

TASTE

COURTESY BLACK LAGOON

Creatures Welcome

Water Witch Tiki Bar brings Black Lagoon, the acclaimed Halloween pop-up cocktail bar, to Bull Street

Written by CAROLINE EUBANKS

WHILE CHRISTMAS-THEMED COCKTAIL POP-UPS are a dime a dozen in December, spooky season is finally getting the attention it deserves. From Sept. 30 to Nov. 2, Savannah's Water Witch Tiki Bar will join leading cocktail bars across North America by temporarily transforming into "Black Lagoon," an immersive, touring Halloween experience that has been named the Best Pop-Up Bar in 2022 by *Canada's 100 Best* magazine.

Inspired by the classics' movie creatures and all things supernatural, the Black Lagoon pop-up concept was founded by cocktail veterans Kelsey Ramage and Erin Hayes in Toronto in 2021 following a successful stint at a bar industry convention. Ramage is an award-winning bartender and consultant from Toronto, Canada, who was named the Spirited Awards Best International Bartender in 2020. Hayes hails from Chicago and served as head bartender at Three Dots and a Dash, the city's own famed tiki phenomenon.

"We created Black Lagoon as not only a fun and unique way to celebrate Halloween, but also as a safe space for anyone who may feel like a misfit," says Hayes. Ramage adds, "We strive for our guests to have fun, have a delicious drink and experience Halloween with

no judgment and not be afraid to channel your inner goth kid."

When Water Witch owner and fellow tiki fanatic Brigitte Martin Harley heard about Black Lagoon from an industry colleague, she and her staff went all in on bringing the world-class experience to Savannah.

Expect macabre decor like life-sized coffins, moody lighting, skulls and skeletons, cobwebs and other eerie items. Of course, you'll also find a menu of frightfully tasty drinks. Popular concoctions of past years include the "Book of Blood," a mezcal spin on the Mai Tai with fresh beet juice for a bloody appearance, and the "Death Rattle," a mix of brandy, amontillado sherry and fresh juices. There are also low-alcohol and spirit-free options. The pop-up even creates tiki-style glassware for its cocktails, which patrons can purchase as souvenirs.

"The cocktails are where we really get to have fun and bring Black Lagoon to life," says Ramage. "Erin and I get to put our bar-focused brains together and really play with our love for the heebie-jeebies to come up with a curated menu of blood-curdling cocktails."

For more information, visit blacklagoonpopup.com — if you dare. ☛