

BAR STOOL



The Thao Dien 'bubble' is a familiar expression when talking about the expat-friendly area of District 2, and Tropicana, on the 9th floor of the Nam Anh building, offers a great vantage point over it.

The bar opened on New Year's Eve, 2016. Martijn Lips, a native of The Netherlands and part owner, felt there was a gap in the market for a rooftop bar in the area; Tropicana remains the first of its kind in the district. Skybars and rooftop terraces

are now familiar settings to have a drink in District 1, but Martijn says they wanted to give that option to District 2 as well.

Going troppo

For a bar with a tropical theme, cocktails are unsurprisingly the name of the game up here. There's an original-looking cocktail list that gives adventurous cocktail drinkers the option to veer away from the usual mojito and cosmopolitan standards and try something new. I chose one off their

Tropicana Signatures list, a Santa Domingo, priced at VND150,000. It contains dark rum, Cointreau, and Malibu with pineapple and lemon juice. With a lot of flavours, plus alcohol, competing for attention, it's an excellent balance and is very refreshing.

I also went for an After Eight, priced at VND150,000. It's a cocktail which features gin, creme de cacao white, creme de menthe, milk, cream and a mint topping. Both cocktails are presented with a bit of flair, important in a competitive marketplace, but most important

Tropicana



PHOTOS BY BAO ZOAN

of all, the flavours complement each other really well. Martijn says they also want to focus on high-quality wines, and their wine list is sourced from Celliers d'Asie.

Island in the sky

There are palm trees dotted around the uncovered terrace, with a sunny and warm colour scheme befitting the bar's name. As well as the bar stools outside, under the covers there are comfy-looking sofas with multi-coloured pillows for larger groups to

sit on. The view is fantastic, which makes the prospect of drinking wine or a cocktail while looking outwards, an inviting one.

A party-type atmosphere is encouraged in the evening, and there's a stage and dancefloor to the right side of the bar. Every Friday and Saturday night there are DJs or bands performing, with the music playing as long as the customers feel like dancing. Once a month Tropicana holds themed parties, which in the past have included Caribbean and Carnival get-togethers.

There is a daily happy hour from 5pm to 8pm, which knocks 10% off wine prices and 30% off cocktails. There is also a food menu which includes Mexican-inspired fare such as *quesadillas* (VND160,000), *tacos* (VND120,000 to VND180,000) and *burritos* (VND120,000 – VND165,000), among other items. — **Thomas Barrett**

Tropicana is located on the 9th floor of the Nam Anh building, 41 Street 41, Thao Dien, Q2, HCMC. For more information on Tropicana, visit facebook.com/tropicanausaigon