

FASHION & STYLE

Proof & Gauge, a Long Island City Bar, Makes Its Own Gin

Boîte

By BRIAN SLOAN APRIL 20, 2016

Chris Murillo, 36, was a corporate lawyer and a cocktail connoisseur when, four years ago on New Year's Eve, he got the kind of idea that comes only after midnight and a few drinks. "I decided to start the first craft distillery in Queens," he said. "After sitting in an office for nine years, I finally needed to do something where I worked with my hands and got out and interacted with people."

So he began making his own blend of Old Tom gin called Queens Courage, which is distilled in Pennsylvania, bottled in Brooklyn and sold in his new bar, Proof & Gauge in Long Island City, Queens.

The Place

The bar is in the commercial courtyard of the Falchi Building, a revamped industrial warehouse on the eastern edge of Long Island City. Follow the old rail tracks embedded in the asphalt, and it's just inside the glass lobby in a white sliver of a space that seats 12 at a copper-top bar.

The Crowd

Local and friendly. Currently, it's a mix of female creatives in their 20s and 30s stopping in after work and folks who live in nearby Sunnyside dropping by for happy hour. Children are welcome and not out of place in the neighborly nonbar atmosphere. On a recent visit, one toddler watched Netflix on his mommy's iPhone while snacking on kids' tapas (a.k.a. Cheerios).

The Playlist

The Spotify player is kept at a low volume for conversation. A recent Friday featured a reggaeton mix.

Getting In

The main barrier: the limited hours. There is no bouncer and no door, just a folding glass partition that opens onto the airy indoor promenade, where another 26 chairs can be set up at busy times.

Drinks

G&T's (\$10) are the specialty, made with the house gin and Haber's Tonic Syrup, made in Queens. If you like yours with a twist, try the hibiscus version, or there are gin cocktails like the Doc Brown with cold-brewed coffee, lemon, coconut and espresso shavings. There is also a selection of New York-brewed beers (from \$5), wines (\$10) and other local liquors. And if you like the house-made gin, you can get your own bottle of Queens Courage (\$40) to go.

Proof & Gauge, 31-00 47th Avenue, Long Island City, Queens; 718-937-7663; proofandgauge.com. Open Wednesday to Friday, 4 to 10 p.m.

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