

MAGAZINE

# ZEST~

COCKTAILS • HIDDEN GEMS • PERSONAS • FOOD



**FEATURING**  
**LAIMIPRESS**  
**ANNA BEDA**

ISSUE N°1 AUTUMN 2020



# EDITOR'S NOTE

Hello! Thank you for picking up the first edition of Zest. You might be wondering what is this all about, so let me take you on a joyride. Zest is born from a collective desire to have a magazine highlighting local hospitality. It's a lovechild of passion for flavours and amicable adoration for the hard work behind it. We took our first baby steps at the beginning of March, still not knowing what events would soon overshadow the entire year.

More than six months later, holding this in our hands feels cathartic. Bars and restaurants all over the world are facing significant struggles; our favourite venues have limited operations, taken a break or closed for good. It is mostly in these times when we feel called to arms and deliver this magazine to you. Shy giggles when your waiter knows how to talk to you might be all the rage. But we need to show that hospitality goes beyond that face-to-face interaction. **We think about you every day.**

We are releasing this magazine amidst the second wave of Coronavirus curfews in Tallinn. It's nothing compared to the rest of the world, but no one knows what the future holds. We hope that what you're having in your hands right now will be a part of it.

In our premiere issue, you can look forward to reading about bars, restaurants and people, who helped Tallinn get through the struggle of early-2020. We want you to know about the new venues that opened in the darkest hours. About our fluffy cappuccino suppliers, our beer guardians, our family.

**This is coming from our hearts.**

We also snatched up a fantastic restaurant reviewer from Tallinn's favourite food Instagram page: @laimipress. Yes, there is a lot of burger action in here. Marika Tikas of Fotografiska is head over heels for a couple of wines, and she wants you to know about them. You can also rediscover the magic of Estonian vodka, get inspired for your night out or flirt with the sexy menu by Sveta.

Of all those things, I'm most grateful for the team that put all this together. We don't usually do this, until, of course, we did. Day-long meetings and all the bickering over Messenger feels so worth it browsing these pages. Thank you, guys.

And yes, we will be back for seconds.

Jiří Mališ, Tallinn, October 2020

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## BABYLON BAR

*Pikk 71*

Of the new bars and watering holes popping up in the city centre, some stand out. When you walk into the dimly lit basement of 3 Sisters' Hotel and enter Babylon Bar, you immediately know what we're talking about. The interior invokes a luxurious feeling, but the down-to-earth service sets a comfortable precedent.

You get to let your creativity run wild as the staff prefers to talk without a menu in hand. Don't be afraid though, Babylon offers an extensive selection of cocktails for both experienced enthusiasts and the occasional bohemian.

If you want to see a new bar blossoming in front of your eyes, make sure to start working on your patron status as soon as possible. With cocktail maestros from the well-acclaimed Infusion Bar and Whisper Sister, it will not take long before Babylon establishes itself atop the city's cocktail scene.



## PURTSE TAP ROOM

*Telliskivi 60m*

The heart of Telliskivi's Creative City finally got its dedicated taproom. Right between the gin-lovers at Junimperium and the new-age wine bar of Nudist sits a beer haven made by Purtse Brewery.

On twelve taps you can taste an ever-changing selection on Purtse's beers as well as an occasional tap takeover. Lovers of stouts and experimental beers will find a great glass without a problem. Still, our favourites are with the lighter style pilsners and IPAs—namely the classic IPA Metsik Ida, its Double cousin Imperiaal and the classic pils Kämp.

On a warmer day, you can sit on the terrace, but if the wind picks up, the indoor area is very cosy, and you get to be a bit closer to the source. Feel free to ask for advice from the bar or go for a full-on beer flight.



# ON THE SPOT

*The rules are simple: two bartenders, one topic, six questions, 15 seconds to answer. These are the tip of the tongue answers from your very own:*

## What do you drink...?

	<b>Johanna Rae</b> (Manna La Roosa)	<b>Anna Petrova</b> (Baila)
In your bar as a guest?	Negroni Sbagliatto	Bubbles n'shots
On payday as a treat?	A bold red wine	Champagne
On a first date to impress?	Filthy Martini	Vesper Martini
After a hard shift at work?	Cold beer	A cup of tea
At a brunch with friends?	Crémant	Lambrusco
To test the bartender?	Vieux Carre	I never test

### **Vesper Martini**

4 cl Gin  
2 cl Vodka  
1 cl Lillet Blanc

Shaken (if you're like James Bond) or stirred (if you prefer your Martini clean)

Served up in a cocktail glass, garnished with a lemon twist.



### **Negroni Sbagliatto**

Pour equal but unmeasured amounts of:

Campari  
Sweet Vermouth  
Sparkling Wine

Into a rocks glass, fill with ice and garnish with an orange wedge









**YOUR  
PARTY  
IS MY  
MARATHON**

**A**nna Beda, the global ambassador for Crafter's Gin and Vana Tallinn and the local ambassador for Liviko's imported spirits, has a lot of bottles to juggle every day. When she's not driving around the country teaching at masterclasses, you can find her in her office studying wine and, if you're lucky, dancing on her rare night off. Anna loves sharing, and while you can read her tips for a perfect Saturday night out on page 52, she shared much more with us over a cup of coffee.

### **Can you tell us something about your career?**

I've been in the hospitality industry for about 13 years. I started young and never left. Hospitality runs through my blood, so I never strived for high positions in my restaurants or bars; I just wanted to be around people. In the end, it doesn't matter whether you're working in fine dining, a fancy speakeasy or if you're making bagels at a gas station. It's first and foremost about hospitality, and I adore everything about it. I am enjoying the communication, the small talk, the sparkles in the guest's eyes when they walk in, and when they take their first bites and sips, that does it for me.

