

Coffins and Cocktails

This experience is a 2.5 hour long learning session on a couple things that make New Orleans special, our unique cemeteries and our libations history. Guests will arrive to learn about both. Each guest will learn how 3 famous cocktails are made, getting some hands-on experience in making and tasting them. In between drinks they will hear a lecture and slide show on New Orleans cemeteries. The cocktail experience will be led by Chip Dennison, an award winning bartender and historian with more than 3 decades working with cocktails and spirits. The guests will be introduced to each drink and its history and variations. Then they will be set up in small groups and given step by step instructions in making the drink themselves. After each cocktail, while they sit and enjoy, they will be led in a talk about cemeteries by Mariel Updegrove who has both a Masters in Architecture and a Masters in Preservation from Tulane and is the first and only documented female grave digger in the history of New Orleans. With slides and facts and first hand accounts, Mariel will go over how cemeteries in the city work, covering the fascinating history as well as some of the common misconceptions.

When a guest returns from this experience they will know more about Coffins and Cocktails than most locals and will have some great stories to share with friends and family back home.

Your Hosts:

Chip Dennison is a local tour guide who has a BA in History from University of San Francisco and is an award winning bartender and has managed a Rum Distillery. He brings decades of knowledge to the subject of cocktails and their history.

Mariel Updegrove has a Masters In Architecture and a Masters in Historic Preservation from Tulane University and has worked as a preservationist for a couple local cemeteries and as a grave digger for the city. She is currently pursuing her Architectural License while also working as a preservation carpenter and woodworker.

What: A 2.5 hour class on cocktails and cemeteries. Small groups will learn the history and how to make 3 classic cocktails. In between drinks they will get a presentation on cemeteries in New Orleans with slides and information from a real expert on N.O. burial practices.

When & Where: Weekdays during the early afternoon at a local bar or coffeehouse.

Details on use of space to be negotiated.