

Black bartenders are the cornerstone of modern cocktails. Before the Roaring Twenties popularized the art of mixed drinks, history points to the fact that many American cocktails were likely the invention of Black mixologists — some were famous like [Cato Alexander](#) and [Tom Bullock](#), while many worked in establishments, quickly mixing up some of the most important drinks in bar culture. After all, what would the Kentucky Derby be without a [Mint Julep](#)? While the origins are still somewhat contested, many agree that [Bullock's Stone Sour](#) was likely the predecessor to the Amaretto Sour.

As renowned [mixology historian](#) David Wondrich [notes](#), “Black people have been mixing drinks in America since the earliest days of European colonization. After the Revolution, saloon-keeping was one of the few occupations open to free blacks in America, and any part of the country with a significant free black population had black-owned saloons to cater to it.”

The impact of Black bartenders and mixology is undeniable. Cato's drinks became so popular that they helped popularize the term “cocktail.” Meanwhile, Bullock's influence allowed him to [write a cocktail book](#), *The Ideal Bartender*, and he was even at the center of a scandal with President Roosevelt. When Roosevelt denied drinking too much, he mentioned he had just a sip of a julep made at the club Bullock worked at. Local newspapers balked at Roosevelt's testimony — surely no one could drink *just a sip* of Tom's julep!

That clout perseveres today, with many of our favorite spirits being distilled by Black-owned brands, while Black bartenders continue to push the boundaries of the craft cocktail world. Here are five compelling recipes created by these Black History Makers.

## BILLIONAIRE'S ROW: BLACK BILLIONAIRE / 12TH AND OCEAN

This fruit-forward cocktail tastes just as gorgeous as it looks. The blackberries enhance the cognac's complex flavors perfectly, while the fresh lemon juice elevates the cocktail to a whole new level.

**Ingredients:**

- 3-4 muddled blackberries
- 1 oz of simple syrup
- 1 oz of fresh lemon juice
- 2 oz of **Billionaire's Row Cognac**
- Garnished with a lemon wheel & fresh blackberry

Shake and strain into a rocks glass. Garnish with lemon and blackberry.

## REVEL SPIRITS: CRY OF DOLORES

Revel is behind some of our favorite spirits. This avocado and coconut-based cocktail is surprising as it is delicious. Creamy yet balanced, it's a must-try. Don't be overwhelmed by making the puree and syrup in advance; both are easy to make and will allow you to make enough ingredients to make a handful of cocktails.

**Ingredients:**

- 2 oz **Revel Blanco**
- 1 oz avocado coconut milk puree
- .75 oz cinnamon syrup
- .5 oz lime juice

Make the *avocado coconut milk puree* by blending 1/2 ripe avocado and 1/2 cup of coconut milk and refrigerating for at least 12 hours. Make the cinnamon syrup by dissolving 1/2 cup of sugar and 1/2 cup of water over low heat. Steep a cinnamon stick in the mixture for 20 minutes. Remove the cinnamon and refrigerate.

Once the puree and simple are chilled, add all ingredients to a shaker, shake with ice, and strain over fresh ice. Garnish with arbol chili and shredded coconut.

## BIRDIE BROWN: GREEN WITH ENVY

As one of the few female African American homesteaders, Bertie “Birdie” Brown made a name for herself selling her homemade hooch out of her home in Montana. Today, we celebrate her grit and ingenuity with this herbal and bright cocktail!

### **Ingredients:**

- 2 oz Birdie Brown Plain Hooch
- .75 oz fresh lemon juice
- .75 oz simple syrup
- 4-8 basil leaves

Combine all ingredients in a cocktail shaker with ice and shake cold. Double strain into a rocks glass with fresh ice and garnish with 3-4 basil leaves.

## LS CREAM: ESPRESSO MARTINI

Inspired by the Haitian tradition of cremas, LS Cream founders used a cherished family recipe to create an award-winning liqueur. The baking spices add comfort and depth to the traditional espresso martini.

### **Ingredients:**

- 1 oz of LS Cream
- 1 oz of espresso
- 1.5 oz of vodka
- 1 oz of coffee liqueur

In a cold Martini glass, pour the LS Cream. Fill a shaker with 2 big ice cubes and add all the other ingredients. Shake vigorously. Strain and pour the mix into the martini glass.

## SAINT LIBERTY WHISKEY: BERTIE'S BRAMBLE

Saint Liberty was founded to celebrate the female bootleggers and moonshiners who kept American spirits alive during Prohibition, including Bertie, mentioned above. This twist on a French 75 calls for blackberries, but you can also make it with Montana huckleberries as an extra homage to Bertie's homestead.

### **Ingredients:**

- 1.25 oz [Bertie's Bear Gulch Bourbon](#)
- .5 oz fresh yuzu or lemon juice
- .75 oz blackberry syrup
- 2 oz prosecco
- 2 fresh blackberries for garnish

Combine all ingredients in a shaker except the Prosecco. Shake vigorously for 10 seconds with cubed ice. Strain into Flute. Top with Prosecco and garnish with two blackberries.

We are highlighting the Black History Makers in the spirits and wine industry all month. Make sure to check out our social feed on [Instagram](#), [Twitter](#), [Facebook](#), [Pinterest](#), and [LinkedIn](#) for exclusive content surrounding Black History Month. For more cocktails crafted by Black Makers, check out our collection of [Cocktails featuring Black-owned Spirits](#).