And I love challenges! I had the most fun trying to change people's mind about things they might have a prejudice against. Most often, that was whiskey and tequila.

### **How did you get to your current position?**

It all came together very naturally. I have a food engineering and

product development education, and together with my experience from the places I worked in, I was at the right place at the right time. I was looking for a career step-up as I just finished my degree and I honestly expected to land a job maybe as a food engineer, but I got recommended for Liviko, and I never looked back.

### **How were the beginnings of your ambassador career?**

I quickly felt accepted by the guys at Liviko. Already at the interview, they were looking for that spark in my eye, for that wish to be good at what I do and despite me not being the technically most gifted applicant, I got the job. They were willing to teach me everything I needed, and that was a big ego boost.

Of course, there was also a lot of hard work in the beginning; it was a brand new world for me. It was emotionally challenging to handle the level of stress while also having to build up my reputation from scratch. Everyone knew I was never a professional bartender, so I went

through some cleansing of that stigma around my inexperience. On the other hand, everyone also knew about my hospitality and my hunger for knowledge, so it didn't take too long before I was standing firm in my position.

And two years later I'm still here, defying that classic story of a bartender who starts as a barback, works their way up, winning a competition or two and then sort-of retires from bartending into ambassadorship. In my case, that couldn't be further from the truth. I had a vast amount of things to learn, but since I over-analyse almost everything anyway, it was like second nature to me. I went to as many masterclasses of other brands, and I took inspiration from wherever I could, but in the end, it's about making your path and following it.

## What do you enjoy the most about your work these days?

Just like when I still worked in bars, I still love giving people the unexpected. Whenever we are packing the car to go and make drinks somewhere, I take something extra so that I can be creative outside of the box. I love making "girly drinks" for middle-aged gentlemen who look at me with scepticism at first, but ten minutes later all their friends want the same thing. I'm still chasing that genuine connection.

And then there is the storytelling: When people learn that Liviko is not this massive corporation with thousands of employees. When they peek into the production line and see how hands-on our products are. I get to weather people's interest in everything I know. Even though most of the time, we still talk about how important it is to pack your glass full of ice. But no matter if



### **Vana Tallinn Espresso Martini**

4 cl Vana Tallinn  
3 cl Fresh Espresso  
2 cl Vana Tallinn Cream  
(Chocolate or Coffee)

Shaken vigorously, served up  
in a cocktail glass with three  
coffee beans on top

people are into history, recipes or techniques, I always love to share my knowledge with them.

### **Did it at some point click that you've actually made it?**

Looking back, I can see I'm more confident in my role now than a year or even four months ago. But there is always room for improvement; after all, even a small masterclass is still a fresh start. It's never the same, and you can never be 100% prepared. Quite the opposite, I would say that if you're able to give a complete presentation without any emotional turmoil, you should probably find new challenges. This is not like giving a presentation to a class of students, and being a little nervous helps to create a connection with your crowd.

### **What are your goals then? What is your personal ambassador's dream?**

I'm trying to live in the moment because despite being humble, there is a lot to be proud of with the brands I'm currently working with. Being a global ambassador of Vana Tallinn sometimes feels like I'm representing Estonia itself. And if I can make Estonia more known in the world through "my" bottles, that'd probably be a fulfilment of my dream. If I stretch that image further, it will blow my mind if we could raise the entire Estonian bartending scene. These days everyone talks about New York, London

and Singapore, kind of omitting the things we have close to us. But getting our bartenders and bars to peek among those legends would be breathtaking.

### **So what is Tallinn missing then?**

I think we need to remind ourselves of the importance of hospitality continually. Making cocktails quickly and being high volume means nothing on its own. We need to make people more emotional, provide the show and make them want to tell all their friends. To be honest, these days you can make a great drink at home, so when you go out, it's not the drinks that make your night. It's all about the atmosphere, the human connection and the added value.

Estonians are historically quite shy people who can hold back at first, but when they travel, they are so open to being amazed by how friendly other cultures can be. And we do that in hospitality on our home turf too. Obviously, it's hard to change the culture, but I think an engaging waiter can make an impact even if it's just for the two hours of his or her service. People here actually like being opened and talked to in a personal matter; it is then up to us to provide that experience. It's still not perfect, but the scene is getting better every year.









### **Do you think there's going to be a significant setback caused by the Coronavirus crisis?**

It's still too early to judge anything. But we've seen that while some people rediscovered the magic of smaller house party gatherings, there are many more people who have been starved of the opportunities to go out and it showed when the industry reopened. People are a bit more appreciative of the craft we put into our work, and they notice the small details better.

Job-wise it's been similar, some changes were necessary, but it's too soon to talk about impact. We had to think much quicker when changing our strategies and adapt dynamically. In the span of a few days, our plans for the rest of the year went out of the window. The solutions we came up with had to be creative. Everyone always knew that putting the local market first is essential. But when that became an absolute necessity in March, everyone seemed just confused. So there is still work to do, local brands should act like glue to keep the community together.

### **Why do you think many bartenders strive for ambassador positions?**

I think a lot of bartenders only see this "it's always a party" appeal of the thing. Constantly being in the centre of attention, having the possibility to peek

behind the scenes of production, there is a lot of travelling, and it's a massive learning curve.

But let's be honest, ambassadorship is a 9-to-5 job only on paper. As soon as your first masterclasses are planned, the touring is endless. Some days can be ridiculously overwhelming, and the marathon of 24/7 running, travelling and communicating seemingly never stops. You also have to remember your responsibilities; people look up to you when you're an ambassador. You can influence a lot of young bartenders and waitresses, and that's like raising a massive herd of children.

