

# Thursday Styles

The New York Times

## Boîte

### Tooker Alley

Prospect Heights, Brooklyn

**I**N an unmistakable sign that Prospect Heights has arrived on the Brooklyn scene, the neighborhood now claims not one, but at least two artisanal cocktail bars. The latest even has a retro-sounding name, Tooker Alley, which, it turns out, is named after the Chicago street that led to the Dil Pickle Club, a famed freethinker's hang-out.

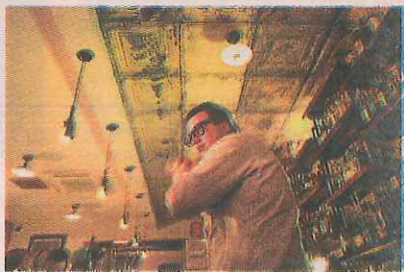
Del Pedro, a former bartender at the Pegu Club, is one of its owners. Tooker Alley takes its cocktails seriously — it says so on the old-timey menu, which offers a drink-by-drink history of the martini, including its predecessor the Martinez and other cocktail variations.

#### THE PLACE

Just around the corner from the Brooklyn Museum. It shares a street with a liquor store and trendy bar, Bar Corvo, which is fairly representative of the area's fast-changing fortunes. There are few surprises in this familiar look: filament bulbs that evoke gas lamps, exposed brick, factory-style windows and antique-like wallpaper.

#### THE CROWD

Prospect Heights is an ethnically mixed neighborhood and the clientele reflects that. On a recent Wednesday night, two handsome nattily dressed



PHOTOGRAPHS BY YANA PASKOVA FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES

**OLD-TIMEY** A martini and Curtis Hancock, barkeep, at Tooker Alley.

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men chatted with the barmen. A couple in their 60s, quietly sipping, sat next to a table of three 20-somethings who were furiously texting. Up front, the large table was taken up by three generations of one family (baby included).

#### THE PLAYLIST

Jazz and more jazz. Don't look for anything else. A recent evening found patrons trying to guess which Coltrane song they were listening to. (It was "Equinox.")

#### GETTING IN

Open the door and walk right in. Cocktail culture has arrived in Prospect Heights, but not velvet ropes.

#### DRINKS

Classic cocktails are interspersed with modern ones (about \$11). Stand-outs include the Cherry Orchard (cherry eau de vie, cherry liqueur and maraschino liqueur), which is in absolutely no need of a cherry garnish. And the very strong, very green Hobo Julep is goosed with mint bitters. On the more restrained side, the aptly named Puritan (\$12) is a martini variation laced with yellow Chartreuse.

Tooker Alley, 793 Washington Avenue (Lincoln Place), (347) 955-4743; [tookeralley.com](http://tookeralley.com). Open 5 p.m. to 2 a.m., Sunday to Thursday; until 4 a.m., Friday and Saturday. **ROBERT SIMONSON**