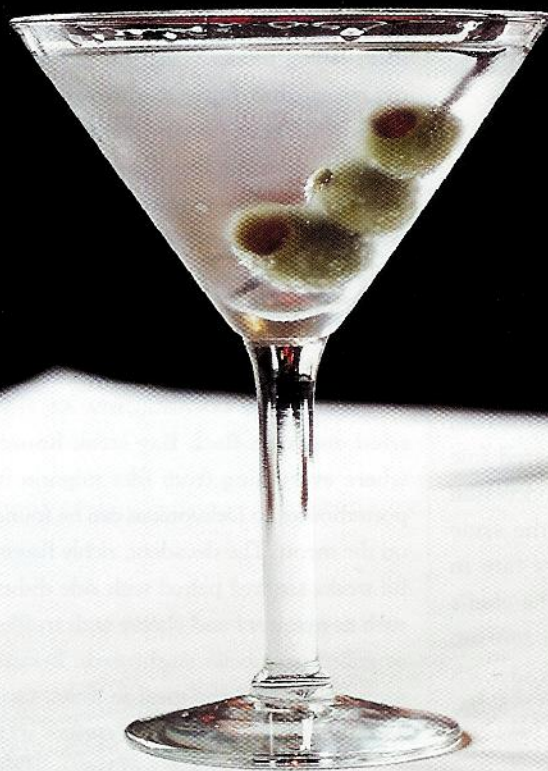


# GREAT MARTINIS

From fruity to dirty, there are fabulous martinis to be sipped all over town.

**By Margit Feury**

**Photographs by Heath Robbins**



**SHAKEN NOT STIRRED:**  
The Classic Martini takes center stage at Sonsie.



"HOW DRY IS IT?" WAS THE QUESTION MY grandfather would ask before deigning to taste a martini. In fact, his liquor cabinet contained three different versions of martini testers. But these days, the ratio of gin to vermouth doesn't seem to matter as much. In fact, it's becoming more rare to find a martini that's even made with gin.

"There has been an evolution of the martini," says Joy Richard, bartender at the South End's hip Tremont 647. Well, that's fine with us. As the martini evolves, it just keeps getting tastier. Here are some of our favorites:

### Classic Martini

#### SONSIE

327 Newbury St., Boston, 617-351-2500

WHILE SONSIE HAS LONG BEEN CONSIDERED a trendy spot to dine on Newbury Street, it has not forgotten that which is tried and true—the classic martini. The chilled glasses may be large, but the bartenders add just the right amount of vermouth. (If you request a "dirty" martini, they'll add a splash of olive juice.) And if the weather is right, Sonsie is one of the best places to people watch. Sit by the large open windows and sip slowly. If you're more in the mood to lounge, head downstairs to the swanky Red Room.

### Strawberry-Basil Martini

#### NOIR

The Charles Hotel, 1 Bennett St.,  
Cambridge, 617-661-8010

THE DRINKS AT NOIR ARE SMOOTH, VOLUPTUOUS and impossible to resist, much like



the noir films for which they're named. You can't help but feel suave as you slide into a black-leather booth, surrounded by dim red lighting and funky house music. Ordering a martini just feels like the right thing to do. Try the Blue Cheese Martini (hand-stuffed olives with Hendrick's rose petal-infused gin in a chilled glass) or the Strawberry-Basil Martini (Stolichnaya Strasberi vodka, fresh basil, lemon and lime juices, and a touch of strawberry purée). The aroma of basil perfectly complements strawberry's juicy sweetness.

### Pear Martini

#### NO. 9 PARK

9 Park St., Boston, 617-742-9991

WHILE THIS SOPHISTICATED RESTAURANT IN the shadow of the State House may be famous for its fine dining and wine list, locals know it's worth stopping in just for the Pear Martini. Grey Goose vodka, a splash of Belle de Brillet (pear cognac), Poire-Williams (pear liqueur) and pear nectar are mixed and then topped with the perfect garnish—a sugar-coated, baked



**TIME TO UNWIND:** Diners relax, kick back and take in the Newbury Street scene at Sonsie, TOP; the ever-popular Strawberry-Basil Martini lures guests to the nearest bar for its tantalizing taste twist.





**ALL AGLOW:** Patrons mingle at Cuchi Cuchi's seductively lit bar, **TOP**; a pear chip adds the perfect garnish to a pear martini at No. 9 Park.

pear chip. Yum. And if that makes you hungry, No. 9's bar and cafe menu will knock your socks off.

## Mantrini

**MANTRA**  
52 Temple Place, Boston. 617-542-8111

ALL MARTINIS AT THE ULTRACHIC MANTRA are called Mantrinis, and they are all worth a taste. As you sit at the marble bar, which was formerly a line of teller windows at the Old Colony Bank, you may have a hard time deciding between the Telotus (vodka, pomegranate juice and triple sec) and the Kiss (Stolichnaya Razberi, crème de cassis and a splash of sour). To make it easier, go straight for dessert with the Valrhona (Stolichnaya Vanil, white crème de cacao, Godiva chocolate liqueur, milk and Valrhona chocolate shavings).

## Thai Martini

**CUCHI CUCHI**  
795 Main St., Cambridge.  
617-864-2929; [www.cuchicuchi.cc](http://www.cuchicuchi.cc)

WITH ANTIQUE CHANDELIERS, STAINED-GLASS WINDOWS, Italian green glass blocks, art nouveau tiles and a color palette of burgundy, mustard green, yellow and touches of black, the decor of Cuchi Cuchi is as eclectic as its extensive small dish menu.

And the signature drink list is equally zany. All concoctions are made with fresh fruit and herbs. You'll actually see green apples transform into your Sour Apple Martini. If apple is not your style, there are more than a handful of other variations on the standard martini from which to choose. One sure bet is the Thai Martini (fresh lemongrass, ginger-infused simple syrup, and splashes of sour apple liqueur and Malibu rum).

## Pineapple Martini

**TREMONT 647  
AND SISTER SOREL**  
647 and 645 Tremont St., Boston.  
617-266-4600

TREMONT 647, A REAL NEIGHBORHOOD (yet creatively fashionable) restaurant, and its sister bar next-door, Sister Sorel, share a fab drink menu, appropriately titled "Delicious Libations." While there are plenty of martinis to match every taste, the pineapple is the surprising standout. The bartender starts with house-infused pineapple vodka, then adds Stolichnaya Vanil and splashes of simple syrup and pineapple juice. It tastes even better than a creamy pineapple LifeSaver.

■ Turn to page 50 for a detailed lineup of additional restaurant listings.