

In the mix

Emma Hughes lines up the finest signature cocktails from cities across the globe—and show-stopping properties for a taste



If you're looking for the spirit of a place—in every sense of the word—open a cocktail menu. Think of the gin and tonic, which sums up London's cosmopolitanism, elegant restraint and irrational insistence that warmer weather is just around the corner. A city's signature drink tells you more than any guide-book ever could.

New York runs on liquor. From Dorothy Parker's martinis in the Algonquin to the solitary drinker in Edward Hopper's *Nighthawks*, this is a city with booze in its blood. An old-fashioned will make you feel like an extra in *Mad Men*, but, for sheer box-ticking pleasure, choose a Manhattan (rye, vermouth and bitters with a brandy-soaked cherry) and drink it in a hotel piano bar (try Bemelmans at The Carlyle). Your server will ask you

whether you want it sweet, dry or perfect—and you should always go for the final option.

And speaking of perfection, 50, Riverside Boulevard, an exceptionally elegant modern duplex penthouse on the Upper West Side, offers views of the Hudson from every room, including the cocktail-hour-ready library—\$16.25 million (£12.8 million) through Stribling and Savills (00 1 212 452 4408; www.savills.com).

Even New Yorkers get tired of the Big Apple sometimes. When they do, they take off for Tulum in **Mexico**. The vibe on this low-fi stretch of Caribbean coastline is boho-luxe and everyone drinks margaritas, made with tequila, lime and a suggestion of orange garnished with a salt-crusted rim that tastes like the waves. At the boutique hideaway Be Tulum's beach

bar, they'll mix you one with mezcal, tequila's worldly, cigar-smoking big brother.

Last year, Knight Frank revealed that Mexico was one of the 10 fastest-growing property markets in the world and Tulum, which boasts direct flights from the UK to nearby Cancún, is one of its most tempting prospects. The best buys are the ones that merge thoughtfully with their surroundings: Casa Siankaana, a four-bedroom eco-retreat shaded by coconut palms with its own stretch of sand, fits the bill—\$3.9 million (£3 million) through Sotheby's International Realty (00 52 984 803 3026; www.sothebysrealty.com).

Aperitivo time—the original happy hour—was born in Italy. And, in **Venice**, it's as sophisticated a business as you'd expect. The Bellini (a blend

of Prosecco and white-peach purée named after the 15th-century Venetian painter) has its spiritual home in the famous Harry's Bar, just off St Mark's Square. They're about €20 a pop, but if you're entranced by the city's heritage, you won't blink at the cost.

A couple of canals down, Pietro Perotti, another of the myriad artists to make their mark on the city, adorned an exquisite apartment in a 15th-century palace, on the elegant Campo Santo Stefano in San Marco, with beautiful 18th-century frescoes. It boasts six bedrooms, a *mansarda* floor and *altana* roof terrace—€8.9 million (£7.8 million) through Sotheby's International Realty (www.venicesothebysrealty.com; 00 39 041 522 0093).

In 1915, **Singapore** was a hectic trading port known as the Gibraltar

of the East and, at the Raffles hotel, a barman created a drink that summed up the city's anything-goes spirit, based on gin, pineapple, grenadine and lime. Its Singapore sling has been widely imitated, but never bettered.

A short boat ride away from Singapore proper, The Copper House on the island of Sentosa would appeal to a modern-day Gatsby, with six en-suite bedrooms, all of which face onto the pool, and acres of entertaining space—\$48 million (£27.6 million) through Christie's International (www.christiesrealestate.com; 00 65 9815 3223).

The last word in louche, of course, is **New Orleans**. The Big Easy is awash with cocktails and its signature drink is the Sazerac, which can stake a credible claim to being America's oldest: a blend of absinthe, bitters, rye and

a lemon twist. At Broussard's, one of the city's most venerable Creole restaurants, they're liberal with the Peychaud's Bitters (made in Louisiana), creating a drink the colour of sunset over the bayou.

Property-wise, the French Quarter's tutti-frutti town houses are always in demand, but if you would like to keep the crowds at arm's length, head a little further out to the Garden District.

Built in the 1890s in a plantation style, 2004, General Taylor Street has had new life breathed into it with a chef's kitchen and careful renovation of its original features—\$998,800 (£789,815) through Sotheby's International Realty (00 1 504 944 3605; www.sothebysrealty.com). Who wouldn't want to drink to that? 🍸