

Enjoy a drink with a view at these Toronto hotel bars

Thu., July 19, 2018 by CHRISTINE SISMONDO Special to the Star

If it feels like something's missing in Toronto this summer, that's very likely because it is.

A few things, actually: There's no big rubber ducky floating in the Toronto Harbour. There's no monster Honest Ed's signs at Bloor and Bathurst Sts. Perhaps worst of all, we can't even console ourselves with a smart gin and tonic on the patio at the Park Hyatt's Roof Lounge. It's under renovation and won't reopen until well into 2019. And frankly, we can't wait that long. Until then, where do you take out-of-town visitors for drinks to marvel at our fast-changing skyline? Here are four options you might not even be aware of. Three are relatively new and the other is a hidden gem.



Viewed from The Perch at Falcon SkyBar on the 28th floor looking east, guests at the new Hotel X Toronto can view the city and GTA in all directions. (BERNARD WEIL / TORONTO STAR)



The west part of the Broadview Hotel patio offers a striking view of the downtown core from across the Don Valley. (RENE JOHNSTON / TORONTO STAR)

Falcon Sky Bar at Hotel X, 111 Princes' Blvd., 27th Floor.

The Falcon Sky Bar at Hotel X is so new, parts of it still feel unfinished. The south-facing rooftop patio, for example, feels like a bit of an afterthought, with some stools and low tables scattered about. But the bar itself, which has a little walkout area so customers can contemplate the city's skyscrapers and mess of waterfront condos, is lovely. It's a fresh perspective on Toronto.

That makes it worthwhile to ignore some of the less appealing elements of this hotel, which include the noise from the Lakeshore, overpriced drinks and an emptiness that's a little reminiscent of *The Shining*. Its location, on the rather vacant Canadian National Exhibition grounds, is not easy to get to. It probably feels more lively when there's a conference going on — a fact pointed out to us by our cab driver. The good news, for now, is on a slow night, you might have the patio all to yourself. We did.



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Signature cocktails: We had the Falcon Goddess (\$20), a mix of gin, ginger and lime, but big spenders will surely want to try The 10 Grand (\$22), a champagne cocktail made with vodka and Grand Marnier. No reservations.

<https://hotelxtoronto.com/en/dining.html>

The Broadview Hotel rooftop, 106 Broadview Ave., 4th Floor.

When it opened last July, the rooftop bar at the Broadview Hotel was an instant sensation, packed with locals curious to see how a three-year renovation had transformed the building that housed Jilly's — one of Toronto's most famous and long-lived strip clubs. The results were so fabulous, they attracted even more curious patrons, since word quickly spread that the design was fabulous, and, most importantly, the view from the rooftop bar was jaw-dropping.

A recent visit proved the rumours true. The view from the west part of the patio is a striking view of the downtown core from across the Don Valley. There were no free tables there, though, so we sat at a bar facing east, which is less of a vista, but still actually quite lovely, since Toronto's trees were in full bloom and a little patch of lake was visible on the horizon.



The west part of the Broadview Hotel patio offers a striking view of the downtown core from across the Don Valley. (RENE JOHNSTON / TORONTO STAR)

Signature Cocktails: Made with tequila and vermouth, the Te Gringo (\$14) is a good, simple and smoky cocktail, but we were nearly tempted by Tropic Like It's Hot (\$13), a fruity tropical rum cooler. Reservations can be made on Open Table or on its website <http://www.thebroadviewhotel.ca/food-drink.html>.

Kost, 80 Blue Jays Way, 44th Floor.

Located in the new Bisha Hotel Toronto on Blue Jays Way south of King St. W., the recently opened Kost has been subject to critique for its high prices — something most of us aren't used to paying for the simple Baja California coastal fare. One item in particular — the \$45 fish tacos — elicited a response from The Star's restaurant critic Amy Pataki, who objected to the price, given that they were fairly ordinary tacos.

The offending item, has since been removed from the menu, and the summer food and drink prices actually seem in line with what to expect in any bar that offers such a commanding view. The cocktails (\$16-\$17) are tall, cool and refreshing, and the shareable small plates (less than \$20) are light and zesty, as you'd expect from contemporary Pacific Latin-American inspired food.

Signature Cocktails: The Weslodge Orange Spice Fashioned (\$17) is a spirit-forward, flavour-rich classic. For something a little lighter and more suitable to the Latin fare, opt for the spicy ginger and lime Mezcal Mule (\$17). Reservations can be made on its website <https://kosttoronto.com/> or by phone (437) 800-5938.

Carlotta, 335 Queen St. W., 6th Floor.

The rooftop bar at The Beverley Hotel isn't exactly a new addition to the city, but I'll wager a lot of people don't realize it's there, let alone that the sixth floor is a perfect lounging oasis with a cute bar and some sweet couches — the ideal escape hatch from the Queen St. W. crowds.

The menu is small, but it's probably the best of the four, with perfectly curated beer and wine, smart contemporary cocktails and fresh Spanish and Latin American snack foods, such as ceviche and pan con tomate — all at moderate prices. The sixth-floor view isn't as striking as the others, but, hey, you can't have everything.

Signature Cocktails: Carlotta's Cocktail No. 4 (\$14), mescal and grapefruit with a hint of spice is a good choice. Sour beer lovers will appreciate the availability of bottled Jelly King by Bellwood Brewery (\$16). Carlotta doesn't take reservations, except for large parties, depending on the night and availability. To inquire, write them at hola@carlottabar.com