

The National

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AMTRAK

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ON THE
OKLAHOMA
PLAINS WITH
THE GREAT
AMERICAN
EAGLE
HUNTRESS



+
An original poem from Billy Collins



Top Shelf

Literary icon Kurt Vonnegut inspires bartenders with his satire and dark humor in *Indianapolis, IN*

“When I get home from school at about 5:30,” Kurt Vonnegut once wrote, “I numb my twanging intellect with several belts of scotch and water.” Now, a decade after his death, Indianapolis mixologists are honoring their native novelist’s bibulous spirit with a selection of 11 Vonnegut-inspired cocktails at bars around town. It’s part of the city’s designation of 2017 as “The Year of Vonnegut,” which will also see the opening of the Vonnegut Museum and Library in April. Here, a selection of cocktails as fanciful as the novels that inspired them. *By Amber Gibson*

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AMBER MOMENT — *Black Market*

1 ¾ oz Monkey Shoulder scotch • ½ oz Benedictine • ¼ oz Dolin G n p y des Alpes • ¼ oz Dolin sweet vermouth • ½ oz passion fruit syrup | ½ oz orange juice • ¼ oz lemon juice • 2 dashes Angostura Bitters
Shake. Serve on the rocks; garnish with maple candy and lemon twist.

When Black Market beverage director Heather Storms read *Slaughterhouse-Five* in college, she was struck by the scene when the protagonist, Billy Pilgrim, is abducted by aliens, who tell him they’re frozen in time like insects in amber. “The whole theory behind this passage is that there is no such thing as free will anywhere in the universe except for Earth,” Storms explains. “If I have to be frozen in a moment, I’d at least like a great drink to pass the time.”

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PLAYER PIANO — *Milktooth*

2 oz Dalmore Cigar malt scotch • ½ oz Amontillado sherry • 1 oz brown sugar cranberry caramel • heavy shake of orange bitters • 1 egg white

Reverse shake and strain over a salted coconut water cube.

Milktooth chef Jonathan Brooks’s favorite Vonnegut novel is his 1952 debut, *Player Piano*, the story of an automated dystopian future. Of the cocktail that novel inspired, bartender Cara Strain says, “We paired it with a scotch cocktail because Kurt loved drinking scotch. This cocktail honors all the hardworking humans who have not yet been replaced by robots!”

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SHERMAN KREBBS — *Hotel Tango*

2 oz hibiscus-infused gin • ¾ oz fresh lemon juice • ½ oz green tea simple syrup • small cat figure garnish

Shake with ice, then strain in a coupe glass.

In *Cat’s Cradle*, freeloader Sherman Krebs kills the narrator’s cat while destroying his apartment, an act that inspired this macabre concoction by bartender Ethan Rogers. “The color of the cocktail can represent blood, or it can represent nothing at all, because it is a nihilistic drink made for nihilist drinkers,” Rogers says. Fortunately, Hotel Tango’s resident cat, Fletcher, is alive and well.

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BREAKFAST OF CHAMPIONS — *Bluebeard*

¾ oz Laird’s applejack • ¾ oz Amaro Montenegro • ½ oz Amaro di Angostura • ¾ oz honey • ¾ oz lemon juice • 1 oz applejack half and half • sugar / Wheaties rim

Build everything in the shaker; add ice and shake vigorously for 16 to 20 seconds. Strain into a coupe glass; pour applejack half and half over a bowl of cereal, let sit for 30 minutes. Strain cereal, repeat several times, add to concoction

One of Indianapolis’s best restaurants, Bluebeard is named for Vonnegut’s 12th novel, but bar manager Ryan Gullett decided to take a literal interpretation of *Breakfast of Champions* with his cereal-infused cocktail. “For the rim, I put Wheaties in a bag and smash it,” he says. “I wanted it to be the same consistency as sugar, so after smashing it, I go at it with a rolling pin.”

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NOT KILGORE’S DR NO — *Spoke & Steele*

1 ½ oz Bank Note scotch • ½ oz Rittenhouse rye • ¾ oz lemon juice • ¾ oz thyme agave syrup • 2 drops saline solution • ¼ tsp activated charcoal • cayenne pepper and thyme garnish

Shake with ice and strain into a coupe glass with garnish.

Dr no killed Kilgore Trout in *Breakfast of Champions*, and the activated charcoal in this cocktail hints at Kilgore’s dark fate. “The major flavor imparted on whiskeys is from the type of oak aging they receive,” bartender Garrett Smith says. “The charcoal is a fun way to reinforce the flavor of the barrel char.”