

3 Weeds



Pub with all the trimmings ... 3 Weeds. Photo: Domino Postiglione

Address

193 Evans Street, [Rozelle, NSW 2039](#) Phone 02 9818 2788 Style [Bar](#) Hours Mon-Sat, noon-midnight; Sun, noon-10pm

Rozelle's 3 Weeds Hotel has been around for yonks. Since 1881 to be specific. Slowly but surely, however, it has tarted itself up, adding a slick bar here, a fine-dining restaurant there. Now it looks more like a trendy city loft than an inner-west stalwart. The latest bit of sparkle is the cocktail-making magic of bartender Asher Pratt.

A PUB IS NO COCKTAIL BAR and most don't usually offer much to inspire beyond a Sex on the Beach. This pub, however, has an ever-changing list of interesting creations. The winter list includes things like its Hot Toddy (winter spiced syrup with whisky or rum, stirred with lemon juice and hot water, \$15), Grandma's Winter Pie (blackberries and apple, house-made cinnamon syrup, apple juice, vodka and cassis, \$17), a Wattle Toffee Daiquiri (TMD wattle toffee liqueur, dark rum, spiced syrup, lime, \$17) and a Ripe as a Cherry (their take on the Cherry Ripe with coconut, chocolate and cherry liqueurs with cherry bitters, \$17). Each is wintery and delectable.

THEN THERE IS THE COCKTAIL Pratt made for the finals of the Magnificent 7 bartending competition during World Cocktail Week in Sydney earlier this year. His 1950s-style Betty Draper cocktail, inspired by the television series *Mad Men*, is based on the Old Fashioned cocktail, a classic drink designed to be sipped after work with a pipe in the other hand. It combines Maker's Mark bourbon whiskey with grapefruit bitters, sugar cubes, soda and a dash of grapefruit juice with a grapefruit slice and maraschino cherry garnish in a rounded, old-fashioned glass.

"I'm a big fan of the drinking culture of that time, most specifically how the women drank back then," Pratt says. "It seems to have changed a lot. It's all about sweet Cosmopolitans and fruity drinks now but back then women would drink harder spirits and Martinis. The cocktails would be more about dressing up the spirits and not just drinking a liquid fruit."

ONE TINY PROBLEM, however, is that Pratt doesn't quite live at the 3 Weeds. It's impossible for him to be there all the time - in fact, he's only there a couple of nights a week - and, of course, we happen to visit on a day he's not. It's a real shame because the cocktail is entirely unspectacular. When I return a few days later, it's brilliant. Maybe it's best to phone ahead to check who's on duty.

THE REST OF THE 3 WEEDS is hardly a secret around the inner west. There's good food, decent wine, fancy decor and a quiet residential feel that people flock here for every night of the week. Beautiful creeper vines, perfectly formed clusters of paper lanterns, sumptuous wooden benches, velvet cushions and warm lighting decorate the various rooms. The menu ticks off pub-food staples such as lamb shanks, steak sandwiches, pizzas and a small selection of tapas, all made well. A word of warning, though. Order some sides. The beef bourguignon pie (\$18) is just that. A pie. On a plate. A *great* pie on a plate nonetheless. And a great neighbourhood pub with a great cocktail list ... most of the time.

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YOU'LL LOVE IT IF you want a local pub with all the trimmings.

YOU'LL HATE IT IF you order the Betty Draper on the wrong night.

GO FOR the Betty Draper, beef bourguignon pie.

IT'LL COST YOU cocktails \$15-\$17, wine by the glass \$7-\$10.50, tapas \$18 for three, or \$25 for five.

Source: Good Living