Heroes of the Sober-Curious World

**Ashish Alfred, booze-free chef and founder of Duck Duck Goose (D.C., Bethesda, Baltimore)**  
*@chefashishalfred*

**Gigi Arandid, founder of Binge Bar, D.C.'s first booze-free bar (opening in 2022)**  
*@\_\_bingebar\_\_ + @bingeongigi*

**Maria Bastasch, founder of Disco Mary and beverage director at Maydan and Compass Rose**  
*@findingdiscomary*

**Derek Brown, founder of Columbia Room + Drink Company and author**  
*@ideasimprove // @columbiaroom*

**Sam Kasten, founder of Umbrella Dry Drinks, Alexandria's first booze-free bar (opening 2022)**  
*@umbrelladrydrinks*

**Lauren Paylor, founder of Focus on Health, trainer at Safe Bars, and R+D at Silver Lyan**  
*@lpdrinksdc*

**Anna Welker, mixologist/bar manager at Hotel Revival in Baltimore and inspiration for Hyatt's new Zero Proof, Zero Judgment menus across the country**  
*@annavonshans*

*Follow more of these local sober-curious IG accounts:*

*@dmvwithoutcompromise* by Mike Shipp and Emily Pazdernik, Athletic Brewing

*@mission\_mocktail* by Vera Rosenthal

*@teetotalingdc* by Meredith Raimondi

*@thenahappyhour* by Chris Riley and Tyler Barker

*@zeroproofnation* by Laura Silverman

## National/International Heroes of the Sober-Curious World

**Shea Gomez, founder of No Booze Babes**  
*@nobozebabes*

**Mille Gooch, founder of Sober Girl Society**  
*@sobergirlsociety*

**Annie Grace, author**  
*@thisnakedmind*

**Chris Marshall, founder of Sans Bar**  
*@sans\_bar*

**Khadi Olagoke, founder of Sober Black Girls Club**  
*@soberblackgirlsclub*

**Ruby Warrington, author**  
*@rubywarrington*

**Holly Whitaker, founder of Tempest and author**  
*@holly // @jointempest*

**Laura Willoughby, Dru Jaeger, and Jussi Tolvi, co-founders of Club Soda**  
*@joinclubsoda*

## Booze-Free Bars in the U.S. and Beyond

**Coast Dry Bar in Chicago, Illinois**  
*coastdrybar.com // @coastdrybar*

**Getaway Bar in New York City**  
*thegatewaypgh.com // @getawaybar*

**Listen Bar in New York City**  
*listen.bar // @listenbar*

**Ocean Beach Cafe in San Francisco, California**  
*oceanbeachcafe.com // @oceanbeachcafe*

**Sans Bar in Austin, Texas (original) + St. Louis, Missouri**  
*thesansbar.com // @sans\_bar*

**Wildcrafters in Jacksonville, Florida**  
*@wildcraftersjax*

Not to mention international spots Brunswick Aces (Australia and New Zealand), Redemption Bar (the UK), The Virgin Mary Bar (Ireland), Eden Bar (Ghana) + more.

## TOP SOBER-CURIOUS BOOKS

1. **"Sober-Curious: The Blissful Sleep, Greater Focus, Limitless Presence, and Deep Connection Awaiting Us All on the Other Side of Alcohol"** by Ruby Warrington
2. **"The Sober Lush: A Hedonist's Guide to Living a Decadent, Adventurous, Soulful Life — Alcohol Free"** by Jardine Libaire and Amanda Eyre Ward
3. **"The Dry Challenge: How to Lose the Booze for Dry January, Sober October, and Any Other Alcohol-Free Month"** by Hilary Sheinbaum
4. **"Quit Like a Woman: The Radical Choice to Not Drink in a Culture Obsessed with Alcohol"** by Holly Whitaker
5. **"This Naked Mind: Control Alcohol, Find Freedom, Discover Happiness, and Change Your Life"** by Annie Grace
6. **"How to Be a Mindful Drinker: Cut Down, Take a Break, or Quit"** by Dru Jaegar, Anja Madhvani, Laura Willoughby and Jussi Tolvi

There are hundreds more (Sarah Hepola, Laura McKowen, Augusten Burroughs, Mishka Shubaly, Catherine Grey, Anna David are phenomenal writers) but this is just to give you a taste of what's out there.





