

I can't count the number of delectable hours I've spent in bars, the perfect places for the meditation and contemplation indispensable to life.

Sitting in bars is an old habit that's become more pronounced through the years; like Saint Simeon Stylites

perched on his pillar talking to God, I've spent long quiet hours day-dreaming, nodding at the waiter, sometimes talking to myself, watching the startling sequences of images that pass through my mind's eye.

Today I'm as old as the century and rarely go out at all; but all alone,

ANTON MUNAR during the sacrosanct cocktail hour, in the small room where my bottles are kept, I still amuse myself by remembering the bars I've loved.

First of all, you must be clear about the difference between a bar and a cafe. For example, I've never been able to find a decent bar in Paris. On the other hand, the city is filled with superb cafes; from Belleville to Auteuil, no matter where you go, you can always find a table, and a waiter to take your order. Without cafes, without tabacs, without those marvelous terraces, Paris is unimaginable. If they

suddenly disappeared, it would be like living in BAS JAN ADER a city that had been leveled by an atomic bomb.

There are certain cafes which have a special importance for me.

The surrealists, for example, pursued many of their activities at the

BLINKY PALERMO Cafe Cyrano on the place Blanche, or at the Select on the Champs-Elysees. I remember being invited

to the opening of the famous La Coupole in Montparnasse, where I met with Man Ray and Louis Aragon to plan the preview of *Un Chien Andalou*. The list is endless, but the crucial point is that the cafe is synonymous with bustle, conversation, camaraderie, and women.

The bar, on the other hand, is an exercise in solitude. Above all else, it must be quiet, dark, very comfortable — and, BRUCE NAUMAN contrary to modern mores, no music of any kind, no matter how faint. In sum, there should be no more than a dozen tables, and a clientele that doesn't like to talk.

One of my favorites is the bar at the Plaza Hotel in Madrid. It's ideally situated—in the basement, where you can't be distracted by the view. The head waiter knows me well, and always gives me my favorite table, where my back is to the wall. You can even eat dinner there; the lighting is discreet, but sufficient.

The Chicote in Madrid is also full of precious memories, but

somehow it's nicer to go there with friends. There's also the bar in the Paular Hotel, in the northern part of the city, set in the courtyard of a magnificent Gothic monastery. The room is long and lined with tall granite columns; and except on weekends, when the place trembles with tourists and noisy children, it's usually half empty. I can sit there for hours, undisturbed, surrounded by Zurbaran reproductions, only half conscious of the shadow of a silent waiter floating by from time to time, ever respectful of my alcoholic reveries.

I loved the Paular the way I love my closest friends. At the end of a working day, my scriptwriter-collaborator Jean-Claude Carriere would leave me there to meditate. After forty-five minutes, I'd hear his punctual footsteps on the stone floor; he'd sit down opposite me at the table, which was the signal for me to tell him a story that I'd made up during my reverie. (I've always believed that the imagination is a spiritual quality that, like memory, can be trained and developed.) The story might have nothing to do with our scenario, or, then again, it might; it could be a farce or a melodrama, short or long, violent or sublime. The important thing was merely to tell it.

Alone with Zurbaran, my favorite drink, and the granite columns cut from that marvelous Castilian stone, I'd let my mind wander, beyond time, open to the images that happened to appear. I might be thinking about something prosaic – a family business, a new project – when all of a sudden a picture would snap into focus, characters emerge, speak, act out their passions. Sometimes, alone in my corner, I'd find myself laughing aloud. When I thought the scene might fit into our scenario, I'd backtrack and force myself to direct the aimless pictures, to organize them into a coherent sequence.

I also remember a bar at the Plaza Hotel in New York, a busy meeting place which at the time was off limits to women. Any friend of mine passing through New York knew that if he wanted to find me, he had only to go to the Plaza bar at noon. (Now, unfortunately, that magnificent bar with its superb view of Central Park has become a restaurant, with only a couple of real bar tables left.)

I also have certain special bars in Mexico, like El Parador in Mexico City, although, like the Chicote, it's more congenial to be there with friends. Then there's the bar in the San Jose Puma Hotel in Michoacan, where for thirty years I used to hibernate to write my scripts. The hotel was situated on the side of a deep canyon

overrun with semitropical vegetation, and although views are usually liabilities where bars are concerned, this panorama was spectacular. Luckily, there was a ziranda — a tropical tree with curving branches interlaced like a nest of huge snakes – just in front of the window, which screened part of the landscape. My eyes

would follow aimlessly along the myriad intersections of the branches; sometimes I'd put an owl on one of them, or a naked woman, or some other incongruous element. And then one day, for no apparent reason, the bar was closed. I can still see my producer Serge Silberman, Jean-Claude, and myself searching desperately through the endless corridors of the hotel in 1980 for a place to work. (These are murderous times-not even bars are spared!)

