

HYDRATION LIBATIONS

We've talked about being on the water. But what about drinking the stuff? Here we chat with Savannah local **Hannah Byrne**, who has amassed a social media following with her refreshing Water Cocktails.

AT AGE 50, Hannah Byrne made a decision to dramatically improve her health. Along with various lifestyle changes, she started swapping out her regular sips of Sauvignon Blanc for water. However, it wasn't just any flavorless, bland water: Byrne began crafting non-alcoholic beverages using water, fruits, herbs, and other elements that gave each recipe the allure of a well-mixed cocktail.

Within a few months of making the switch, she experienced weight loss, better sleep, and — what she affirms is the most noticeable difference — clearer skin. “We slather all of these ingredients on our face every day when we can get the same minerals by drinking them,” explains Byrne. With the help of her son, she brought her journey to Instagram under the name @honestlyhannah in January 2024 and has grown a community of more than 25,000 followers also interested in improving their health. Per Byrne, “It was really born out of vanity, but the benefits are so much more holistic than that.”

Her recipes offer a cleaner alternative to many mocktail mixes, which can contain sugar and other additives. The star



COURTESY HANNAH BYRNE

ingredient of all of her recipes is naturally occurring mineral water, whether that be spring, glacier, or volcanic. From there, the base of every Water Cocktail is a fruit (such as strawberries, blueberries, or mango), and then she adds a citrus before choosing an herb (think mint, rosemary, or thyme). The herbs are sometimes muddled for flavor; other times, they act as a garnish. She frequents Herb Creek Landscape Supply with her husband, a horticulturist at Palmetto Bluff, to pick up new herbs to try.

In addition to muddling and shaking, Byrne likes to add traditional cocktail ingredients, such as agave or nonalcoholic bitters. “When you level it up with a bitter or muddle in some jalapeño, it really changes the profile,” says Byrne. “Pour it into a refined glass, and you feel like you’re actually drinking that cocktail.”

The most frequently asked question Byrne receives on social media is how to order a Water Cocktail when you’re out on the town. “I’ve interviewed bartenders around the world about this, and they all

say the same thing: we are here to make you what you want.” She advises bar-goers to assess the menu to see what garnishes and fruits they’re using in their regular cocktails. Once you know what you’d like to order, be direct. “You can say, ‘I’d like still water in that stemmed glass with ice, two slices of blood orange, drizzle some Luxardo cherry juice on top, and put a sprig of rosemary in it,’” she gives as an example.

Byrne frequently collaborates with local businesses, like Rhoot Man Beverage Company, and is available to create custom Water Cocktail recipes for events. For example, she created a drink called the Crunchie Brunchie, which she crafted using Party of Hive granola and Savannah Bee Company honey. Byrne is currently working on a book about the benefits of drinking water and building the Honestly Hannah brand to continue showcasing her personal health journey. “I’m not against alcohol,” she explains. “I just want to look and feel as good as I can each day.”

—MARY CORNETTA

The Classic Texas Waterita

Byrne already has an eBook available, featuring her favorite recipe series: the Waterita.

“I’m a sucker for a margarita,” she says. “I love the flavors of the Waterita; I could drink them all day long!”

Here’s her recipe for an invigorating libation for a steamy summer day.

INGREDIENTS:

- 1 ounce fresh-squeezed tangelo juice
- ½ ounce lime juice
- 1 teaspoon agave

DIRECTIONS:

- Shake all ingredients plus 4-5 ounces spring water and ice
- Pour strained into a rocks glass loaded with ice, rimmed with Tajin
- Garnish with wedges of orange and lime

The Classic
Texas Waterita

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