**Booze-Free Bottle Shops To Order From**

**Alena Botanica:** [alenabotanica.com](http://alenabotanica.com) // [@alenabotanica](https://www.instagram.com/alenabotanica)

**Better Rhodes:** [betterrhodes.com](http://betterrhodes.com) // [@betterrhodes](https://www.instagram.com/betterrhodes)

**Boisson NYC:** [boisson.nyc.com](http://boisson.nyc.com) // [@boisson.nyc](https://www.instagram.com/boisson.nyc)

**Drink No and Low:** [drinknolow.com](http://drinknolow.com) // [@drinknolow](https://www.instagram.com/drinknolow)

**The Open Road Bar + Bottle Shop:** [openroadbarpgh.com](http://openroadbarpgh.com)

**Sechey:** [sechey.com](http://sechey.com) // [@shopsechy](https://www.instagram.com/shopsechy)

**The Zero Proof:** [thezeroproof.com](http://thezeroproof.com) // [@thezeroproof](https://www.instagram.com/thezeroproof)

And with all the bottle shops that are brick and mortar only (Sipple, Spirited Away, etc.), this category is zooming full speed ahead. Coming along for the ride?

**Top Low- or No-Alcohol Recipe Books**

**“All Day Cocktails: Low (and No) Alcohol Magic”** by Shaun Byrne and Nick Tesar

**“Good Drinks: Alcohol-Free Recipes for When You’re Not Drinking for Whatever Reason”** by Julia Bainbridge

**“Mindful Mixology: A Comprehensive Guide to No and Low Alcohol Cocktails”** by D.C.’s own Derek Brown (coming January 18)

**“Mocktail Party: 75 Plant-Based, Non-Alcoholic Mocktail Recipes for Every Occasion”** by Diana Licalzi, MS, RD, CDE and Kerry Benson, MS, RD, LDN

**“Zero Proof Drinks and More: 100 Recipes for Mocktails and Low-Alcohol Cocktails”** by Maureen Petrosky

**“Zero Proof: 90 Non-Alcoholic Recipes for Mindful Drinking”** by Elva Ramirez

*We’d love to see what kind of fun alcohol-free drinks you create/find or any self-discoveries you make this month. Feel free to tag @boozefreeindc and @districtfray so we can join you in #DryJanuary and beyond.*

**FROM TOP.** Ashish Alfred. Ruby Warrington. Photos courtesy of subjects.

DRY OUT WITH  
**DEREK BROWN’S DESIGNER N/A COCKTAILS**

**WORDS BY COLLEEN KENNEDY**

The mastermind behind the Columbia Room, a previous designee of “Best American Cocktail Bar” by the Spirited Awards, Derek Brown has just authored his second book devoted to the craft of the American cocktail. In “Mindful Mixology: A Comprehensive Guide to No- and Low-Alcohol Cocktails with 60 Recipes,” he rewrites the script of cultural expectations by delivering mouthwatering concoctions that deliver style and taste without a hangover.

“Mindful drinking is a very straightforward concept, as in ‘mind the gap,’ being aware of what you’re drinking and why you’re drinking,” Brown says. “If you’re drinking on automatic then you’re eventually going to have a problem.”

In the introduction of his latest work, which will be published this month, he shares a brief but candid discussion of reevaluating his own drinking habits.

“Mindful drinking is the goal and ‘Mindful Mixology’ is the tool,” he says.

His mindful-drinking toolbox includes 60 recipes ranging from seasonal delights to happy hour classics. More importantly, it reconceptualizes drinking responsibly and with meaning.

Photos courtesy of “Mindful Mixology.”



“Some of the drinks are simulacrum and others provide an entirely new perspective. But the greatest part of all of this is liberating cocktails from alcohol so individuals have the tools to drink them with or without alcohol,” Brown says.

In between the recipes of “Mindful Mixology” are interludes from bartenders, health experts and distillers about the meditative practices behind making liquors, selecting ingredients, slowly sipping and more.

Brown’s book is a wonderfully balanced mixture of a recipe book, historical text and introductory barguide with suggestions for tools, drinking glass styles and mixing methods. In the vein of exploring the history of American cocktail culture, “Mindful Mixology” builds upon Brown’s first published work, “Spirits, Sugar, Water, Bitters: How the Cocktail Conquered the World.”





# Mindful Mixology

A Comprehensive Guide to  
No- and Low-Alcohol Cocktails

Derek Brown



Ever the historian, Brown offers an unsavory etymology for “cocktail” that will make you think twice the next time you see a horse swishing its tail prettily. He even turns to archives and old newspapers, adapting from temperance recipes from the Prohibition Era as the starting point for many of his nonalcoholic (N/A) offerings.

“A lot of skills that proliferated over the last decade have been hard-won by bartenders who focus on the craft of cocktails and look back at traditional techniques,” Brown shares. “It’s time for nonalcoholic cocktails to regain their crown. There isn’t a difference in my mind. It wasn’t different for early bartenders who included both alcoholic, non- and low-alcohol recipes in the same book — and they weren’t self-conscious about it.”

Just don’t call them “mocktails.” These are not merely stand-ins for the real thing, but delectable libations that stand on their own. Brown anatomizes and analyzes the components of a classical [sic] cocktail to show that intense aromas and flavors, a rich texture, an astringent bite, and overall style are the qualities that make a cocktail — not the amount of stiff liquor in the glass.

