You look like you need a drink.
Sure, beer’s cheap, but it’s been a long summer — you deserve something special. The Scene has a list of 15 awesome local beverages you need to sample, from an icy take on Irish coffee to a refreshing sangria that comes loaded with watermelon.

Wanna get weird? Head toward the green light in Germantown and imagine you’re chilling with Serge Gainsbourg at Nashville’s only absinthe bar. Or enjoy everything that’s great about being a kid (while imbibing the booze that’s legal as an adult) by tossing back a showy milkshake that’ll give you a sugar high. We’ve also got an under-a-buck summer cocktail recipe that may not knock your socks off, but it’ll get the job done. It’s the Scene’s annual Drinks Issue, y’all — cheers!

Kingston Negroni
$13
Bastion, 434 Houston St.

My initial reaction to Bastion’s Kingston Negroni was, “Tastes like Christmas!” Not necessarily something you’d say about a standard negroni, which is equal parts gin, vermouth rosso and the pungent, herbaceous bitter Campari, with a twist of orange. Joaquín Simó, the expert bartender behind New York’s Death & Co. and Pouring Ribbons, developed the variation using Smith and Cross Jamaican rum in place of the gin, which Bastion head bartender Michael McCollum has added to the menu with Simó’s blessing. My very amenable bartender poured me a taste of the Smith and Cross, which I was unfamiliar with. It knocks you back like the first time you sneaked a drink from your dad’s scotch bottle, leaving a long, tingling burn. But the Kingston Negroni’s few ingredients play off each other in a way that mellows that top layer of sharpness, not unlike the way rum and ginger beer blend in a Dark and Stormy. That gives the orange and the fruit notes in the rum bigger roles to play in the overall flavor profile, making the Kingston Negroni the perfect thing to sip on whether you’re enjoying the bar’s upscale ‘60s rec-room feel with friends or going for the high score in Galaga on their free-play arcade machine. STEPHEN TRAGESER

Drunken Monkey
$13
No. 308, 407 Gallatin Ave.

At first blush, No. 308’s Drunken Monkey looks simple enough: brown rum, poured over a single large cube of ice, into a tumbler, topped with a small pink flower. But there’s more to it than that. The East Side bar infuses Diplomático Añejo rum with banana and honey cream through an hours-long sous-vide process, giving the liquor a complex, rich flavor. And that flower, it’s an edible orchid. Not only is it edible, it doesn’t have the sort of bitter, grass-clippings flavor you might expect, but rather a bright, almost arugula-like bite. Now if the Drunken Monkey — as delightful and flavorful as it is — packs too much kick for you, I’d recommend instead the Monkey Business. Served at No. 308’s Tiki Tuesdays (and there are only two left this summer, the next one being Aug. 16), the Monkey Business is a banana daiquiri adorned with a half-banana carved to look like a dolphin. If you imagine the Drunken Monkey as something Ernest Hemingway might have drunk while lunched over a typewriter in Havana, the Monkey Business is what Hunter Thompson would buy a round of for the party at the next table. D. PATRICK RODGERS
Brevans H.R. Giger, $18
The Green Hour at Tempered, 1201 Fifth Ave. N.

Thursday, Friday and Saturday nights, bespoke Germantown chocolate shop Tempered flicks on a green light and serves as the city’s only absinthe bar. Real absinthe, the stuff with oil of wormwood, has only recently been re-legalized in America — the longstanding belief that wormwood is a psychedelic having been debunked — so push out thoughts of French dilettantes chasing dragons in their addled brains. Erase, too, scenes of frat boys setting the stuff on fire and shooting it like cinnamon whiskey. That is more of an Eastern European thing, and The Green Hour is dedicated to serving the herbaceous drink French style, befitting the bar’s fin-de-siècle decor and atmosphere.

And that requires some patience. The proper form is to slowly drip water into the glass, allowing the oils within the drink to release, transforming a clear glass of booze into an enchanting murky green cloud. Absinthe tastes unlike anything else, and because each distiller has its own guarded recipe, no two absinthes taste alike. Fortunately, the ever-helpful Jeremiah Blake will find the right one for your tastebud. Since I’m a fan of funky beers, he poured Brevans H.R. Giger for me, and he was right — it was the alcohol equivalent of breathing in the earthy air of a hidden forest glade.

