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Sipping in the Sky

Sky Bar in Bangkok



What better place to take in a city's ambiance than from the top? Here are some of the best rooftop bars around the world, just in time to appreciate cooler, crisper nights, but before bone-chilling weather arrives.

ROOF, on the 27th floor of Chicago's brand-new [TheWit](#) hotel, is 7,000 square feet of chic. With three bars, some of those spaces open year-round due to a vaulted glass roof, you can choose from seating options that include communal tables and double-sided settees, some located beside a double-sided glass fireplace. During summer and fall, fire pits are lit. Tap into your geeky side by peering through a telescope set up in one corner. Small plates include grilled lamb burgers, beef carpaccio and roasted sweet peppers and goat-cheese crostini. Individual pizzas, are cooked in a wood-burning oven. *Recommended drink:*

Londoner in Bangkok (Beefeater Gin, Fresh Mango and Basil).

Bangkok's Sky Bar is on the 64th floor of [Ilebea at State Tower](#), a hotel that boasts the city's second-highest tower. From a circular bar lit in a soft blue, the bartender muddles, shakes or stirs cocktails while you relax and take in the view of Bangkok's skyline and the Chao Phraya River. There are no roofs or walls here, just a glass banister between you and the city. Arrive early as it's a hip place to be at night—and watching the sunset from here is high on most people's lists. *Recommended drink: Champagne from the wine list.*

A recent \$4 million renovation at [The Peninsula Beverly Hills](#) extended to the brand-new rooftop bar (The Roof Garden), where on cooler nights heated limestone flooring allows you to slip off your shoes. There's a "living wall" of plants and the herbs used in the rooftop garden make their way into drinks and food. Peek into the outdoor grill to watch dishes being prepared, items like a burger with Pinot Noir aioli & white cheddar cheese, orchestrated by executive chef James Overbaugh. *Recommended drink: Speckled Jalapeno Margarita (Tequila with fresh citrus juices and Grand Marnier, muddled with a thin slice of jalapeno).*

With a hotel-room key or a reservation, anyone can check it out Private Roof Club and Garden, on top of the [Gramercy Park Hotel](#). It's been open since the summer of 2006 and serves breakfast, lunch and dinner year-round—plus drinks and a weekend brunch—thanks to a retractable glass-enclosed roof. The club offers amazing views of Manhattan's skyline, including a great shot of the Chrysler building. This fall Danny Meyer introduces Maialino, an Italian restaurant, with dishes incorporating classic Roman ingredients, perfect for this cozy-yet-luxurious space. *Recommended drink: Ginger Fig (vodka with muddled ginger root, fig jam and fresh orange juice).*

The [Ivy Hotel](#), which arrived in San Diego's Gaslamp Quarter two years ago, has two rooftop watering holes: Envy Nightclub and Ivy Rooftop. Envy is a sultry, multi-level club where beds turn into tables, only open on weekends (Thursday through Saturday nights), and Ivy evokes a sunny day at the beach with a sundeck and pool (open day and night). Each guest has his or her own dedicated cocktail server. Tangerine-colored cushions at chaises by the pool, and chocolate-brown and blonde wicker furniture, make Ivy a stylish place to hang, away from the beach crowd. *Recommended drink at Ivy: Bliss (Veuve Clicquot Champagne and St.-Germaine Elderflower Liqueur).*

The view from the top of four-year-old [Hotel Básico](#) in Playa del Carmen, Mexico, is all turquoise waters and white sands. (The Caribbean Sea is just two blocks away.) Azotea bar is located on the third story of this eco-friendly, 15-room hotel (cabana beds are repurposed from truck fronts and soaking tubs are former petroleum water tanks). Relax in a cabana that's outfitted with billowy white curtains or take in a movie on nights when tropical-themed films are shown. Most nights, local DJs provide the tunes. *Recommended drink: Mojito.*