

# SANTA BARBARA NEWS-PRESS



## Drink of the Week

It was a good year for cocktails. Jimmy's Oriental Gardens reopened as the Pickle Room, but essentially, it was like that seven year gap never happened. Some upmarket restaurant and bars came bearing very good cocktails, but then whoops! disappeared. St. Germain was everywhere. We got two — count 'em, two! — new local distilleries making great whiskey. The Funk Zone became a bit of a Drunk Zone, but Bar Seven is fun and Reds still rocks. Out in Goleta, the Imperial is the Tiki Bar we've always wanted.

So let's end the year on another positive note. The new Paloma restaurant is a rebranding of the Rudy's restaurant it used to be. Owner Rudy Alvaro changed the name to Paloma to reflect its more sit-down, not take-out atmosphere. And Alvaro made the change overnight — new signs, new paint, loads of cosmetic changes — without losing a day. The food, by the way, is pretty killer and varied, but we were here for the cocktails.

The traditional Paloma cocktail here has Blood Orange puree added and Squirt replaced with San Pellegrino's Pompelmo soda. It makes it much more mature and a tangier drink. The El Diablo, with Skyy Passion fruit and Fever Tree Ginger Beer (with real ginger chunks) brings plenty spice with its muddled serrano and ginger, but never overwhelms. And we love love loved the Pepino Con Chile, with its Tajin rim, tequila, cucumber, and Tapatio mix. Yes! Tapatio ... both spicy and mellow and cool at the same time, making each sip different. This, mis amigos, is how we're seeing in the New Year.

### PEPINO CON CHILE

2 oz. El Jimador Blanco tequila  
1 oz. Agave nectar  
1 oz. lime juice  
3 cucumber slices  
Dash of Tapatio  
Tajin for the rim

Muddle cucumber, agave, and cucumber together in shaker. Add ice, tequila and Tapatio. Shake and pour into lowball glass rimmed with Tajin.

Yield: 1

### PALOMA

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