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ILLUSTRATION BY MARK STIVERS



DRINK

# Good libations

BY RACHEL MAYFIELD / [rachelm@newsreview.com](mailto:rachelm@newsreview.com)

**Fourth of July is here, that time of year for eating** barbeque, shotgunning beer and experiencing the unpleasant effects of eating barbeque and shotgunning beer. Let's face it: The gut is a delicate ecosystem that can be drastically transformed by dietary changes and is in more danger during cookout season. Before disaster strikes—or even as it strikes—take stock of some pro-digestive drinks that taste almost (but not quite) as good as those grilled chicken wings.

## Dressing up

Vibe Health Bar's cold-pressed Wellbelly Shot (\$4) is one of many probiotic drink options. The label breaks down what each ingredient does, with vinegar and vegan probiotic assisting in gut health and digestion. Turbinado sugar supposedly "aids in fermentation process" while purified water helps with ... 'hydration.'" Hmm, the jury's still out on that one. Mostly it tastes like a thick strawberry vinaigrette, which isn't a bad thing, especially if you've been craving salad but still haven't emotionally recovered from last year's E. coli lettuce outbreak. **2770 East Bidwell Street in Folsom; (916) 990-5367; liquidologybar.com.**

## For the culture

Sweetened tea fermented with a symbiotic culture of bacteria and yeast, also known as kombucha, is another probiotic beverage that's been said to help with recolonizing gut bacteria. Zeal's Vanilla Pine Kombucha (\$3.99 per bottle at Sacramento Natural Foods Co-Op) doesn't immediately assault your senses as it trickles down your tubes. Instead, the sparkling

coral-hued refreshment has a light, mild fizz and goes down smooth. You can find it bottled or on tap around town, and it may even pair better with a burger than your standard IPA. Plus, it tastes like vanilla and pine. **2820 R Street; (916) 455-2667; zealkombucha.com.**

## Spice world

Life isn't just about cultivating your microbiome. Sometimes, you just want to kick back, relax and sip on something that won't inflame your digestive tract. The Golden Milk (\$6.50) at Backbone Café is a lactose-free, honey-sweetened delight. Not only does it contain a blend of coconut and almond-pecan milk, it's infused with spices such as turmeric, ginger, nutmeg and cardamom, all of which are said to be useful in treating an upset stomach. Ask for it cold, and it's almost like drinking an iced latte, minus the coffee, the milk or the ice. **729 J Street; (916) 970-5545; backbonecafe.com.**

## Fight and flight

Sun & Soil's piping hot Turmeric Tea (\$5) is definitely a last resort, but it's pretty effective at combating squirming intestines. Just one 12-ounce cup boasts an arsenal of turmeric, ginger, chamomile, licorice root, cinnamon, black pepper and dandelion root. The added honey gives it sweetness, but not enough to lessen the sting when it hits the back of your throat. It's a dangerously spicy elixir that does a bang-up job muffling the moans inside your body long enough for you to politely excuse yourself from the family picnic and power walk all the way home to, ahem, take care of business. **1912 P Street; (916) 341-0327; sunandsoiljuice.com.** □

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