“I’m trying to show that nonalcoholic drinks can be just as sophisticated, sexy and have just as much gravitas as an alcoholic cocktail,” he says. “We are in such a great, albeit nascent, period of good nonalcoholic spirits, beers and wines. I hope in addition to enjoying these drinks at home that bartenders serve people who haven’t yet tried N/A cocktails and entice a new audience to try great craft cocktails.”

Many of these old-fashioned N/A cocktails and his contemporary adaptations, Brown points out, have less in common with a Shirley Temple or Roy Rogers and more in

common with, well, an Old Fashioned.

There are fruit juices, purees and syrups galore, but there are also splashes of vinegar or soy sauce, various brewed teas, egg whites, garlic and beef broth poured into mixers and glasses. There is even a take on D.C.’s official native cocktail with sour cherries complementing the punch of lime juice to create a piquant Cherry Lime Rickey. For wintertime, try either the Twelfth Night Cider or the spicy bouquet of cloves, ginger and spices in the Lion’s Paw (a N/A version of a bourbon-centered drink called The Lion’s Tail).

There are originals, too, such as the mouth-puckering Pinch Hitter composed of lemon juice, apple cider vinegar, ginger syrup for heat, aquafaba (chickpea water) for weight, a pinch of salt and lemon garnishes.

“It’s ostensibly a lemonade in some ways, but it’s much more complex than that,” Brown says.

Even sans alcohol, the 60 recipes offered in “Mindful Mixology” are nonetheless spirited and a perfect way to mindfully enjoy the best of American cocktails.

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*“Mindful Mixology: A Comprehensive Guide to No- and Low-Alcohol Cocktails with 60 Recipes” is available from Rizzoli Press wherever books are sold. Follow Columbia Room on Instagram @columbiaroom and Derek Brown on Twitter @ideasimprove.*

**Columbia Room:** 124 Blagden Alley, NW, DC; 202-316-9396; columbiaroomdc.com // @columbiaroom



## Do the Booze-Free Hustle at

# DISCO MARY

WORDS BY  
LAURA SILVERMAN

PHOTOS BY  
JENNIFER CHASE

You’ll be partying like there is a tomorrow at Columbia Room’s latest pop-up, Disco Mary, because all the apothecary-style, alcohol-free cocktails are meant to be sipped as is (although adding booze is optional and neither choice is frowned upon by bar staff).

Before you even saddle up to the bar on the patio or take a cozy seat inside the newly revamped library to enjoy vegan eats by Chef Elena Venegas, you’ll be greeted by a mirrored Virgin Mary, meticulously crafted by multimedia artist Lina Shamoon. Yes, a disco ball Virgin Mary is totally the vibe that will follow you throughout your evening.

Welcome to an expanded definition of nightlife — and we love it.

The visionary behind Disco Mary is Maria Bastasch of Maydan and Compass Rose fame. Bastasch and Derek Brown, owner of Columbia Room, are not just business partners — they’re life ones as well. Brown has been vocal about becoming a mindful/rare drinker of alcohol over the years so it only makes sense that a pop-up devoted to all things booze-free would find its way into the mecca of D.C.’s zero-proof innovation.

For the first time in a long time, I donned my gold sequined earrings made by local jewelry designer Earcandie and actually left the house for a drink. I met up with my friend Maria Denton, who is a local zero-proof ambassador and southeast regional manager for Lyre’s Non-Alcoholic Spirits. We raised our glasses — many a time because hey, no booze — as we watched the sun glow behind the buildings of Blagden Alley.

It was the perfect setting for “peeking behind the curtain” to become more acquainted with two of the team members driving the Disco Mary concept: Yaki Udoumoh and Todd Carnam.

Udoumoh has been a mixologist at Columbia Room for the past two-and-a-half years. When he first got into bartending, he noticed Seedlip as the predominant nonalcoholic spirit but has since witnessed the movement blossoming (and tips his hat to Lyre’s, one of the featured spirits on Disco Mary’s menu).

“I make my own tinctures and am trying to go for a more holistic apothecary style,” Uduomoh says of incorporating zero-proof into his personal life when not at Disco Mary.

Udoumoh’s fave on the menu: The Evolutionary.



