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## [Let Los Feliz School You on Today's Finest Tequila](#) (/nightlife/let-los-feliz-school-you-on-today-s-finest-tequila-1.42976)

By [Victor Ozols](#) (/public-profile-7.117?=&u=user12521) December 15, 2011

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(<http://www.blackbookmag.com/nightlife/let-los-feliz-school-you-on-today-s-finest-tequila-1.42976>)

You think you know tequila (<http://www.blackbookmag.com/nightlife/hold-the-lime-1.36876>)? Perhaps you do, but I guarantee you'll find a few bottles behind the bar at Manhattan's Los Feliz (<http://www.blackbookmag.com/guides/details/los-feliz>) that you haven't yet had the pleasure of sampling. I certainly did. I recently spent a pleasurable hour on a barstool there under the guidance of head bartender Ben Carrier, who took me through some of the Lower East Side tequileria's most interesting and eye-opening offerings. With a tequila menu divided into blanco (unrested), reposado (rested less than one year), and añejo (rested beyond one year) categories, he quickly got me up to speed on the many beautiful expressions of the fruit of the agave plant. I highly recommend that every spirits enthusiast submit to the same rigorous training regimen.

If you swore off tequila years ago, realize that today's finest bottles are miles from the swill that gave you the worst hangover of your life back in college. When you're at Los Feliz you can forget about the lick-slam-suck ritual designed to mask the flavor of rotgut. Every one of the 120-plus tequilas you'll find there are meant to be sipped as you would a fine Scotch. From the Hacienda del Cristero blanco to the Milagro Select Barrel reposado to the Don

Pilar añejo, you'll want to savor every sip, rather than getting it in your belly as quickly as possible before the wet T-shirt contest begins. Unless you're some kind of *jimador*, you'll need some guidance, so tell Carrier (or whoever happens to be behind the bar) a little about your preferences, and you'll have a mind-blowing tequila in front of you in no time.

But what if straight spirits aren't your thing, and you prefer the complexity of well-made cocktails? Again, you're in the right place. I've enjoyed many margaritas in my day, but never thought of them as anything more than a fun and frivolous drink to enjoy in the sunshine, certainly not a sophisticated and nuanced cocktail. With one sip, the Los Feliz Classic changed my mind on the subject. Made with Pueblo Viejo Blanco, fresh lime juice, and organic raw agave, it's a mildly sweet and an amazingly well-balanced drink sure to please even the most discerning cocktail drinker. It's a margarita that's been to finishing school, refreshing and delightful. And if you don't love it, there are a half-dozen other margarita varieties to choose from, not one of which is extruded from a neon-green slushie machine.

Once you've had a few sips, order some red snapper ceviche from chef Julieta Ballesteros' dinner menu and explore the funky tri-level space. From the street-level Taqueria, which faces Ludlow Street, find your way to the secret door that leads to the Cobble Room, with muraled walls and a gorgeous marble bar. A few more steps down brings you to the lounge, which boasts a DJ, chandeliers, antique mirrors, and leather banquettes: perfect for a private party with a few dozen of your closest friends.

Back at the bar, you'll probably be feeling a bit more adventurous at this point, so go ahead and splurge on a glass of Porfidio añejo (\$19) and watch the pedestrians rush down the sidewalk in a stress-fueled hurry that you simply don't feel anymore.

**Tags:** [Los Feliz](/listings/Tag/Los%20Feliz/), [Nightlife](/listings/Tag/Nightlife/), [Ben Carrier](/listings/Tag/Ben%20Carrier/), [Tequila](/listings/Tag/Tequila/), [Victor Ozols](/listings/Tag/Victor%20Ozols/)



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