So while on Instagram it might look like all fun and party, there are a lot of sleepless nights and vacations usually turn into long-distance office work. But as I said, you're the star of the show, and you have to make sure it looks pretty on the outside.

**WE  
TALK  
WITH  
OUR  
MOUTH  
FULL**





When a global pandemic stares directly at you, what do you do in the face of adversity? Take inspiration from the team behind Tsunft, buckle up and go forward with your plans despite the havoc you see around you.

Tsunft  
Toom-Kuninga 21  
Monday - Saturday  
Breakfast, Lunch,  
Dinner, Wine

Tsunft is a new addition to the growing, vibrant neighbourhood of Uus Maailm.

Exactly what you need from your next-door hospitality vendor, Tsunft combines a morning cafe with the perfect lunch spot and a weekend dinner destination. When you walk in, you are instantly drawn to admire all the open space. The often overcrowded interior design of Tallinn's restaurants pales in comparison. At first glance, you

know you're going to get something different in here. Elements of Scandinavian design captivate the eye with their subtle elegance. And it won't come as a surprise that head chef Maidu Maiste spent a while working in Denmark. The bar area in the restaurant, designed with the help of Whisper Sister founders, reflects the same principles.

But it all started with yeast. Some of you might already be familiar with the delicious baking skills of Kotzebue Bakery, and Tsunft is an all-



day extension of their space in Kalamaja. As their popularity grew, so did the need for a sit-down space. With no desirable spots available in the city, the search took a good couple of months. Finally, a contract for a lovely site at Toom-Kuninga street was signed last August and the planning started for real. Despite an extremely unlucky timing, the moving-in started in mid-March, just as the Coronavirus crisis started rampaging the city's industry. But all was ready for an opening on May 1st and the first dinner service happened a week after.

The concept of Tsunft is as fluid as its team. Bakers and wine-enthusiasts alike, the idea was to create one place

as an umbrella for everything concerning baking, food, service and drinks. At first sight, the evolving romance between the food and the wine is evident. The recommended wine list changes at least weekly and goes hand-in-hand with the daily specials crafted by the kitchen. This highlights the desire of each wine glass to be enjoyed alongside a paired dish or charcuterie. It would be almost a sin not to allow yourself that combination.

And there is a lot to say about the wine selection. Wine enthusiasts will be amazed by the wide selection of Horeca-exclusive bottlings you are unlikely to find in other places. You are, after all looking at the most distinctive



wine selection in the country. A lot of the bottles come from small scale producers and reflect the terroir and climate of their regions. This is a place where you will learn to love and appreciate biodynamic and natural wines. And the careful selection extends to the spirits – the rums, gins and mezcals alike are all earning their spot on the shelves.

The food doesn't sit far behind. As the staff likes to say, the team literally "talks with their mouth full". Constant discussions and arguments about the food are essential as Tsunft is its own most prominent critic. With a principal focus on taste, a lot of generic considerations go out of the window. All ingredients need to be of a 100% quality before served; hence you will not see an emphasis on local or regional products.

The in-team collaboration is a massive driving force, and when you have too many heads put together, a straightforward elevator pitch is rarely the result of such work. An overly individual approach would hold the team back, so inspired by some of the most successful Scandinavian restaurants, they rarely venture on big projects solo. Tsunft is looking to be the flagship on the sea of restaurant improvement in Estonia. There is a long way to go, but a lot of things have changed in recent years, and the future looks bright.

Currently, you have the option to dine at Tsunft on Thursdays and Fridays, but the concept is prone to evolution. You can always count on breakfast and lunch, but in the words of the chefs, "that's too easy". In the long run, every restaurant will strive for that excitement of evening service. The menu changes weekly, so you are always guaranteed to see something new. This way it's also more entertaining for the kitchen, but at the same time you need to be a perfect planner to not end up with leftovers, and you have to realise you are driving your buy-in price high. But for the sake of the concept, that's sacrificable.

There are still things that are hard to change in the local dining culture. While there is usually a split between restaurants where one enjoys lunch and dinner, Tsunft changes so much from morning to evening that it looks like three distinct places. Slowly and patiently explaining that you can lunch and dine at the same location while nodding in agreement with the struggles their guests might face elsewhere in the city.

Not only do you have less daily specials offers during the summer months, but it's a struggle in general to find a perfect lunch spot that combines an affordable price with reasonable quality. It's



usually a choice between an uninspiring, almost Soviet-diner style, chunk of food and a full-on restaurant that you don't have the time for during a lunch break. "For that, I would give us a pat on the back, but we can't sleep on the laurels. We need to keep our communication on point so everyone can get to know about us,"

The cultural struggle doesn't end there. Despite an almost perfect location for an after-work glass of wine and a plate of cheese, the late afternoons at Tsunft are a rare endeavour. In other parts of the world, this is a natural extension of the working day, a smooth transition between work and rest. In Estonia, that is sometimes even looked down upon.

And of course, the crisis took its toll. There were still bread baking days and preorder pickups, so contact with customers wasn't lost, but it made the beginning slow and difficult. And despite being in between significant office buildings, working from home cuts off a big part of potential guests. But once again, the team pushes through and enjoys a packed restaurant for almost every lunch and sells out selected dinner parties.

But there are bright sides as well. It seems that people are more food and wine aware after the crisis. After having to cook for themselves for three months,

a lot of people have a better understanding of how difficult it gets. At the same time, the wine went from being just a drink to a focal point of the conversation. It's playful to look for flavour notes and aromas in the glass. And when they finally get a chance to go out for a meal, you can see how hungry they are for a great experience. In many ways, Tsunft is a concept the Tallinn food scene has not had the chance to encounter before. And it is one that should definitely stay.