# DISCO MARY DRINK MENU

## CAN'T REMEMBER (TO FORGET)

**Ingredients:** Hawthorn berry, rosehips, honey, Lyre's Italian orange  
**Soundtrack:** "Love Is In the Air" by John Paul Jones + "The Hustle" by Van McCoy

## DISCO COLLINS

**Ingredients:** TOST (elderberry, ginger, bubbles), lemon  
**Soundtrack:** "Last Dance" by Donna Summer + "I Love the Nightlife (Disco Round)" by Alicia Bridges

## DOPE KALEIDOSCOPE

**Ingredients:** Pumpkin spice (not latte), coconut, aquafaba, apple cider vinegar (ACV), hemp oil  
**Soundtrack:** "Ladies Night" by Kool & the Gang + "Funky Town" by Lipps Inc

## THE EVOLUTIONARY

**Ingredients:** Wild lettuce, chinotto, lemon, agave  
**Soundtrack:** "Can't Get Enough of Your Love" by Barry White + "I Will Survive" by Gloria Gaynor

## GF SPRITZ

**Ingredients:** Grapefruit, lime  
**Soundtrack:** "We Are Family" by Sister Sledge + "Love Train" by The O'Jays

## INFLUENCERS IN THE WILD

**Ingredients:** Dragonfruit, schisandra berry, lemon balm, lime  
**Soundtrack:** "It's Raining Men" by The Weather Girls + "Dancing Queen" by ABBA

## MUSHPRESSO + TONIC

**Ingredients:** Adaptogenic mushroom, cacao, cold brew, Lyre's Coffee Originale  
**Soundtrack:** "Le Freak" by Chic + "Knock on Wood" by Amii Stewart

## PUFF PUFF

**Ingredients:** Pu-erh tea, ginger honey, puff puff juice, damiana + frankincense smoke  
**Soundtrack:** "Rock the Boat" by Hues Corporation + "I Feel Love" by Donna Summer



Fellow mixologist Carnam ran The Interval, the Long Now Foundation's high-profile cocktail bar in San Francisco before moving to D.C. While in California, he created the bar's first low- and no-ABV section. Carnam feels very strongly about providing options for those curious about or already involved in the zero-proof community. "A lot of people are going to want to go out [as we navigate a new pandemic "normal"] — but why should it be only drinkers? [These alcohol-optional drinks] are really intriguing and enticing for people who want to not drink [alcohol] or want to drink very little."

Carnam's fave on the menu: Can't Remember (To Forget). Whether you're taking a break for the holidays, participating in Dry January or just wanting a cozy, eclectic spot to dine vegan and sip booze-free (or low-ABV), Disco Mary has your back. Maybe I'll see you there. Until then, we'll be right here sipping the night away.

*Make a reservation via Resy and download my Disco Mary Spotify playlist at <https://spoti.fi/3rzuNGX>.*

**Disco Mary (inside Columbia Room):**  
124 Blagden Alley, NW, DC; [discomary.com](http://discomary.com)  
// @findingdiscomary





# Mindful Drinking for the Sober-Curious

ILLUSTRATION + WORDS BY AMANDA WEISBROD

Ever since Dry January was introduced to the U.S. in 2013, the sober curious movement has grown from a niche community to a full-blown cultural shift. But what does sober curious even mean? And how exactly does one practice “mindful drinking?” Find the answers to these questions and learn more about where the non-alcoholic beverage industry has been and where it’s headed below.



## Tips + Tricks for Mindful Drinking



### hit pause + reflect

Without judgment, ask yourself about the intentions behind your desire to drink. Is this what you really want right now? Or are you giving in to impulse?



### make a game plan ahead of time

If you’re planning to drink alcohol at a gathering or what not, decide what and how much you’ll drink before you go so you can keep yourself accountable.



### order your drink first

Place your booze-free drink order first and your friends might even follow suit! This also alleviates the pressure to say “I’ll have what they’re having” due to social norms.

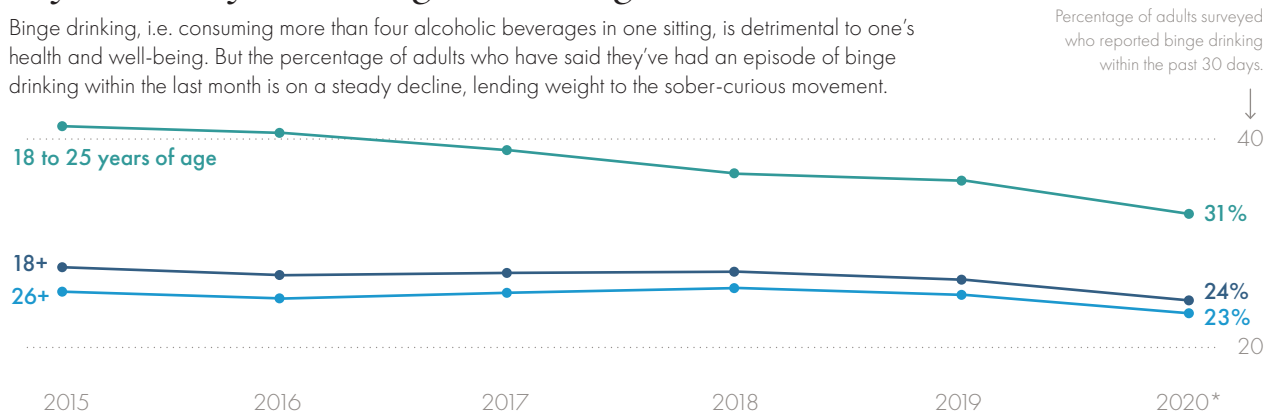


### savor every sip

Take the time to drink slowly and enjoy all of the intricate flavors of your beverage, alcoholic or otherwise. If you don’t like what you’re drinking, then don’t drink it!

