



Seamstress Web

The Upper East gets nuanced cocktails and inspired bites from Seamstress

By Karen Palmer

Executive Editor

3/11/15



This past Saturday night [Seamstress](#) was bursting at the, well, seams. Marked not by a sign but with a door emblazoned with a scissors logo, the new [Upper East Side](#) cocktail bar-slash-restaurant hummed with a Brooklyn-esque crowd, complete with the occasional ironic (or possibly unironic) hat. They were there to experience what is probably the coolest spot the UES has seen in recent months—or possibly ever. This restaurant from Josh Mazza and Steve Laycock, owners of tony nearby cocktail bar [The Gilroy](#), Seamstress is decked with chic. Even walking in, you're greeted in a cozy check-in room by a dapper host, who stands in front of a small case of Shinola watches, Lotuff leather goods and razors for sale. Inside, the narrow space is awash in exposed brick and white subway tile, adorned with simple decorations like metal chandeliers and a pair of wire dress forms. The most noticeable design detail is a massive communal table with

several different seating nooks, made by local artisan Robert Rising from a tree that fell during Hurricane Sandy. The tight front bar was elbow to elbow, so make a reservation for a table unless you want to fight the crowd.



Pam Wiznitzer stirs a cocktail at Seamstress.

Sit down, cozy up to the irreverent menu from chef Will Horowitz (of the East Village's [Ducks Eatery](#)) and nibble on inspired bar snacks like smoked shrimp cocktail (\$24), served in a foot-tall chalice-like glass filled with ice and sea beans with Marie Rose dipping sauce. There are gargantuan slabs of fried potato (\$7), too, with a peppery, garlicky spread for dunking, and a charcuterie plate (\$19) with West Loop's lardo draped over thin slices of bread, among other salty snacks.

But you're really here for the cocktails, created by [The Dead Rabbit](#) alum Pamela Wiznitzer, whose playfulness is woven throughout the 24-drink menu (that would

be 21 cocktails and three mocktails), broken down into cheeky categories like Embroidered and Muslin.

"I'm a realistic bartender," Wiznitzer says. "I know how bartenders drink and how niche-cocktail people drink—but I know that 97 percent of people want a drink, and they want it fast. So how do I meld that with my classic training?"

She stitches the two together beautifully in cocktails she calls somewhat "ridiculous." Take the Wiz Fizz (\$13), Wiznitzer's take on the classic Ramos Fizz. It's an Aviation gin cocktail that veers more into the land of White Russians with its foamy, milky texture, thanks to egg whites and half-and-half. There's root beer in there, too, which plays off the sarsaparilla in the gin.

"I love root beer floats," Wiznitzer says. "This cocktail is all about layering flavor on flavor."

It's *sew* good, we'll definitely be back to sip another.