

FLYING HIGH

The Peacock Plane at the Peacock at DC Ranch takes a classic cocktail to new heights

The classic Paper Plane cocktail was developed as a riff on the Prohibition-era gin-based Last Word. Now, spirits expert Dakota Watts has put his own spin on the herbaceous libation with the Peacock Plane. Named for both its original predecessor as well as the bar where it's served, this clever nod offers something familiar but with its own distinct personality.

The newest addition to the cocktail menu at The Peacock at DC Ranch, a chic speakeasy hidden within The Living Room, the Peacock Plane (\$18) is bold, eye-catching and layered with complexity.

A base of bourbon and scotch brings a deep sweetness with smoky, earthy undertones. Aperol adds a slightly bitter, citrusy flavor that pairs beautifully with the herbal notes of Amaro Nonino. Fresh lemon juice lends a bright, zesty finish. "Each ingredient plays an essential role in building a drink that's rich yet refreshing, complex yet approachable," says Jacob Williams, area director of Kaufman Hospitality, the company that manages the lounge.

The bold, layered flavors pair well with dishes like steak frites and lamb lollipops. "The bourbon and scotch offer smoky, robust flavors that complement the savory richness of the steak or lamb, while the bitterness from the Aperol and Amaro Nonino cuts through the fattiness of the meat, creating a perfect balance," notes Chef Chris George. "The interplay of flavors between the food and drink enhances both."

The drink is served in a smoked 10-ounce carafe and then poured tableside into a coupe glass. Smoke fills the carafe and adds an aromatic depth. It serves as both a garnish and an essential part of the sensory experience. "The Peacock has a cool, sultry elegance, and this drink fits right in with that atmosphere," Williams says.

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