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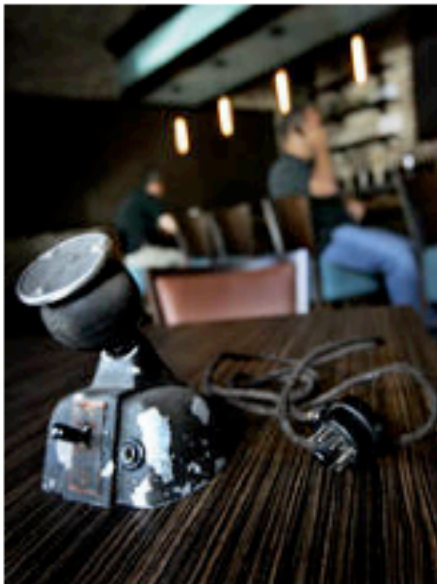
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New lounge is speakeasy chic

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Metromix
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The microphone that holds the magical inspiration... (Credit: Frank Espich / Metromix)

The dignified patrons at the new Ball & Biscuit cocktail lounge didn't seem like those given easily to trivial amusements. Still, they couldn't help but enjoy the one-way mirror effect as passers-by pressed their perspiring faces against the tinted storefront glass, hunting for signs of life.

You couldn't blame them, of course. Buzz has been building for months about the stylish bar, which opened very quietly last weekend.

The owners, Trevor Belden and Zach Wilks, wanted to create the allure of a modern-day speakeasy — "like you were sitting in a crumbly, old New York warehouse ... with modern furnishings," Wilks said. For design inspiration, he held up a vintage STC 4021 microphone, nicknamed the Ball & Biscuit because of its shape.

True to form, "The Biscuit" features pre-Prohibition-era cocktails, such as the Sazerac (\$10) — like glowing embers in a glass. You can taste the diligence that goes into each perfectly harmonized drink, largely thanks to Wilks, who has tended bar at The Red Room, Oceanaire and Euphoria.

The citrusy Silver Gin Fizz (\$10) is made light and frothy with egg whites. Special touches, like the Chilean Alfonso olive in the signature dirty martini, give the drinks an indulgent flair.

And while you wouldn't expect to see the ghost of Lucky Luciano or other kings of Gotham drinking an Aviation cocktail up at the bar, the exposed brick walls, dark tones and regal club chairs seem to transport imbibers to another era — as does the coolly refined blond hostess.

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