

ON LOCATION

# BOTTOMS UP, BARCELONA

A clutch of bar-raising establishments proves the art of the cocktail is alive and well in the Catalan capital, says **CLAUDIA WHITEUS**



The eye-bending bar set-up at Boca Chica in Eixample



The elegant interiors at Dry Martini

## ► DRY MARTINI

If this polished establishment is a temple to its namesake cocktail, its mahogany bar – or at least the central two metres of it – is its altar. The space is reserved solely for the most senior bartender on duty to prepare the drink that put this place on the map (which here, incidentally, is stirred – not shaken). A clandestine reservations-only restaurant in the back room adds to the members-only aura, expertly engineered by native gastro mogul

Javier de las Muelas.  
[drymartiniorg.com](http://drymartiniorg.com)

## ► OLD FASHIONED

This hideaway in lively Gracia has become somewhat of an institution



Vodka cocktail from Solange

despite its diminutive size. A fast-paced jazz soundtrack, nostalgic black-and-white photos, vintage artefacts and bow-tied bartenders make for a welcoming atmosphere in which to enjoy a gin and tonic, mixed more than 30 different ways. [oldfashionedcocktailbar.com](http://oldfashionedcocktailbar.com)

## ► SOLANGE

Relatively new to the scene is brothers Alfredo, Xavier and Raúl Pernía's tony little number named for *Casino Royale* femme fatale Solange Dimitrios. Drowning in mirrors and crystal, the ostentatious decor only bolsters the intoxicating effect of the joint's seriously delicious cocktails. The inventive presentation (the HMS Conqueror is served, inexplicably, wrapped in manila packaging) is always good for a chuckle. [solangecocktail.com](http://solangecocktail.com)

## ► BOCA CHICA

The sophisticated Spanish set favours this sumptuous Eixample bar, a first-floor add-on to the chic Boca Grande restaurant downstairs. Here, the dashing staff flit about the premises equipped with ear-pieces to ensure guests unwinding on the bar's low-slung sofas and daybeds are never without a drink. Cowhide stools and animal skulls add a Wild West undertone to the establishment's Modernista feel, the work of local design legend Lázaro Rosa-Violán. [bocagrande.cat](http://bocagrande.cat)

Tried & Tasted

## THE COTTON HOUSE HOTEL

A new, vintage-inspired bolthole is an instant classic



The 83-key property set in a restored Neoclassical edifice was unveiled as part of Marriott's svelte Autograph Collection in 2015. The cornerstone design by the prolific Lázaro Rosa-Violán is delightfully theatrical, with boiserie-embellished ceilings, dark woods, an endlessly winding staircase and marble floors, making for a gentlemen's-club feel that continues in its first-floor lounge, where the walls are lined with ancient tomes and colonial-period portraits. Those with a sweet tooth will delight in a mouthwatering breakfast of exquisite cakes and confections, while the restaurant-bar gets points for the out-of-this-world cocktails (try the *Gossypium*) by mixologist Jonatan Macià Marlés. [hotelcottonhouse.com](http://hotelcottonhouse.com) — CW

**IN OTHER NEWS ...** Italian chef Giuseppe Iannotti just made a dashing Barcelona debut with the launch of his Krèsios restaurant in the **Mercer Hotel**, a svelte space designed by architect Rafael Moneo (*left; mercerbarcelona.com*) ... Not far from El Born, **Casa Bonay** makes a stirring first impression with 67 rooms in a restored 19th-century building that also houses a top-shelf tapas restaurant and a Vietnamese eatery (*casabonay.com*).