



A MENSWEAR
SPECIAL

MODERN PROFESSIONAL

HOW TO
DRESS FOR WORK
TODAY



DESIGN

LIGHT MY FIRE

The restaurant matchbox has become an artwork in itself. By *Inès Cross*

"A matchbox is one of the last truly analogue, pocket-sized objects in hospitality," says Anna Polonsky, founder of Polonsky & Friends, a creative studio that specialises in interior design and branding for restaurants. "They are one of our favourite things to work on." As part of their work for Lil's, a piano bar at the recently opened Moss New York members' club on Fifth Avenue, her team conceived a set of matchbooks as piano keys with bright red tips. For French bistro Petite Edith and

Peruvian izakaya Papa San, they used handpainted illustrations, personalised quotes or punchy graphics from local artists and friends.

From Carbone in New York to Claridge's in London, Café Triste in LA to San

"THEY CAN CARRY THE ENTIRE BRAND IN MINIATURE"

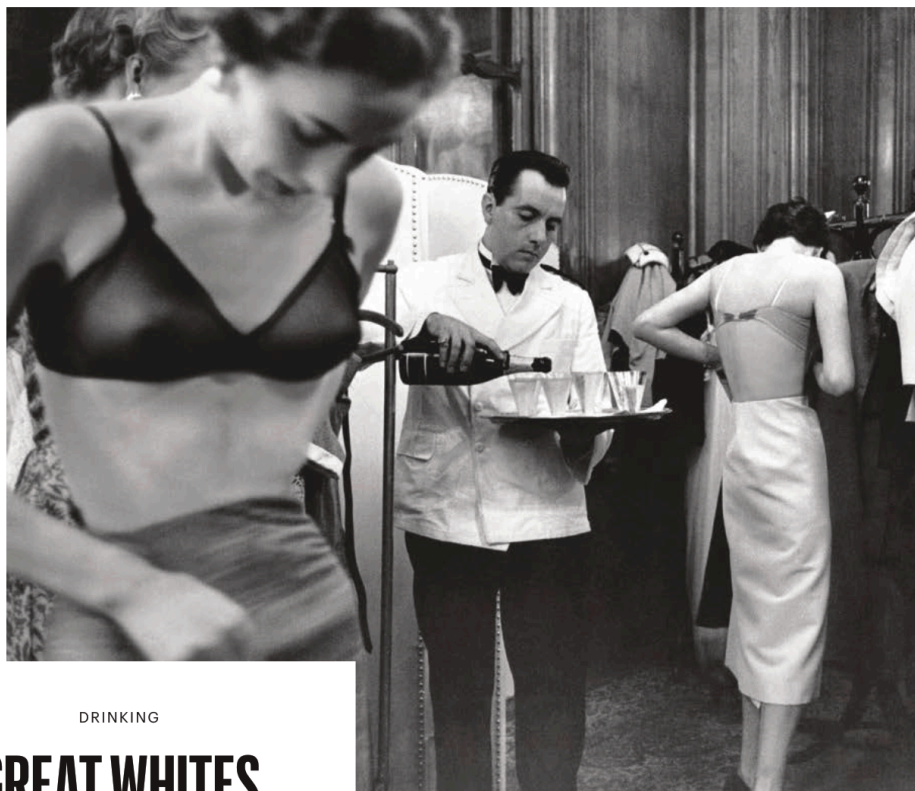
Francisco's House of Prime Rib, many restaurants have a beautiful matchbox or matchbook. It is an essential calling card. Case in point, a tribute to London's Café Deco's signature egg mayo dish is inscribed on their matchbox by in-house chef Alexis Osborn. "In a restaurant, they can carry the entire brand in miniature," says Polonsky. The creative director has amassed more than 200 examples from venues around the world. (eBay also sells vintage ones by the dozen, and real obsessives can even buy matchbook prints at The Go-To.)