## Say “Goodbye” to Binge Drinking

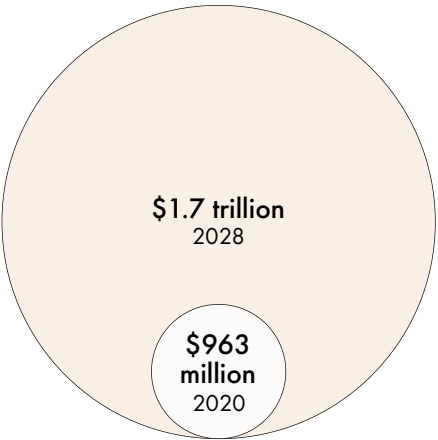
Binge drinking, i.e. consuming more than four alcoholic beverages in one sitting, is detrimental to one’s health and well-being. But the percentage of adults who have said they’ve had an episode of binge drinking within the last month is on a steady decline, lending weight to the sober-curious movement.



\*NOTE: SAMHSA’s data collection method changed in 2020 from previous years because of the coronavirus pandemic. The data for 2020 is an estimate based on data procured in Q1 and Q4 of that year; actual data from Q2 and Q3 is not available.

## The Zero-Proof Market Grows

Fior Markets, a market analyst company, reports that the non-alcoholic beverages market is expected to increase by 200% over the next 6 years.



## Just How Sober-Curious Are We?

Breaking down Google search trends provides insight into what people are interested in at any given moment, and in our case, we’re focused on the sober-curious movement. Each graph below measures the popularity of search terms compared to its most popular moment (100) versus times when its popularity is so low there isn’t enough significant data to map out (0). When mapped together, the data of all terms is compared to the highest moment of popularity out of all terms, resulting in different perspectives on the numbers.

### mindful drinking (n.)

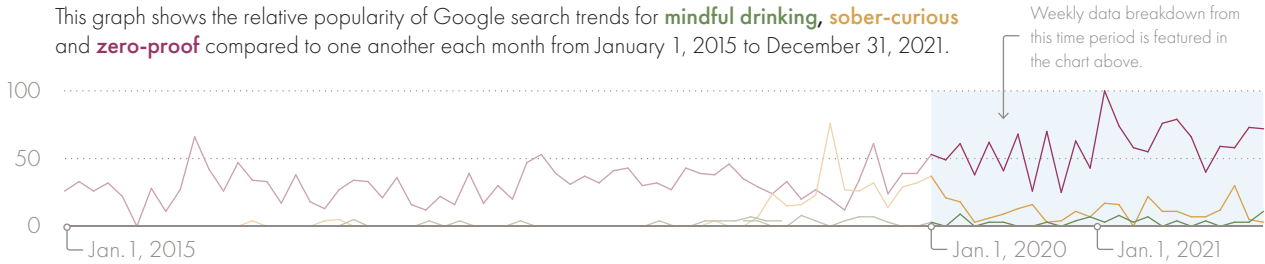
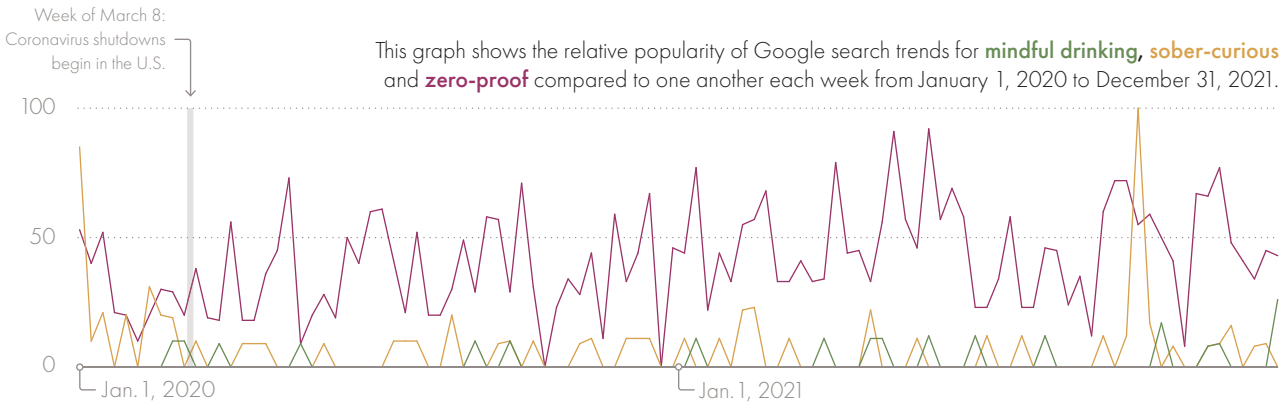
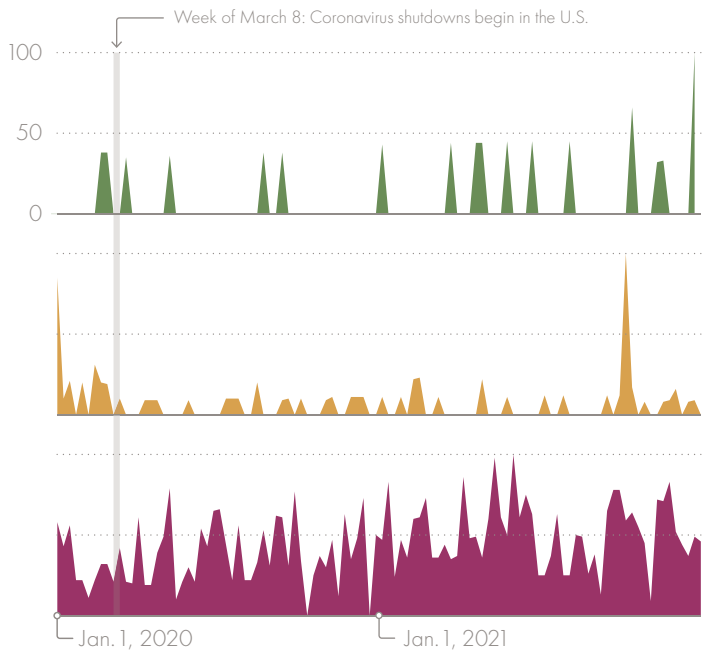
The practice of being intentional, curious, and mindful about the reasons why one drinks and how much alcohol one consumes.