# TSUNFT



Martha Rouge



Susucaru Rosato



Taganan Blanco



# WINE SPIRATION

by Marika Tikas

**Straight out of Fotografiska, house sommelier Marika Tikas presents three bottles that should definitely land on your radar.**

## **Susucaru Rosato, Frank Cornellisen, 2019**

Sicily, Italy

Ladies and gentlemen, please fasten your seatbelts as we are getting ready for the landing of an amazing bottle of rosé in Estonia.

Susucaru Rosato is a blend of native Sicilian grapes like Malvasia, Moscadella, Cattaratto, Nerello and Mascalese. The vinification follows what you might already know from Frank Cornellisen, lots of skin contact and fully finished malolactic fermentation. This results in a juicy rosé with a huge character, ideal to go with almost any dish.

This one is seriously hard to get our hands on so if you see it, don't hesitate. Enjoy at the first possible moment, so you can come back for more!

## **Martha Rouge, Arndorfer, 2019**

Kamptal, Austria

A true family wine always has a certain romance around it. So when Martin and Anna Arndorfer started naming their wines after their daughters, my heart melted with cuteness a little bit.

Martha Rouge is an extremely elegant and full of juicy fruits rafted from a blend of Zweigelt and Sauvignon Blanc grapes. Fermented with native yeasts and aged six months in used French oak, this natural beauty doesn't need any more help. So no fining, no filtration, just gravity doing its thing.

Pure joy and love, bottled and finding its way onto your table.

## **Taganan Blanco, Envinate, 2018**

Canary Islands, Spain

The coolest kid on the block has roots in the Canary Islands, that's obvious, right? Taganan Blanco grew up in very old fields on the north-eastern side of Tenerife and blends a variety of grapes that perfectly reflect the wine culture of the Canaries.

All the grapes. Marmajuelo, Malvasia, Listán Blanco, Gual y Forastera and Albillo, are vinified separately. But all of them enjoy a salty Atlantic-influenced air, which brings minerality and the ashy soil lends a distinct smokiness.

Taganan is a lush romance in a glass. An orgasm for every wine geek, and a tremendous pleasure for everyone.



# **GETTING HIGH ON HEDONISM**





Of all the talk-of-the-town neighbourhoods of Tallinn, none has a more resonating name than Noblessner. A match made in heaven for a summer afternoon-evening in the sun, this former shipyard area seemingly has it all. Take a scooter from the city centre, stop by Baltijaama Turg for some fresh grapes, take a stroll alongside the water and your opportunities only begin there. You can feel like a true bohemian, with great coffee, food, beer and cocktails all at your fingertips. But since we're mostly into cocktails, let's explore the self-proclaimed Embassy of Hedonism - this is about KaiF.

KaiF  
Peetri 12  
Monday - Sunday  
Cocktails, Beer  
Bubbly, Fun

We're sitting on the first floor of KaiF, a bar that has been spreading cocktail joy in Noblessner since December 2019. "Still, most people don't even know we have anything else than a bar on the ground floor," said Andrei Kazakov and Kristo Lassi, the founders of one of the most talked-about spots in the city this summer. It's a warm day, and we're watching the water of the Tallinn Bay sway in the light wind.

"We're just another bar in the hood, not really trying to prove

anything" is a sentence we came back to multiple times during our talk. The humble vibes are contrasting with the masses of people who almost invaded the area during May. No one was thrilled with what was going on, but everything balanced itself out. "We didn't build this bar to serve 600 guests in three hours, so we are relieved everything is coming more or less to normal running". Because while KaiF might look like your regular high-volume bar in a hip area, its concept is more in-depth than you might think. But it's up to you (or in this case us) to dig into its roots.





## The Story

KaiF has a somewhat spiritual story full of unusual coincidences. But it all started a while ago. Both Andrei and Kristo are very well known in Tallinn's cocktail scene. Andrei, previously the ambassador to Prike and by extension to international giants Diageo, has gained bartending experience abroad in Amsterdam before coming back to help open up Butterfly Lounge. After four years he opened Dissident, a bar still well remembered in the hearts of many locals.

Kristo has for a long time been a key figure in Restoran Pegasus, but when his time was coming to an end, he had a heart-to-heart with Andrei at the World Class competition launch event. Little did he know that he has been on Andrei's top three list of people to work with on his next project.

They put together a dreamy concept of a bar that would at the same time be a shop and have its own podcast. When they were looking for a "working name" for the platform, they thought about what they wanted it to stand for. Living in the moment, enjoying life and hedonism were the main topics. "That's how we settled on Kaiff, a slang term for being high and bodily pleasures".

Initially, it seemed that "Kaiff" was going to find its home at Pohjala Tehas but after the negotiations with their to-be landlords went astray, the search continued. Then a phone call happened. One of Andrei's regulars from Dissident invited them to take a look at the area that was supposed to become Noblessner. It was far out of the city, a complete ruin without floors and water was free-flowing everywhere. "So obviously we took it".

It soon turned out why that was a perfect choice. Located in the Kai Keskus, the individual spaces and rooms are labelled alphabetically, and the one



allocated to Andrei and Kristo was called Kai F. Hence the working name came full circle.

### **The Kaiff Experience**

The soft opening happened at the end of November. Eager to show people their plans, they printed out descriptions of future furniture elements on pieces of paper and hung it around the venue. People could wander around and look at a white wall that said "this wall will be painted with naked people" or "here we're gonna have a bar shelf". It was like a gallery that allows for a peek into the future because just months after the launch, everything started becoming a reality.