For Calypso Eaton of Goya Communications, "the best ones are by Brutto", the Farringdon trattoria. Their vivid-green design with a cute hand-drawn figure brandishing a plate of squiggles was copied from graffiti spotted in Venice. Displayed in a big bowl by the reception, they're the ultimate sneaky take-out. ■HTSI



Matchbooks and matchboxes from (top, clockwise from top left) Lil's piano bar at Moss New York, Dishoom's UK restaurants, London's Trattoria Brutto and Kismet restaurant in Los Angeles; and (above, clockwise from top left) Café Deco in London, Petite Edith in Chicago and Carbone restaurant in New York

Right: a server wears a classic white dinner jacket at a fashion show in France in 1953



DRINKING

GREAT WHITES

The bartender's jacket signals mastery and power. No wonder it endures, says *Alice Lascelles*

Bartenders have dressed all kinds of ways in the past 200 years. Jerry Thomas – the original 19th-century "celebrity bartender" – wore a shirt and waistcoat "all ablaze with diamonds" and a Derby hat (sometimes accessorised with a pair of pet rats). Modern-day mixologists channel everything from goth to steampunk.

It's the classic white dinner jacket, though, that remains the most iconic look of all – a shorthand for the old-time elegance of Dukes in St James's, Harry's Bar in Venice and the American Bar at The Savoy. And now it's being reinterpreted. "In the Jazz Age, white conveyed confidence, cleanliness and ceremony – it signalled mastery," says Dominic Dijkstra, director of mixology for the Waldorf Astoria, Osaka. "Today it still carries that same visual power."

For the hotel's 1930s-style speakeasy, Cane & Tales, the team devised a "more streamlined" double-breasted version of the jacket worn by Harry Craddock, the bartender who presided over the American Bar in the 1920s and '30s. "Its off-white tone was chosen to feel softer and more wearable than a stark optic white," says Dijkstra. The jetted pockets also have a green trim to add "a discreet layer of personality".

Erik Lorincz spent eight award-winning years as head bartender at The Savoy's American Bar, during which time he helped reinstate a more Craddock-like uniform. When it came to launching his own Mayfair bar, Kwânt, he went for a white jacket too, but styled it in a way that expressed a new spirit of independence. "We dropped the lapels and added some black silk stitching and buttons," says Lorincz. The off-white jacket – by Italian tailor Maurel – is worn with a white shirt, blue jeans, trainers and the bartender's choice of tie. "Anything blue or green is OK – but no red allowed."

A '90s Margiela "lab coat" inspired the staff jacket at Obvio, the New York "neo-noir" supper club and cocktail bar from restaurateur Juan Santa Cruz. "I saw the people working at Margiela's shop in London in white lab coats

and loved the idea," he recalls. "We wanted to highlight that our bar people are true craftsmen, like chemists in a lab."

The dandyish outfits worn by the bar team at Bar Les Ambassadeurs inside Paris's Hôtel de Crillon were designed by French designer Hugo Matha, founder of bespoke-uniform maker Form-Uni. "The starting point was a double-breasted waistcoat – a classic tailoring piece, structured and almost ceremonial, reworked to become a statement," he says. Then it was all about details: "A textured honeycomb fabric. Natural horn buttons, chosen for the depth and unique variations. A black-and-white polka-dot pocket square." Instead of ties, the bar staff wear silk neckerchiefs with the colours denoting their roles.

Savile Row tailor Cad & The Dandy was behind the white bar jacket for Brutes, a Martini bar opening in April on London's Bruton Place. Cad & The Dandy creative director Oliver Mumby describes it as "a modern working jacket with old world bar-room pedigree. It's cut from a mid-weight off-white barathia [a finely ribbed fabric] by [Yorkshire cloth merchant] Dugdale Bros & Co that drapes beautifully. It's designed to look just as good at last orders as it does at opening."

"OUR BAR PEOPLE ARE CRAFTSMEN, LIKE THE CHEMISTS IN A LAB"

Making cocktails can be very physical – so mobility is key. The traditional-looking cream jackets at Copenhagen's award-winning Tata Bar incorporate an "action back" – a design with extra gussets or pleats often found in motorcycle jackets – for maximum flexibility.

At new Manhattan bar and restaurant Chateau Royale, owner Cody Pruitt favours a lightweight fabric for his staff's double-breasted white jackets, for ease of movement when stirring and shaking drinks. "I am an unabashed sucker for a bartender in a white jacket," says Pruitt. "Whether it's at the American Bar at The Savoy or at Tender Bar in Tokyo."

The answer to keeping a white jacket clean? Have several. The staff at Room 207 in New York have five a-piece. Kwânt's Erik Lorincz searched long and hard for a fabric that was truly machine washable. "I soaked it in coffee and grenadine for three days, to make sure," he says. Or you could just make less mess in the first place. Which is why the white jacket remains strictly for professionals. ■HTSI

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