### sober-curious (adj.)

The state of being curious about how and if alcohol serves one’s life anymore while questioning the expectations of alcohol culture.

### zero-proof (adj.)

A description of spirits, cocktails, ales and other drinks that feature little to no alcohol often crafted to imitate alcoholic beverages.



Sources: 2020 National Survey on Drug Use and Health published by Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration; “What Is Mindful Drinking? How It Can Help Your Mental Health” by healthline.com; May 2021 Market Forecast by fiormarkets.com; Google trends data; “What does it mean to be sober curious?” by verywellmind.com.





# release your inner zero-proof bartender

**ILLUSTRATION BY AMANDA WEISBROD**  
D.C.'s own Disco Mary and Binge Bar serve up booze-free  
realness with their creative nonalcoholic concoctions. Try these  
recipes at home to see for yourself just how delicious zero-  
proof cocktails can be.



## The Evolutionary

By Disco Mary

- INGREDIENTS**
- 1 oz. wild lettuce tea (double-steeped)
  - ½ oz. chinotto syrup
  - 1 ¼ oz. lemon juice
  - ¾ oz. agave syrup
  - For garnish: nasturtium leaf

**STEP-BY-STEP**

- 1**  
Add ingredients  
(except garnish)  
to a shaker.



- 2**  
Add ice to the  
shaker and shake  
vigorously.



- 3**  
Strain liquid into  
a 5.5–7.5 oz.  
cocktail glass.



- 4**  
Garnish with  
nasturtium leaf  
and enjoy.



"Herbal, bitter and bright,  
The Evolutionary is the best  
example of the intersection  
between herbalism and  
mixology."  
- Maria Bastasch,  
founder of Disco Mary



"The explosion of flavors and aroma once you scoop the  
bottom of the glass is every inner child's wildest dream."  
- Gigi Arandid, owner of Binge Bar

## You Matcha Keep Floatin' On!

By Binge Bar

- INGREDIENTS**
- 3 scoops matcha green tea ice cream
  - 1 shot rosemary + basil simple syrup
  - SIP CLEAN rosé wine or white blend
  - For garnish: lavender buds, slapped  
rosemary + cinnamon stick

**STEP-BY-STEP**

- 1**  
Place 3 scoops of  
matcha green tea  
ice cream into a  
margarita glass.



- 2**  
Pour a shot of  
rosemary and  
basil simple syrup  
into the glass.



- 3**  
Garnish with  
lavender buds,  
slapped rosemary  
and cinnamon  
stick.



- 4**  
Fill glass halfway  
with SIP CLEAN  
rosé or white  
blend.



