



Pick Your Poison

If it's any old drink you're craving, you're spoiled for choice in Berlin. But for a truly special signature cocktail, follow your thirst to **Hilda Hoy's** picks.

Every distinguished drinker should have a signature drink, like James Bond and his dry vodka martini or Don Draper and his beloved old fashioned. Even the Queen has her favorite tipples: gin and Dubonnet with a slice of lemon, which she apparently enjoys every day just before lunch. If you don't have a signature drink of your own, here are three potent potables to lay claim to and the best places in the city to order them.

GIN & TONIC

The menu at **G&T Bar** (Friedrichstr. 113, www.amanogroup.de) opens with a quote from writer Bernard de Voto: "The proper union of gin and tonic is... one of the happiest marriages on earth." This elegant bar with a classic air pays

homage to that much-loved highball cocktail and stocks a carefully curated selection of the world's finest gins and tonic waters. A house specialty is the tea-infused gin, but if gin and tonic is your signature drink, go for the classic, a blend of Tanqueray No. TEN and locally made Thomas Henry tonic.

CHAMPAGNE COCKTAIL

The dapper, ultra-professional bartenders at chic **Victoria Bar** (Potsdamer Str. 102, www.victoriabar.de) can mix up practically anything, but because nothing says class quite like champagne, a special section of the menu is dedicated to cocktails based on bubbly. Try the classic Champagne Cocktail, a blend of champagne, Angostura bitters, and a sugar cube.

Or take inspiration from the Queen herself and try the Alfonso, which adds Dubonnet to the recipe.

MAI TAI

The Rum Trader (Fasanenstr. 40) in Wilmerdorf has dubbed itself to be, at age 40, the oldest cocktail bar in Berlin. Whether or not that claim holds any water, stepping into the smoky bar is like entering a 1930s time capsule, and the bar's collection includes a number of rare, vintage rums. In true speakeasy style, you'll have to ring a bell to get in. If you're lucky enough to snag a seat, owner Gregor Scholl – a well-known personality on Berlin's bar scene – will personally mix you up a decadent mai tai, made as strong as he thinks you can handle.