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The Pontiac: Your new favourite neighbourhood bar

Bringing fun to Old Bailey's Street



The Pontiac looks to be Hong Kong's comfy go-to bar with the most premium craft spirits and cocktails

Hong Kong has long been missing what people in the U.S. and the U.K. would typically call your 'local bar' — a place where you and your friends are regulars. No, not the type of 'regular' that only drops by on a Friday and Saturday night out in Lan Kwai Fong but one that also frequents the bar during the week (be it afternoon or after work) because you love the atmosphere, the bartenders and you know what you're getting. This is what new bar The Pontiac is trying to achieve.



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Beckaly Franks is one of the leading female bartenders in the industry.

Inspired by the neighbourhood watering holes of Portland, Brooklyn and San Francisco, The Pontiac wants to establish a relationship with each and every one of their customers so they become almost like a second family — albeit a slightly wild and quirky one.

The buzz: Helmed by the Roopchand brothers (of *Fatty Crab* and *Rummin' Tings*) and Beckaly Franks (also fondly known as the 'First Lady of Mixology'), the first female mixologist to win the 42 Below Cocktail World Cup and an expert in American whiskey, The Pontiac specialises in casual but quality craft cocktails.

Related: NEO: Noho's hottest new cocktail bar

The look: Located right next to Fatty Crab, the bar features modern industrial-style interiors with a tongue-in-cheek retro flair — keep an eye out for the small disco ball and bra jokingly hanging from the ceiling



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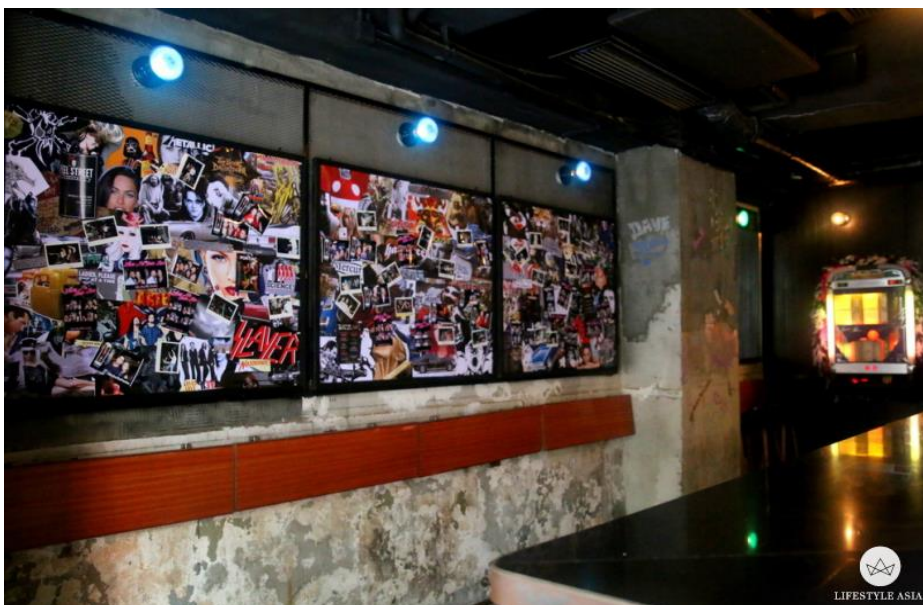
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When you enter, you're immediately greeted by the funky cocktail menu graffitied onto the right wall and on the left is an edgy community board where people can post pictures and flyers.

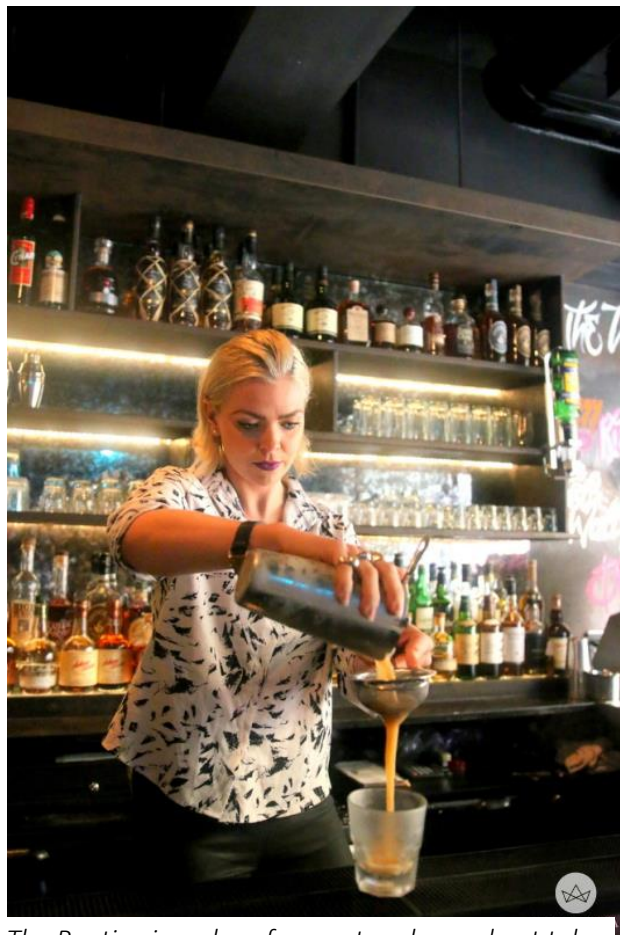
Each cocktail has its own unique twist and a cheeky name to match.



Check out the latest local happenings on The Pontiac's community board.



Drinks: The one thing we love about The Pontiac's cocktail menu is that you can actually digest it. While every other bar seems to boast menus featuring over 30 cocktails (all of which they claim are signatures), The Pontiac's menu has a refreshing total of nine signature cocktails (all HK\$88 each) and homemade jello shots.



The Pontiac is a place for you to relax and not take yourself too seriously.

"The whole concept behind the cocktail menu is that it's here if you want it but it won't be pushed in your face," explained Beckaly Franks. "We want to make cocktails that people can easily drink and keep drinking all night if they want to. This doesn't mean that we're not capable of making this uber avant-garde menu but that's not what The Pontiac is about."



Pictured: The Heisenberg, Hobnail and The Runaway.

From house up, The Pontiac only uses the most premium products. Their house vodka and gin, for example, is from The 86 Co. and Plantation 3 Stars is used for their house rum. Some of our favourites include the bright blue Heisenberg slushie cocktail (Aviation gin, Bianco vermouth, blue curacao, absinthe and lemon), which is deceptively light.

Related: 5 best Old Fashioned cocktails in Hong Kong

Old Fashioned lovers will like the Hobnail (a well-balanced mix of scotch, ginger, Averna, lemon, bitters and orange oil) while those looking for a creamy, tropical tippie should go for The Runaway (Blackwell Jamaican rum, pineapple, coconut, lime/lemon and crème de noyaux topped off with soda).

What else: The bar also features a super cool, jukebox all personally curated by Franks and Michael Callahan (of 28 HongKong Street and Proof & Company) and some of the most exclusive bottles of single oak whiskies.

Photos: Yi Li Dawson