Talking about bars leads me inevitably to the subject of drinks, about which I can pontificate for hours. In the interests of my readers, I'll try to be concise, but for those who aren't interested — and, unfortunately, I'm sure they're numerous — I'd advise you simply to skip the next few pages.

I'll have to put wine, red wine in particular, at the top of the list. France produces both the best and the worst; in fact, there's nothing more horrendous than the famous coup de rouge served up in Parisian bistros, except perhaps for Italian wines, which have never seemed completely authentic to me. I'm also very fond of Spanish Valdepenas, which should be drunk chilled and preferably out of a goat-skin. There's also a white Yepes that comes from the area around Toledo. In America, there are some good California wines, especially Cabernet, and sometimes I drink a Chilean or Mexican wine. Curiously, I never drink wine in a bar, for wine is a purely physical pleasure and does nothing to stimulate the imagination.

To provoke, or sustain, a reverie in a bar, you have to drink English gin, especially in the form of the dry martini. To be frank, given the primordial role played in my life by the dry martini, I think I really ought to give it at least a page. Like all cocktails, the martini, composed essentially of gin and a few drops of Noilly Prat, seems to have been an American invention. Connoisseurs who like their martinis very dry suggest simply allowing a ray of sunlight to shine through a bottle of Noilly Prat before it hits the bottle

of gin. At a certain period in America it was said that the making of a dry martini should resemble the Immaculate Conception, for, as Saint

LEONORA CARRINGTON Thomas Aquinas once noted, the generative power of the Holy Ghost pierced the Virgin's hymen "like a ray of sunlight through a window — leaving it unbroken."

Another LATTHAPON KORKIARTAKUL crucial recommendation is that the ice be so cold and hard that it won't melt, since nothing's worse than a watery martini. For those who are still with me, let me give you my personal recipe, the fruit of long experimentation and guaranteed to produce perfect results. The day before your guests arrive, put all the ingredients, glasses, gin, and shaker-in the refrigerator. Use a thermometer to make sure the ice is about twenty degrees below zero (centigrade). Don't take anything out until your friends arrive; then pour a few drops of Noilly Prat and half a demitasse spoon of Angostura LORENZO MASON bitters over the ice. Shake it, then pour it out, keeping only the ice, which retains a faint taste of both. Then pour straight gin over the ice, shake it again, and serve.

(During the 1940s, the director of the Museum of Modern Art in New York taught me a curious variation. Instead of Angostura, he used a dash of Pernod. Frankly, it seemed heretical to me, but apparently it was only a fad.)

MARGIN

MARIO GARCIA TORRES After the dry martini comes one of my own modest inventions, the Bunueloni, best drunk before dinner. It's really a takeoff on the famous Negroni, but instead of mixing Campari, gin, and sweet Cinzano, I substitute Carpano for the Campari. Here again, the Gin — insufficient quantity to ensure its dominance over the other two ingredients-has excellent effects on the imagination. I've no idea how or why; I only know that it works.

I should take this moment to assure you that I'm not an alcoholic. Of course, I've occasionally managed to drink myself into oblivion, but most of the time it's a kind of ritual for me, one that produces a high rather like that induced by a mild drug, a high that helps me live and work. If you were to ask if I'd ever had the bad luck to miss my daily cocktail, I'd have to say that I doubt it; where certain things are concerned, I plan ahead.

MARIO NUZZI CALLED
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I never drank so much in my life as the time I spent five months in

the United States during Prohibition. I had a two-fingered bootlegger friend in Los Angeles who taught me that the way to tell real gin from ersatz was to shake the bottle in a

MARTIN KIPPENBERGER

certain way. Real gin, he assured me, bubbles. It was a time when you could get your whiskey in the local pharmacy, with a prescription, and your wine in a coffee cup when you went to the right restaurant. There was a good speakeasy in New York where you rapped out a code on the door, stood for inspection at the judas, and slipped inside quickly

MARCEL DZAMA once the door was opened. It looked like any other bar, and you could get whatever kind of liquor you

ly one of the MARTA ROBERTI wanted. (Prohibition was clearly more nonsensical ideas of the century. Americans got fabulously drunk, although with repeal they seem to have learned to drink more intelligently.)

Another of my weaknesses is the French aperitif, like the pi-con-beer-grenadine and the mandarin-curacao-beer, which made me drunker more quickly and more definitively than the dry martini. Now, these exotic concoctions seem to be becoming extinct; in fact, the decline of the aperitif may well be one of the most depressing phenomena of our time.

