

Shhhh....A Field Guide To The Birds

Since opening our doors 7 years ago, we've always been about creating really good, consistently balanced cocktails that draw heavily from the classics. In early 2014, we were looking for ways to utilize the creativity of those on our bartending staff, but in a way that would allow us to stay true to our brand and philosophy. So we put our heads together and designed a secret cocktail menu that could only be ordered from if guests knew to ask for it. We created our secret "A Field Guide to the Birds" menu—a collection of variations on the classics, each named for a bird, and using approachable ingredients in interesting combinations.

Which came first? The cocktail or the bird?

It started with the cocktails, then we paired our favorite birds with each, based on each bird's personality and unique quirk. Our criteria when choosing the birds was: does it have a cool name? Does the bird's personality and story connect with the cocktail in the right way? And, very importantly, can we represent it well on the pages of our secret menu?

We were lucky to know Melanie Getman, a past Beretta host and talented illustrator who returned to us with her first bird drawing—the sage sparrow—in less than 30 minutes. From there she drew all eight of the birds found on the secret menu, and also drew the ingredients found in each of the cocktails.

Three months later—and *a lot* of tastings later—we had taken our idea from conception to reality and introduced the secret menu to our longtime guests and friends in the summer of 2014.

What's next for the bird menu? Will there be a 2.0?

The next iteration is in the works. There will be 8 new cocktails, some high balls for sure, and a new jelly to take the place of our popular fernet jelly. With a general idea of the cocktails we'd like to include, we're now in the process of vetting birds to pair with each drink. Stay tuned...

Is there a bird you'd like to see on the menu? Send your ideas to Beretta's Bar Manager California Gold: cgold@berettasf.com.

--Dominic Alling, former bartender and Beretta legend