- 5**  
Proudly gaze  
at your creation  
and enjoy with  
a spoon.





# Make It A Lyre's

WORDS BY LAURA SILVERMAN

Given all the reasons people might have had to drink during the pandemic, the nonalcoholic beverage industry skyrocketed in 2020 and 2021. In the past year alone, nonalcoholic sales totaled more than \$330 million, according to a recent Forbes article. Confined to couches, people started exploring ways to drink without the buzz — and Lyre's Non-Alcoholic Spirits led the way.

Lyre's founder Mark Livings says he started Lyre's in 2019 “with a bold mission: to change the way the world drinks.”

“Our global success has shown there's incredible demand for premium nonalcoholic drinks,” he says.

At first, Lyre's was only available in Australia where the company is based. But by 2020, the spirit could be found in the U.S., Europe and Canada. The booze-free spirit company then made inroads in the Middle East and parts of Asia the following year.

With such an international and cosmopolitan “spirit,” it's no surprise that “D.C. has been at the forefront of the Lyre's story,” says Maria Denton, Lyre's southeast regional manager.

Lyre's, founded in Sydney, recognized Washington, D.C. as a global and innovative pioneer in cuisine driven by a vibrant immigrant culture and saw the potential for a strong partnership with DMV-area Clyde's Restaurant Group (CRG), which eventually allowed Lyre's to plant their flag in the nation's capital.







David Moran, director of operations at CRG's Old Ebbitt Grill, says he's seen the saloon's cocktail lists evolve to include more and more nonalcoholic options over the past 10 to 15 years.

"There are lots of people who choose not to imbibe for various reasons and these kinds of drinks have given everybody a chance to still enjoy a festive beverage with everyone else at the table," he says.

With spirits and canned ready-to-drink (RTD) cocktails both vegan and gluten free, Lyre's product range speaks to the main propellor of the no and low movement: health-conscious millennials who drink less or choose to not drink at all. You want an Old Fashioned? Check. What about a Negroni? Check. Espresso Martini? Check. Margarita or Paloma? Check and check.

"The pace of growth we're seeing is exceptional. We sold our first bottle in 2019 and today we're selling one at least every 30 seconds," Livings says. "On our current trajectory, Lyre's is set to become the fastest independent beverage brand to reach Unicorn status [when a privately held company is valued at \$1 billion]."

Lyre's has made such a global splash they are the official spirit of this year's Dry January. Started in 2013 by nonprofit Alcohol Change UK with 4,000 participants, this booze-free month-long challenge now has millions of participants and is ubiquitous with beginning the new year fresh as a way to reset the body and mind. Livings says, "We believe it is part of our role to educate and showcase the wide range of options available, whether people want to stop or moderate."

# Local Spots with Lyre's on the Menu

Clyde's Restaurant Group • Old Ebbitt Grill • Hamilton  
Tombs • 1789 • Hank's Oyster Bar • Estuary at The Conrad Hotel  
Columbia Room // Disco Mary • Lib's Grill in Maryland

**Stores Carrying Lyre's:** Calvert Woodley • Addie Bassin's • McArthur Beverages • Vitis Fine Wines and Spirits • Wine Source in Maryland

## Lyre's Classic Margarita

### Ingredients

45 mL Lyre's Agave Blanco Spirit or Lyre's Agave Reserva Spirit  
15 mL Lyre's Orange Sec  
30 mL lime juice  
7.5 mL white sugar syrup (1:1)  
1 dash orange bitters (Laura's pick: All the Bitter, 0% ABV)

**Method:** Shake briefly with ice. Fine strain into glass.  
**Glass:** Half salt-rimmed cocktail coupette  
**Garnish:** Lime wedge

## Lyre's Pink London Cosmo, D.C.-Style

### Ingredients

45 mL Lyre's Pink London Spirit  
15 mL Lyre's Orange Sec  
15 mL lime juice  
30 mL cranberry juice  
7.5 mL premium cherry syrup  
Lemon twist (place inside shaker)

**Method:** Hard shake with ice, fine strain.  
**Glass:** Coupette  
**Garnish:** Orange zest

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**FIRST PAGE.** Tommy's Margarita. **THIRD PAGE.** Paloma. Photos courtesy of Lyre's Non-Alcoholic Spirits.





## STAY DRY THIS JANUARY UNDER SAMANTHA KASTEN'S

# Umbrella

WORDS BY TRENT JOHNSON

Over the past three-plus years, Samantha Kasten hasn't been shy about her sobriety. From Instagram posts cataloging alcoholic alternatives to her recent attempts to burgeon the booze-free scene in the DMV, Kasten has discovered a burning desire to explore the world of low and no-ABV cocktails and other forms of pseudo-booze.

"When I finally got sober, it took me some time to open up about it," she says. "Eventually, people began reaching out to me about their own struggles. Through that I found a community which has led to me meeting so many people through Instagram."