Getting the first guests wasn't an issue. Restaurants Lore and Kampai were already attracting curious diners, and KaiF fit right in. And despite Noblessner being home to many entities, most of them work as one unit. Collaborations are frequent, and venues recommend people just to bounce next doors when they can't fulfil their culinary or cocktail needs.

Of course, as soon as KaiF started to spread its wings, all bar activities came to a halt. Through the initial outbreak, the bar was closed for public for about a month, but it's presence expanded. They built an online shop, organised a bottled cocktail takeaway and all in all,

it never felt like KaiF completely shut its doors. And even though nobody made big bucks on a takeaway cocktail, it showed people that the bar scene is still here. They also put a lot of effort into their social media. "It might be brave to say this, but apart from a big amount of lost revenue, the lessons learned from this crisis might have a very positive effect on this industry".

The bar is still in its young years though and months without a proper drinking culture took its toll. "We never strive to educate people; this is not a school. But we know we've done something wrong when we can have more than a hundred people drinking on the terrace, and maybe only 10% of them will know about our upstairs bar." KaiF rose to popularity very quickly and only now catches up with the details.

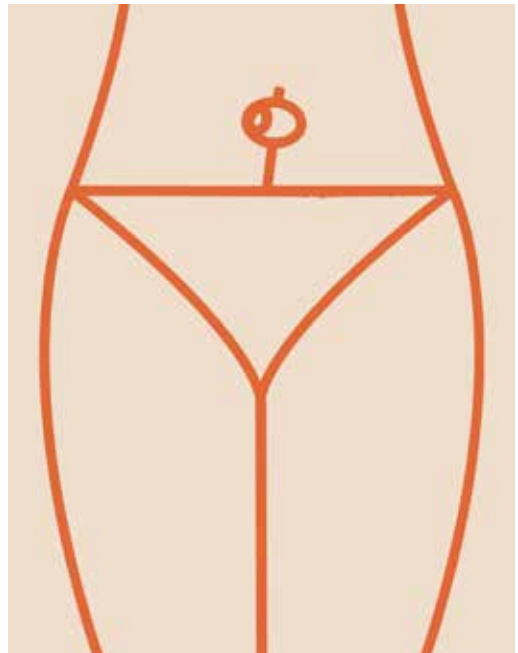
If you come without further expectations, this bar will fulfil your hedonistic needs. You will find the majority of the bottles you're familiar with, and the mixed drinks are not going to catapult you out of your comfort zone. This is a space where you kick back, relax and enjoy your time off in the sun. Hugo Spritz, Margarita and a cold beer? That's a yes from us. Could you do it yourself? Yes, but a true hedonist would never consider that an option.

You can see it from the people you are going to observe once you take a seat. These people don't come here for exquisite cocktails. They come to hang out with their friends, and only later they realise they're drinking decent drinks and at a reasonable price and later come back to reinvestigate. "Yes, maybe there is a handful of people who expected more than just gin-tonic-on-tap ground floor and flavoured Old Fashioned on the first floor from Kristo and me, but again, that amount is negligible.

As the year is entirely in its second half, talks about the future are obviously on the table. "We are still yet to encounter our first full proper winter season, so we can't rely on knowledge from our previous bars." But tap cocktails are here to stay. So are collaborations with both audio and visual artists, the podcast is nearing its 20th episode, and there is only more focus to be put on the upstairs bar.

Yes, the chances are high that if you are listening to your bohemian and hedonistic cravings, you likely surrendered to KaiF a while ago. But come with fresh eyes and dig into the details. But don't go too deep, this is designed for enjoyment. "We are not even talking about ourselves as a cocktail bar; it is an add-on. We are a laidback bar, and many bars are in my

eyes way better at technically being a cocktail bar. But are we doing great cocktails? Yes. Are we having fun? Absolutely. And this is the moment when we realise that this job doesn't feel like work; it's a part of our lifestyles, it's kaiff."





**LAIMIPRESS**

# **YOUR GUIDE TO EATING OUT**

# ÜLO

---



Ülo is a restaurant that opened back in 2018 and has been going strong since. The owners are also involved in other well known restaurants such as Restoran Pegasus, Rataskaevu 16 and F-Hoone, to name a few.

The restaurant is easy to reach; it is located in Kalamaja, right next to Balti Jaama Turg. Inside seating is limited, but during summer months they set a few tables on their terrace and on the street, which is perfect for having a few signature cocktails and doing some people watching.



Even though Ülo's average namesake is 67 years old, the menu is in line with the times. Instead of having an animal-based focus with a few vegetarian or vegan options, they offer mostly vegan selection with a few fish/meat-lover options. The offerings have changed a few times over the years, but some classics never leave. Their sweet potato fries with kimchi and herb mayo is probably the most popular dish and for a good reason. It's highly photogenic, and the taste is damn on point.

Another bombastic choice is their tiger prawns in kataifi with grilled pineapple and lime mayo. The combination of flavours and textures is exceptional, and it is the dish I always order when visiting. However, even if you decide to freestyle, you'll surely enjoy your meal – the servings are simple and straightforward, with exciting flavour combinations and beautiful presentations.



The staff is knowledgeable and can easily offer you a suitable wine or cocktail pairing. They're young, friendly, energetic and eager to help or just have a conversation.

Ülo is a restaurant that should definitely be on your radar, especially if you're looking for a restaurant mostly frequented by locals. Take a seat on their terrace, order some shrimp, a good cocktail, sit back and relax while enjoying the vibrant people of Kalamaja cruising around.