MATTHIAS NOGGLER

I do drink other things, of course – vodka with my caviar, aquavit with smoked salmon. I like Mexican tequila and mezcal, even though they're really only substitutes for the real thing. Whiskey I've never understood; it's one drink that truly doesn't appeal to me. I remember reading once, in one of those advice columns in a popular French magazine — Marie-France, I think — that gin was an excellent tranquilizer, that it allayed the anxiety that often goes with air travel. Since I'd always been profoundly terrified in airplanes, I decided to give it a try. (My fear was constant and irrepressible. If I saw one of the pilots walking down the aisle with a serious expression on his face, I always assumed

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REMY ZAUGG

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To continue this panegyric on earthly delights, let me just say that it's impossible to drink without smoking. I began to smoke when I was sixteen and have never stopped. My limit is a pack a day. I've smoked absolutely everything STANLEY BROWN but am particularly fond of Spanish and French cigarettes (Gitanes and Celtiques especially) because of their black tobacco.

If alcohol is queen, then tobacco is her consort. It's a fond companion for all occasions, a loyal friend through fair weather and foul. People smoke to celebrate a happy moment, or to hide a bitter regret. Whether you're alone or with friends, it's a joy for all the senses.

What lovelier sight is there than that double row of white cigarettes, lined up like soldiers on parade and wrapped in silver paper? If I were blindfolded and a lighted cigarette placed between my lips, I'd refuse to

smoke it. I love to touch the pack in my pocket, open it, savor the feel of the cigarette between my fingers, the paper on my lips, the taste of tobacco on my tongue. I love to watch the flame spurt up, love to watch it come closer and closer, filling me with its warmth.

STEFANIA TAJADA

I once had a friend from my student days called Dorronsoro, who was from the Basque country and, as a Spanish Republican, was exiled to Mexico. When I visited him in the hospital, he had tubes everywhere, as well as an oxygen mask, which he'd take off from time to time for a quick puff on a cigarette. He smoked until the last hours of his life, ever faithful to the pleasure that killed him. Finally, dear readers, allow me to end these ramblings on tobacco and alcohol, delicious fathers of abiding friendships and fertile reveries, with some advice: Don't drink and don't smoke. It's bad for your health.

vvvvvvvIt goes without saying that alcohol and tobacco are excellent accompaniments to lovemaking-the alcohol first, then the cigarettes. No, you're not about to hear any extraordinary erotic secrets. Men of my generation, particularly if they're Spanish, suffer from a hereditary timidity where sex and women are concerned. Our sexual desire has to be seen as the product of centuries of repressive and emasculating Catholicism, whose many taboos-no sexual relations outside of marriage (not to mention within), no pictures or words that might suggest the sexual act, no matter how obliquely — have turned normal desire into something exceptionally violent. As you can imagine, when this desire manages to overcome the obstacles, the gratification is incomparable, since it's always colored by the sweet secret sense of sin.

With rare exceptions, we Spaniards knew of only two ways to make love — in a brothel or in marriage. When I went to France for the first time in 1925, I was shocked, in fact disgusted, by the men and women I saw kissing in public, or living together without the sanction of marriage. Such customs were unimaginable to me; they seemed obscene. Much of this has changed, of course, over the years; lately, my own sexual desire has waned and finally disappeared, even in dreams. And I'm delighted; it's as if I've finally been relieved of a tyrannical burden. If the devil were to offer me a resurgence of what is commonly called virility, I'd decline. "Just keep my liver and lungs in good working order," I'd reply, "so I can go on drinking and smoking!"

TAMARA HENDERSON

Safe at last from the perversions that lie in wait for old, impotent

men, I can think back with equanimity on the whores in Madrid and Paris, the taxi girls in New York. And except for the occasional French tableau vivant, I've seen only one pornographic movie in my life —

THEA GVETADZE provocatively entitled *Sister Vaseline*. I remember a nun in a convent garden being fucked by the gardener, who was being sodomized by a monk, until finally all three merged into one figure. I can still see the nun's black cotton stockings which ended just above the knee. Rene Char and I once plotted to sneak into a children's movie matinee, tie up the projectionist, and show THOMAS HUTTON *Sister Vaseline* to the young audience. O tempora!

O mores! The profanation of childhood seemed to us one of the more seductive forms of subversion. (Needless to say, we never got beyond the planning stage.)

TOBIAS JUST Then there were my bungled orgies. When I was young, the idea of an orgy was tremendously exciting. Charlie Chaplin once organized one in Hollywood for me and two Spanish friends, but when the three ravishing young women arrived from Pasadena, they immediately got into a tremendous argument over which one was going to get Chaplin, and in the end all three left in a huff.