Kasten says the booze-free community on social media is so robust that it inspired her to develop her own business built around the idea of providing quality alcohol-free drinks for everyone, whether they're sober or not. Just this past December, before the holidays, Kasten introduced people in Alexandria to her passion project: Umbrella Dry Drinks.

"I came up with this idea where people can find a place to come and congregate with others," she says. "It's more common now to find people who have a story like me. You don't have to suffer through rock bottoms and it's really cool that the [sober] community has grown so much where people can learn more about themselves and about nonalcoholic options."

Though in its infancy, Kasten has lofty goals for her project — all of which stem from her primary goal to enlighten, educate and entertain via masterful concoctions.

### A Large Umbrella

Kasten describes sobriety as a large umbrella and says, "No matter where you are under that umbrella, you belong." She started her own journey into the world of sobriety after several

years of heavy drinking, which began when she moved from Northern Virginia to Charleston for college. There, she fell deep into the party scene. She initially decided to cut alcohol out of her life following a DUI in 2016, but it took her several years to climb firmly onto the wagon. On January 2, she celebrated her three-year anniversary of sobriety.

"I've been very open about it," Kasten said.

This year, in the midst of the seemingly ongoing and never-ending pandemic, Kasten took her desire to learn more about alcoholic alternatives to the next level by enrolling in a 10-week course led by Sans Bar Founder Chris Marshall, a nationally-recognized leader in the sober-curious movement. The academy classes were Kasten's first foray into mixology — unless you count the extremely short stint when she was a bartender in her early 20s (author's note: she doesn't).

"I wasn't very good [then]," Kasten laughed. "To be honest, I don't know that much about bartending. I have always been a very creative person, so I'm able to come up with interesting combinations. When I drank I didn't even really drink cocktails; I drank bourbon neat. I think that's why I'm more interested in it now. It's more about the process and enjoying a drink you put time and effort into."

What she lacks in traditional experience, she makes up for with infectious enthusiasm. Kasten cares deeply about the plight of folks who are sober but want the feeling of camaraderie that drinking can provide. It's a social aspect that can be difficult for people in search of an alternative.

"Sometimes there's still a stigma with people who don't order drinks out," she says. "I've sometimes left it to chance and let a bartender prepare a mocktail, but it's nine times out of 10 just a jumble of sodas and syrups."

Photos courtesy of Samantha Kasten.





Despite only one pop-up under her belt, which was held at Mint Collective in Alexandria and featured her take on a hot spiced cider and a Dry 75 (her version of a French 75), Kasten is already looking toward her next steps. She says she'll be hosting another pop-up in January, though the location is still TBD, and hopes to eventually house Umbrella Dry Drinks in its own brick-and-mortar.

"It's been about a month," she says candidly. "I'm not far into it, but I've already connected with so many people. Everyone deserves a good drink, whether or not you're drinking alcohol. This is the concept I landed on when figuring out how I could do more with my sobriety and my story."

### Alcoholic Adaptations

Kasten's first experience with the types of events she eventually plans to curate herself occurred at King's Ransom, led by local DMV mixologist Jon Schott. Since this "explosive realization," she has encouraged people in her own life to explore the possibilities of alcoholic alternatives.

"If you hand someone a drink and say it's nonalcoholic, people are going to have a preconceived notion of it being bad," she says about the stigma.

To curb this, she suggests approaching nonalcoholic cocktails you try with an open mind. Even if the drink is intended to replicate the flavor of a traditional Old Fashioned or Manhattan, it is key to approach the beverages with a curious mindset.

"Start with something that resembles a basic drink," Kasten

says. "I'd suggest a mule because ginger beer has such a strong flavor itself. Go toward mocktails you're familiar with, but again, go in with an open mind and know it won't be the same because it's not supposed to be the same. Think about how you'll feel after the fact."

Social media has played a huge role in connecting with others over the course of her sobriety journey, and she suggests Instagram as a great place to identify recipes worth trying. Even if you experience a less than stellar taste with your first one, there will always be another to try.

"Go in without expectations but know there are many good options out there and the first one might not be your favorite," she says. "Look for good resources and try again."

For some, Dry January marks the only time this year they will opt for alcohol-free versions of their favorite drinks. Others will continue to rely on the passion of people like Kasten, who have sacrificed large portions of their lives to continue building the lexicon of robust low- or no-ABV drink alternatives year-round.

"I thought of the concept in the middle of the night and knew what I wanted to call it and what I wanted to do," she says. "The whole time I was taking the [Sans Bar] class, I didn't know what I wanted to do. Now that I do, I'm diving right in."

*For more information about future pop-ups and other news, follow Umbrella Dry Drinks on Instagram @umbrelladrydrinks.*

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