# PÕHJALA TAPROOM

If you haven't had a Põhjala beer, you haven't been to Tallinn. Or Estonia, for that matter. And if you have, and enjoyed it, you have to visit Põhjala Tap Room. There's no better place to try all their different brews and maybe even take a tour of their production line, which is conveniently located right under the bar and restaurant. Yes, a great view is included. As a great plus, it sits in the hippest place in town – Noblessner.

The power couple in the kitchen is Michael Holman and Hannah Hintlian. Michael dishes out most of the menu, while Hannah does her magic with the sweet stuff. Both have worked in Michelin starred restaurants before finding their way to Tallinn, and it shows. Everything in Põhjala is homemade, except the ketchup, which has to be Heinz, obviously. You can choose from a couple of bar snacks, some sandwiches but the star of the show is the Texas-style BBQ. Even though Michael is Canadian, he sure does know his way around a smoker. The juicy brisket melts in your mouth; the sausages are smoky, the tender ribs fall from the bone like cotton candy. To be frank, anything you order is divine. Let them fill your tray with meats, a side of elote and a wedge salad and you're good to go for the day. And of course, chase it down with a beautiful, cold Põhjala beer. And if breakfast is your thing, stop by on a Sunday. Hannah cooks an American style all-day breakfast, and she surely knows how to amaze.



Renee Altrov

# BURGER BOX

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This almost literal hole-in-the-wall burger joint is loved by everyone who has had the chance to try their food. Even though it does not look like much and their social media is essentially a meme, you need to visit them.

It took me a while, but once I got it together and forced myself to visit them, I never looked back. The buns might be very basic, but the attention paid to the pairings of the burger's components is immense. The result equals brilliance. The flavours and textures are amazing, and the sizes are worth the price. Their falafel burger is probably my favourite vegan burger in town.

Get this – it's crunchy, smooth, juicy and well sauced at the same time. Pack on their OG kimchi fries, which likely inspired most restaurants in town to do their versions of the dish. Their laksa is to die for, and they brought the Dutch kapsalon to Estonia. They make their tofu in-house, and they seem to have even experimented with making tempeh.

This shows that whoever is behind this shady-at-first looking establishment is simply not interested in anything fancy and pretentious; they're just offering bangin' street food in a chill environment. So next time you're slightly hungover, do yourself a favour and visit this underground-ish burger joint and stuff your face with junk food without being judged.





***If you are at least a little bit familiar with Tallinn's scene of Instagram food bloggers, there is no need to introduce Laimipress. Since 2018, he has been relentlessly pursuing the best food experience in and out of Tallinn. And when he's not on the hunt, he provides his followers with tons of delicious home cooking inspiration.***

***These are some of his "Best of..." current experiences in Tallinn. And if you're craving more (as you should), give him a follow @laimipress***

## **GLOSSARY**

- ▶ **Kimchi** - Korean side dish consisting of salted and fermented vegetables. Most often napa cabbage and daikon. Adds crunch, acidity, funk and spice to dishes.
- ▶ **Kataifi** - String pastry looking like vermicelli pasta, thin noodles of crunchy deliciousness, usually wrapped around another smaller dessert.
- ▶ **Elote** - Mexican street food corn grilled on the cob. Usually slathered with mayo, sprinkled with cotija cheese and cilantro and seasoned with either Tajin or chili. If served off the cob, the dish is called esquite.
- ▶ **Laksa** - Asian noodle soup. Usually based on creamy coconut milk with a bit of spice, rice noodles and meat/fish
- ▶ **Kapsalon** - The greatest Dutch invention since the stroopwafel - lovechild of nachos and kebab. Fries, topped with kebab meat, melted cheese, topped with tomato and cucumber salad, dressed with garlic and sambal sauces.

# SPIRITS PACKED WITH STORIES

A lot has been bubbling under the surface at Moe Distillery despite the crisis. The renovation of the historic manor in the namesake village in the middle of Estonia is reaching the finish line. They have released and almost immediately sold out Estonia's first whiskey. And of course, they are still going strong with their gin and vodkas, whose legacy resonates more substantially in times, where the focus on the local market is vital.



UNFILTERED GIN  
45% ALC/VOL (90 PROOF)  
NET WT 1000g (35.27oz)  
BOTTLED IN AUSTRIA

**MOHN GIN**  
SMALL BATCH - UNFILTERED GIN

HAND-CRAFTED GIN  
FROM AN INTRIGUING  
BLEND OF WILD POPPIES,  
GREEN & BLUE JUNIPER  
BERRIES FROM THE UNIQUE  
MOHN ISLAND.  
UNFILTERED TO MAINTAIN  
FULL FLAVOUR.  
THE BERRIES & SEEDS  
ARE HANDPICKED AND  
NATIVE TO THE ISLE.  
BASE SPIRIT IS DISTILLED  
FROM WINTER RYE

EST. 2017

**SMALL BATCH - UNFILTERED GIN**  
45% ALC/VOL (90 PROOF)  
NET WT 1000g (35.27oz)  
BOTTLED IN AUSTRIA

**70CL**



There is a lot of magic even behind simple products. Like the anagram-ability of Moe's most important years, 1688 and 1866. Of those two, you often see the latter, commemorating the year when the first Estonian became the owner of the first ethanol and vodka facility in the country. While it might seem more convenient to push an earlier year, as many brands do to gain sound, Moe keeps it humble and local. Their core recipe is more than 200 years old, and it proves that respecting the traditions can get you very far.

