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People, places, and directions that
will shape the way you drink in 2020.



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**People, places, and directions
that will shape the way you
drink in 2020.**

A new year, a new decade, and lots of plans to make for the months ahead. Here's our annual list of the 75 people, places, destinations, and directions that will shape the drinks world in 2020 and beyond. Find a new favorite café or cocktail bar, see what's up with great brewers and winemakers, figure out a travel itinerary, or discover a new drinks style. This list gets you started—be sure to visit us at imbibemagazine.com to learn more about the 2020 Imbibe 75.

By Penelope Bass, Joshua M. Bernstein,
Paul Clarke, Wayne Curtis, Jennifer Fiedler,
Emma Janzen, and Emma Mannheimer

PEOPLE *to* WATCH

Samara Rivers

While working as an event planner several years ago, Samara Rivers looked over the marketing material for a prominent whiskey brand as part of her work for a client. “In that document, I didn’t see anybody who looked like me—and when I *did* see myself [in marketing material], it was more in the urban demographic category, which skews much younger and aims for an urban hip-hop vibe,” she says. “That didn’t resonate with me. I wanted to show there’s a more mature, educated, sophisticated consumer of color that’s just as interested in premium spirits.” She did so by founding the Black Bourbon Society, an Atlanta-based company aimed at involving consumers of color in the bourbon experience. Society members, who number more than 10,000, are offered twice-yearly excursions to Kentucky to tour distilleries, and in 2018 Rivers and her partner, Armond Davis, selected private barrels of bourbon at Maker’s Mark, which were bottled and released in cities including Chicago, New Orleans, and Houston. She also talks bourbon with Davis on their “Bonded in Bourbon” podcast and writes about bourbon on the BBS website, including the long-neglected history of African Americans in

American whiskey. “Some distilleries have been making whiskey since well before emancipation—somebody was cutting that corn and grinding the mash, and there’s plenty of room for that story to be uncovered,” she says. “Let’s tell it in a way that honors the people who put the energy and effort into making these whiskies what they are today. It doesn’t diminish the brand—it’s the acknowledgement of our place in the story. In that sense, it furthers the notion of inclusion—we’re in there, we’re not hidden.” —PC

Theresa McCulla

“Brewing history is American history,” says Theresa McCulla. “You can truly look at any era of American history and find beer there ... from advertising culture, or technological change, to social movements, or beer as a history of immigration into the U.S. It pertains to the entire spectrum of the American experience.” It’s exactly this kind of history that McCulla has been researching for the past three years in her role as

curator of the American Brewing History Initiative at the Smithsonian’s National Museum of American History. The museum’s new display, “Brewing a Revolution,” which opened to the public in October, highlights the modern history of homebrewing and microbrewing in the U.S., beginning around the 1960s. McCulla highlights people like Fritz Maytag, who bought Anchor Steam in 1965 (and whose signature white coveralls are on display); Michael Lewis, who built up the brewing science program at UC Davis and donated his personal textbook, and Charlie Papazian, widely considered the father of modern homebrewing, and whose wooden homebrew spoon now adorns the display. “It’s an interesting challenge to consider working in 20th- and 21st-century history, because the brewing industry is history in the making,” she says. —PB

Todd Cavallo and Crystal Cornish

It wasn’t technically a wine that put Todd Cavallo and Crystal Cornish in the spot-

light, but a wine by-product. The team behind Wild Arc Farm left their home in Brooklyn and their jobs in tech to buy land in the Hudson Valley in 2016. “I think we were just kind of crazy,” says Cornish. “Let’s leave the city and be farmers.” They dabbled in vegetables but knew the key to viability was wine. Sourcing much of their fruit from the Hudson Valley and at times the Finger Lakes and Long Island while their own vines established, Wild Arc soon had wines served at spots like Racines NY and Petra, and was recently picked up by importer Jenny & François Selections. But it was their experimentation with a historical style called Piquette, a fizzy, low-alcohol beverage made from a second fermentation of leftover grape pomace, that piqued the attention of the wider wine industry (see page 80). “We didn’t have a ton of grapes to play with, but we did have a ton of energy, and were really motivated,” says Cornish. “It was something else we could make with what little we had—we just got lucky that people like it.” —PB