There was also the time that my friend Ugarte and I invited Lya Lys (who played in *L'Age d'or*) and a friend of hers to my place in Los Angeles. We'd laid in all the necessities, right down WILLIAM LEAVITT to the flowers and champagne; but the two women simply talked for an hour and then politely said goodbye.

I remember, too, at about the same period, the Russian director (his name escapes me now) who finally received authorization to come to Paris. As soon as he arrived, he asked me to put together a small, "typically French" orgy for him. I laughed; he couldn't have picked a more unsuitable person for the job. Finally, I asked YUTAKA SONE Aragon what to do.

"Well, mon cher ami," he began delicately, "the question is, would you prefer to be ...?"

Here he used a word that, even after all this time, I can't bring myself to write. (In fact, the proliferation of gutter words in the works of modern writers disgusts me. They use them gratuitously, in a pretense of liberalism which is no more than a pathetic travesty of liberty.) In any case, I answered with a resounding negative, upon which he advised me to forget orgies altogether. The poor director eventually returned to his homeland, minus that particular experience.

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to the flowers and champagne; but the two women Angeles. We'd laid in all the necessities, right down WILLIAM LEAVITT Lys (who played in L'Age d'or) and a friend of hers to my place in Los There was also the time that my friend Ugarte and I invited Lya one was going to get Chaplin, and in the end all three left in a huff.

Pasadena, they immediately got into a tremendous argument over which friends, but when the three ravishing young women arrived from Chaplin once organized one in Hollywood for me and two Spanish the idea of an orgy was tremendously exciting. Charlie Then there were my bungled orgies. When I was young, the planning stage.)

seductive forms of subversion. (Needless to say, we never got beyond O mores! The profanation of childhood seemed to us one of the more Sister Vaseline to the young audience. O tempora! THOMAS HUTTON movie matinee, tie up the projectionist, and show above the knee. Rene Char and I once plotted to sneak into a children's ure. I can still see the nun's black cotton stockings which ended just being sodomized by a monk, until finally all three merged into one fig-a convent garden being fucked by the gardener, who was THEA GVEPADZE provocatively entitled Sister Vaseline. I remember a nun in tableau vivant, I've seen only one pornographic movie in my life — Paris, the taxi girls in New York. And except for the occasional French men, I can think back with equanimity on the whores in Madrid and

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smoke it. I love to touch the pack in my pocket, open it, savor the feel of the cigarette between my fingers, the paper on my lips, the taste of tobacco on my tongue. I love to watch the flame spurt up, love to watch it come closer and closer, filling me with its warmth.

STEFANIA TAJADA I once had a friend from my student days called Dorronsoro, who was from the Basque country and, as a Spanish Republican, was exiled to Mexico. When I visited him in the hospital, he had tubes everywhere, as well as an oxygen mask, which he'd take off from time to time for a quick puff on a cigarette. He smoked until the last hours of his life, ever faithful to the pleasure that killed him. Finally, dear readers, allow me to end these ramblings on tobacco and alcohol, delicious fathers of abiding friendships and fertile reveries, with some advice: Don't drink and don't smoke. It's bad for your health.

vvvvvvvIt goes without saying that alcohol and tobacco are excellent accompaniments to lovemaking-the alcohol first, then the cigarettes. No, you're not about to hear any extraordinary erotic secrets. Men of my generation, particularly if they're Spanish, suffer from a hereditary timidity where sex and women are concerned. Our sexual desire has to be seen as the product of centuries of repressive and emasculating Catholicism, whose many taboos-no sexual relations outside of marriage (not to mention within), no pictures or words that might suggest the sexual act, no matter how obliquely — have turned normal desire into something exceptionally violent. As you can imagine, when this desire manages to overcome the obstacles, the gratification is incomparable, since it's always colored by the sweet secret sense of sin.

With rare exceptions, we Spaniards knew of only two ways to make love – in a brothel SUPERSTUDIO or in marriage. When I went to France for the first time in 1925, I was shocked, in fact disgusted, by the men and women TAMARA HENDERSON I saw kissing in public, or living together without the sanction of marriage. Such customs were unimaginable to me; they seemed obscene. Much of this has changed, of course, over the years; lately, my own sexual desire has waned and finally disappeared, even in dreams. And I'm delighted; it's as if I've finally been relieved of a tyrannical burden. If the devil were to offer me a resurgence of what is commonly called virility, I'd decline. "Just keep my liver and lungs in good working order," I'd reply, "so I can go on drinking and smoking!"

Safe at last from the perversions that lie in wait for old, impotent