

A Cool (Bob)Cat In Town: The Royal Bobcat cocktail bar brings 1920s zest to Atwells Avenue



Providence flapper gals and dapper gents, take note! There's a chic new cocktail bar slinking its way onto the scene, and it's the cat's meow! Nestled on Federal Hill, The Royal Bobcat is here to bring all the fun and friskiness of Roaring Twenties New Orleans to PVD! Owners Ellie Coyne and Dan Becker take their vintage concept to the next level with a craft beverage menu that pays homage to classic

libations, like a Sazerac, prepared with enough absinthe to make Ernest Hemingway proud. True to the form of a genuine Southern-inspired speakeasy, any of their drinks can be ordered with an absinthe rinse, and Coyne and Becker look forward to hosting absinthe tastings at The Royal Bobcat's bar! Sign me up for sure!

Not in the mood to imbibe? No worries! The Royal Bobcat offers two signature mocktails, a Cranberry Jalapeño and a Cardamom Ginger, and both are flavored with Bootblack Syrups, a handmade cocktail syrup made in Rhode Island. I tried the Cranberry Jalapeño, and the kick from the candied pepper was an unexpected but pleasant surprise! Oddly enough, I'm a fan. In addition to mixed drinks, The Royal Bobcat stocks local draft beers, ciders and even unsweetened Granny Squibb's iced tea in cans. Don't see something you like on the menu? Bartender Steve Sharp, who also doubles as Foolproof Brewing Company's head brewer, will whip you up a custom concoction based on your tastes — another detail that sets this one-of-a-kind watering hole above the rest.

Hungry for more? Head on over to the in-house takeout window, Hanju Kitchen, where you can dine on "Ko-Cajun" cuisine from Chef Jenny Han. She uses her South Korean roots coupled with The Royal Bobcat's southern flair to create a truly unique and memorable menu. Sink your teeth into a massive Po'Boy Sandwich, stuffed to the gills with your choice of fried shrimp, tofu, or Korean bulgogi beef and topped with Asian pickled veggies and a house made remoulade sauce that's slap yo' mama good, or the popular kimchi mac 'n' cheese, which combines the traditional Korean fermented cabbage with a rich three cheese blend of Parmesan, havarti, and cheddar cheeses, and of course, plenty of noods! This is a far cry from the blue box mac, and for that, I am very grateful. Chef Jenny got her start working at fancy-schmancy Chez Pascal just down the hill, and although Hanju Kitchen's offerings are decidedly casual, the love and attention that she puts into each and every dish that comes out of her kitchen window is totally apparent when you take the first bite! And the second... And the third...

A visit to The Royal Bobcat is the ultimate beginning or end to a starry Providence night. Whether you're coming for a dinner with friends before painting the town red, or a romantic nightcap at a secluded table for two, one thing's for certain: The team at The Royal Bobcat certainly proved Jay Gatsby wrong when he said, "You can't repeat the past" with this whimsical throwback to a bygone era where everything old is new again. After all, a little party never killed nobody!

Note: The Royal Bobcat is temporarily closed due to state order.

The Royal Bobcat & Hanju Kitchen, 422 Atwells Ave, PVD; The Royal Bobcat Open 4pm - midnight Sun - Thu; 4pm - 2am Fri - Sat; Hanju Kitchen Open 5:30 - 10pm Mon - Thu; 5:30 - 11pm Fri - Sat; Closed Sundays