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## Manhattan Cocktail Classic — The Main Event

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Need to brush up on your ice-carving skills? Your cocktail photography not what you want it to be? Not sure what sort of martini goes well with that filet mignon? Take heart.

The Manhattan Cocktail Classic is back in town with the answers to every arcane mixed-drink mystery and a truckload of Boston shakers.

After a two-day “preview” event last October that was attended by 2,000 people, the organization will return May 14 to 18 with its first full-fledged convention.

Like last fall, activities will be centered at the Astor Center in NoHo where an official bar, opening at 11 a.m. everyday, will include a series of noted bartenders from New York and across the United States.

The number of seminars, however, has tripled. They will include such hyperfocused cocktail topics as the role of Curaçao in cocktails; a history lesson about the late-19th-century New York bartender Harry Johnson, a revered figure in liquor circles; an examination of “monk-inspired” cocktails (think Chartreuse and Benedictine); a discussion of non-aged whiskeys known as “White Dog”; and a session on “Bar Myth Busters” (Do you really need to shake a Ramos for 15 minutes? Can you really light gunpowder in 100 proof alcohol?) This is not to mention long, loving looks at sherry, gin, tequila and mezcal, and punch.

There will also be a variety of off-site tutorials, feasts and workshops, including an ice-carving class taught by Death & Company’s Alex Day and Momofuku’s Don Lee; a drinking event by Willy Shine at the soon-to-open Lower East Side bar Painkiller; a three-hour, sunset cocktail cruise featuring five bars; a class in cocktail photography conducted by the bartender John DeBary; and a tasting that will match different martinis with an array of steak cuts. As in 2009, the convention will end with a drinking bacchanal at the New York Public Library on Fifth Avenue. This year, however, the Manhattan Cocktail Classic intends to take over the entire building.

“If Terry Gilliam threw a cocktail party at the New York Public Library, I think it would look something like this,” said the convention’s director, Lesley Townsend.

Tickets, which go on sale Wednesday, are \$50 for Astor Center and off-site events, and \$100 for the gala. Contact the Web site.