### **Moe 1866**

Judging by sales volume, Moe's baseline vodka is by far their bestseller. And while vodka producers can't rely on massive flavour profiles to differentiate from the competition, it's the history that sets Moe apart. It is a story that many whiskey distilleries could envy. The tumultuous ownership shifts that followed the company since its start in 1688, with only a handful of Estonian owners in its 334-year history, contrast with the reliance on local produce. Moe owns Estonia's only ethanol factory in Rakvere, where grain from Estonian farmers becomes the base for vodka produced in its historic manor/facility. Since all the effort put into the final product happens within the country, Moe has successfully pushed for protection under the EU law, and since then Estonian Vodka has become a term of its own.





## Gin

Since Moe was founded under the Swedish rule, homage is paid with the naming of Moe's gin – Mohn. A Swedish name for today's island of Muhu leads to the fact that all botanicals are sourced from this small piece of land between the mainland and Saaremaa. Juniper berries might be a must in gins these days, but here we have them embraced in both green and blue variants, adding a little bit of grassy spice. An additional surprise in the mix is poppy seeds. With a direct focus on a clear herbal taste, as opposed to modern gin, who are leaning towards hiding the juniper flavour behind anything from oranges to basil, Mohn is a gin that packs a punch and goes straight to the point. If you're missing the gin taste in your gin-tonic, this is your way to go.



## Whiskey

The journey of Estonia's first whiskey is still young, and what the future holds might be even more impressive. Aged for a minimum of three years and three months in American and European oak, the small size of the first batch still carries an enormous impact of wood. The base is Sangaste Rye, one of the oldest strains of rye in the world. It has not gone through many mutations, so a comparison to certain varieties of grapes is on hand. The is clean crispiness, and you can feel it in the final product. The reception was so good that you might not be able to get your hands on one of the 100 bottles produced. But keep an eye on further releases and any experiments potentially coming your way.

## Manor

And if you're up for an all-day adventure, make a trip to the facility itself. This beautiful manor that houses more than 500 years of history is also home to a Vodka museum, which is now ready to welcome the public after three years of renovations. You can tour the distillery, the brewery, try to discover a secret bar or just hang out in their beautiful garden. The people behind Moe have been looking forward to reopening a lot, so spice up their autumn schedule and visit them. Just make sure to not arrive by car.







**FIND  
YOUR  
INNER  
SLUTTY  
SVETLANA**







It is rare to find cocktail menus that at first sight, perfectly describe their bars. But the menu at Sveta is innocently lying there on the bar, with a subtly provocative frontpage and you could easily mistake it for a left-behind magazine. That's how much it belongs. But under the surface lingers a different beast.

Sveta  
Telliskivi 62  
Monday - Sunday  
Cocktail, Beer,  
Bubbly, Music

Despite Sveta not classifying themselves as a cocktail bar, the head bartender Melih

Burak Yildiz prepared a cocktail menu that provides the bar's vibrant clientele with not just a good drink to sip on. On a handful of pages, the menu perfectly describes everything Sveta stands for – equality, diversity, acceptance, kinks and much more.

Sveta has for a long time, been a steady shining star of the nightlife in Telliskivi. A mix between a bar and a culture venue (also hosting concerts and other events), Sveta represents the eclectic, bubbly and fun-loving outgoer, who loves good things – be it an experience, a drink or pure vodka.

That reflects with what the bar offers. A relatively broad selection of beer, solid cider, canned cocktails, twists on classics; and then there is what we came for. Sveta's dedicated cocktail menu shows that you can get a nice drink without

spending a lot of money. Not aiming for top-class cocktails and focusing on the imbibing potential and presentation, the menu perfectly hits a sweet spot.

The menu is a fashion lookbook, and on first sight, you might even miss that the focus is on the cocktail and not on the clothes or arrangements. This project has been on Melih's mind for a while, as Sveta Vintage, their fashion twin in neighbouring Baltijaama Turg, wanted to create a fashion lookbook. Melih recycled this idea and got it to launch after year-long preparations at the start of this spring.

"People still don't get that it's a menu as it looks very fancy, so clean. And when they turn pages, see me in a BDSM costume, look at me, get surprised and even more when I then tell them they're looking at the menu. That's cool. It suits the Sveta vibe well."

The drinks were slowly coming together as the menu was being born. As the photoshoots took a while to arrange, the

planning only included two or three cocktails at a time. The result is as straightforward as the bar itself. Have an idea? Just do it.

Obviously, being a bit provocative is in Sveta's DNA. You can't help thinking who's grandmother decided to be the model for a cocktail called Granny Seduction, but everybody was super happy when the collaboration wrapped up. It always helps to have a friend help you out though, both to keep the cost down and keep the spirit in the community.

Relying on the portrayal of high fashion as a way to express flavours of drinks is an unusual choice. But everything today is an expression and Sveta adds meaning to the menu.

Launching such an elaborate menu did change the bar a little bit though. The difference between opening a beer and preparing a sophisticated cocktail is significant but worth it. Sveta acknowledges that not many high-volume cocktail bars have been successful on Tallinn's nightlife scene. "It's something that we still haven't figured out, and we're getting used to picking up all the broken shards of glass at 7 am."

What does the future hold in the cards? "It would be super cool to do an audiovisual menu, but that's a whole different beast.". For now, it's time for a controversial fashion. And where else do you get a condom as a garnish for your drink?









# WHAT'S WITH THE TAP?

**L**ike it or not, tap cocktails are here to stay. A topic that has been dividing bartenders and cocktail lovers alike has been seen in full swing around Estonian bars this summer. You can read what the hedonists of KaiF have to say about it (page 24-29), below we asked Kristjan-Walker Kask of Punch Drinks for his insights and summed it up with our own.

