

Getting Into Holiday Spirits This Season

By Jeanne Cooper

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When it comes to capturing holiday cheer in a glass, we've come a long way since the yuletides of yore. Sure, carolers may still sing "Here We Come Awassailing," but few are bellying up to the bar later for wassail, a heated brandy and apple cider concoction. Heating wine with spices — think Glühwein when you're with Germans, glögg with Swedes — understandably still holds appeal to those in cooler climes, but today's mixologists have come up with alternative methods for making patrons feel all warm and cozy. Dark spirits can quickly take the chill off, while bright colors, sparkling notes and spiced spirits somehow convey seasonal merriment even without a signature song. Here are seven suggestions for festive tipples in San Francisco and on the Peninsula this year. Bonus: Almost all lie within easy reach of Union Square or Stanford Shopping Center, because if holiday shopping doesn't deserve a drink, what else does?



Toddy Italiano

Tratto

Traditional Italian cocktails maybe standards here, but hot toddies inspired general manager **Cynthia Tran** to create this East-meets-West winter warmer. Served in a tea cup, it blends equal parts Averna amaro (a Sicilian digestif), BroVo No. 1 amaro, chai tea syrup and lemon juice with hot water, topped with a lemon wheel.

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