



Clockwise from upper left: the Sideways Sour, a contemporary take on the Pisco Sour; vintage bottles of Pisco Punch alongside a home distillery; Guillermo Toro-Lira, cocktail historian at Pisco.

Pisco, opening August 1, 5 p.m.

THE SPIRIT

Pisco, the bar's namesake, is a potent South American brandy made from grapes.

ON DISPLAY

A copper pisco still, original bottles of Pisco Punch from the '30s, and other artifacts anchor the bar to the past.

OPTIONS

Have your drink made with one of about 20 different piscos.

ATMOSPHERE

Lush, red, textured wallpaper and a semi-private area with a rippling water feature provide a high-styled lounge look.

SNACKAGE

Bar bites include fried quinoa risotto balls, Peruvian-style crudo, and house-cured chorizo.

1817 MARKET ST., S.F., 415-874-9951, PISCO SFCOM

Elsewhere:

One of the first cocktail bars to get creative with pisco (try the Blushing Lima), **Cantina** concocts the Punch with fresh pineapple, three kinds of citrus, and bitters. 580 SUTTER ST., S.F., 415-398-0195, CANTINASFCOM

Bartenders at newly renovated lounge/restaurant/lobby bar **Level III** in the JW Marriott add a touch of allspice liqueur and pineapple gomme syrup, created by Jennifer Colliou of the Slanted Door, to the Bank Exchange Punch. 500 POST ST., 3RD FL., S.F., 415-771-8600, LEVELTHREESFCOM

Tim Stookey keeps it fresh at the **Presidio Social Club**, adding lemon, lime, and pineapple juice to his version of the drink. BLDG. 563 RUGER ST., THE PRESIDIO, S.F., 415-885-1888, PRESIDIOSOCIALCLUB.COM

NIGHT WATCH

Punch-drunk love

San Francisco's lost classic cocktail, **Pisco Punch**, is resurfacing around town.

BY CAMPER ENGLISH
PHOTOGRAPH BY LORI EANES

The martini was probably not invented in Martinez, the Buena Vista Café only popularized Irish coffee, and Trader Vic's mai tai was likely "inspired" by a competitor's recipe. But Pisco Punch, made from the South American grape brandy, was most certainly created at the Bank Exchange in San Francisco by Duncan Nicol. Though the recipe died with Nicol in 1926, the cosmo of the gold rush era is making a comeback, thanks to the efforts of Bay Area resident and scholar Guillermo Toro-Lira.

The just opened Pisco, located adjacent to Destino on Market Street, is the newest of several bars now re-creating the famous cocktail—but it is the only one with Toro-Lira as staff historian. The lounge has white marble floors and a riveted door in homage to the Bank Exchange, but it is overwhelmingly modern in design, with LCD screens and cocktail-glass coolers built into the bar. Pisco Punch is, of course, the focal point of the drink menu, but one of several other adaptations (Pisco Negroni) and new creations (Sideways Sour) just might become San Francisco's next famous pisco-based cocktail. ■