"This year we have seen about a threefold increase in tap cocktails sales in Estonia," says Kristjan-Walter Kask. His company Punch Drinks delivers their tap delicacies to about 20 bars in the country which

includes both bespoke tailored cocktails for specific venues and classic high-volume best-sellers like Aperol Spritz or Mojito. And of course, you can find them at various events, concerts and festivals, where the concept meets its real need. Punch Drinks is an excellent example of everything good about tap cocktails – consistent quality, reduced waste and faster service.

"We project the tap cocktails popularity will rise even more year-on-year since more and more forward-looking business owners start to see the perks behind this concept." And as more resources are directed towards their research & development teams, bartenders



are getting on board each year. The latest addition to the research and development team is Mihkel Kahn, last year's winner of Estonian Bartender Championship. So keep your tastebuds ready for the next upcoming things.

In comparison to such successes, any rejection of draft cocktails might sound like stubborn, bitter words of an old-fashioned grumpy man. It remains true that cocktails on tap are still only dreaming of capturing the majority and tradition still reigns supreme. But a compromise is the right way to go.

Of course, many of us go to cocktail bars for the thrill, the theatre and the show. Seeing your cocktail built ingredient by

ingredient creates a visual bond as you wonder how it is all going to come together. It is easy to compare the tap cocktails discourse to similar discussion years back – premix or “from scratch”? Some bartenders are still debating whether you should put your shelf-stable ingredients for a Singapore Sling into a bottle or if you should spend an additional two minutes gathering and pouring ingredients individually.

There is a space for both. I do not mind the most popular cocktails being available on tap. I don't need to see a bartender churn a mojito sixty times a night and the same goes for a gin-tonic or any other highball. But please keep my daiquiris in your shakers. Thank you.





# COMMUNE CAFE

*Pärnu maantee 20*

Are you looking for a cosy cafe with a Nordic touch, a perfect spot for a quick lunch or all-day Swedish-style pastry? Look no further – Commune Cafe and Bakery brightened a vacated local in the city centre with plenty of flowers and the smell coming from the kitchen is just so delicious. The friendly service, fantastic soundtrack and let's not forget **!!PIZZA!!** will have you coming back for days on end.

Did we mention that everything is 100% plant-based? Not that you would notice, with a four-cheese pizza and luscious cakes on almost every table. But that's the best part about it. Commune promotes a vegan lifestyle in the most attractive way possible. By showing that if done right, it doesn't even seem like a change.

So ease yourself into a vegan treat proving that a plant-based cheat day is a delicious thing.





# F.BURGER

*Paepargi 57*

For a fantastic burger experience away from the city centre, plan yourself a sunny afternoon trip to Pae Park in Lashamae and stop by F Burger. Located in a local Maxima shopping centre, this is a real diamond hidden in the rough. Everything these burger maestros create is hand-made, sourced as locally as possible, and their creativity will blow your mind. Get ready for salmon salted with grapefruit and extra strong gin or go gluten-free with mind-boggling bun replacements. Whether you're going to support your local burger place or head there from great lengths, you will not be disappointed. See you at the park!



# HOW-TO: SATURDAY NIGHT OUT

by Anna Beda

## Going Out On A Saturday, How To Do It In Style and Look Like A Boss

The weekend is in full swing. You took it easy on Friday night and full of energy you are planning a big outing for Saturday. To help your inspiration flow, we asked Anna Beda for a couple of tips on how best to enjoy the most joyful day of them all.

First of all, if you have a clear head when you wake up and a whole Sunday as a bumper for a potential hangover, why not start your day with a late brunch? Sleep in, open your curtains to the sunshine and find yourself a nice place with a terrace. Hit up a couple of friends who you haven't seen in awhile and order a couple of Bellinis for the table. Get your stomach full because this night will not have you going easy.

Next up: assemble your posse for the night venture. You should have a couple of hours to spare at home, and you better use them to make sure you look like the queen/king you are. You should look outstanding, and when you look into the mirror as you're leaving, you should be seeing the person who you want to take home for the night.

Go for a lovely dinner. You should book in advance because you want a table with the best views of the Old Town or the seaside. Make sure the golden hour and the sunset can paint the sky for you in lovely colours. Your Instagram followers will appreciate the idyllic background. There is nothing wrong with going traditional but look for a restaurant with a modern touch. Don't be shy and get playful with your favourite cuisine and let the chefs blow your mind.

In the same way, give full freedom to the bartenders. You don't need to overthink; it's your day off anyways. Furthermore, wine pairings are great, but a cocktail pairing can blow your mind. You will get a delicious starter drink in bartender's style – it might be a Negroni, a spritz or maybe a complete surprise. Of course, aperitivo is not only about drinks; it's the time when you get to talk with your friends before you stuff your mouths with all the delicious food.



The main course should again go with a cocktail, and if you're not yet convinced, imagine a delicious pairing of an Elderflower Margarita with a duck breast. Yes, you should not miss out on these opportunities. And for dessert, take everything and top it with an Espresso Martini.

When you roll out of the restaurant, it's time to call your favourite bar and ask if they have space for you. Always try to go for places where bartenders know you so you can continue that omakase vibe you started with dinner. Bartenders love expanding your horizons so ask for the crazy stuff.

Afterwards hit up another bar and repeat the process or if it's already getting late, find yourself a nice dance bar with a substantial gin selection and float into the late night with a herbal and bitter highball in your hand. Take selfies, make memories and when you get home, take another look at how lovely you look. This night was worth it!

### **Patron Margarita**

This classic Margarita recipe is personally embraced by the Patrón Brand Ambassador to Benelux, Sarah Södersten

45 ml Patron Silver  
25 ml Triple Sec  
20 ml Lime Juice  
5 ml Simple Syrup

Shaken and served up  
in a cocktail glass with a  
optional salt rim





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until next time..