And the buzz? It is different from a standard one. Less stumbly, more heady. And while the FDA assures you no hallucinations come from wormwood, I did have a vivid dream that was an amalgam of The Ring, The Wyatt Family’s entrance and an unaired episode of Tennessee Crossroads. Lesson learned? Absinthe, as great as it is, doesn’t play well with hot chicken. J.R. LIND

Seven Samurai, $13
Otaku Ramen, 1104 Division St.

If I tell you I’m going to “fat wash” your drink, your first reaction may likely be, “Gross, Steve, and get your hands off my drink.” But if I tell you I’m going to take the best part of pork — the smoky, umami goodness of it — and get that essence into a glass, well, that’s another matter entirely. The folks at Otaku Ramen now have their own version of a drink that popped up in New York a decade ago as a Benton’s Old Fashioned. They use the fat from the pork in their tonkatsu ramen and infuse it into whiskey, then freeze it, which makes straining the fat out easier. The result? A smokier, smoother liquor that works very well against their summer version of an Old Fashioned, which features grapefruit instead of orange. STEVE CAVENDISH
**B.S., $12**

**Bar Sovereign,**
514 Fifth Ave. S.

Though somewhat inconspicuous on the outside, tucked away on Fifth Avenue in SoBro just south of Peabody Street, Bar Sovereign is anything but low-key on the interior. Filled with all manner of curios — from nautical antiques to a giant teddy bear that’s affixed to the wall — Bar Sovereign bills itself as a gastropub, and it boasts an impressive little cocktail list. At the top of the menu is what my bartender on a recent visit told me is the establishment’s most popular drink, the B.S. A near relative to the ever-popular Old Fashioned, the B.S. features whiskey, Casoni 1814 (an Italian aperitif), amaro, lemon and bitters, garnished with mint. Like a properly made Old Fashioned, the B.S. has a bitter finish that’s balanced well by the drink’s hint of citrus — but unlike an Old Fashioned, there’s no muddled sugar here, so the Casoni and amaro do all the work of adding complexity. A strong option for the brown-liquor aficionado.

D. PATRICK RODGERS

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**Whiskey Sour and Pimm’s Cup slushes, $7 for 12 ounces/$22 for a 60-ounce pitcher**

**The Hook,** 2222 Eighth Ave. S.

I lived next door to the neighborhood pool growing up, but sometimes it was worth it to walk the 10 blocks or so to the Handy Andy gas station for something even more refreshing than a swim — an ICEE. My mom never kept soft drinks in the house, so getting a swirl of frozen Coke and cherry slush that would stain your tongue bright red all afternoon made the walk worth it.

If you’re nostalgic for those ICEEs (or Slurpees or Slush Puppies, depending on the convenience store), the two frozen drinks at The Hook are what your summer needs. Served in a 12-ounce metal mug that frosts up (or a glass, for the larger size), the whiskey sour and Pimm’s cup slushes are tart and refreshing and not too alcoholic — which is to say, perfect for the dog days of August.

The whiskey sour slush is as bright red as those cherry ICEEs of my youth, except the red comes from grenadine (in a twist on the traditional cherry garnish for the cocktail), mixed with rye, lemon, and orange bitters. The drink is far more cherry than whiskey, but the Pimm’s in the other slush stands out, with hints of ginger, citrus, cucumber and mint. Best of all, if you’re dining with friends, you can order the drinks by the pitcher. Just try doing that with an ICEE. CARI WADE GERVIN
1.21 Gigawatts, $12  
**Rolf and Daughters**, 700 Taylor St.

Great Scott! With a base of Fords Gin — a relatively new London-distilled spirit released in 2012 that is neither traditional nor dry — and the addition of Cardamaro, Cocchi Rosa and orange-cream citrate bitters, the 1.21 Gigawatts (“What’s a gigawatt?!”) at Rolf and Daughters is almost too much of a good thing. But just almost. The juniper and floral smack of the gin plays extremely well on the sugary, yet tart orange-cream bitters, and the Cocchi Rosa mellows on the tongue the same way a good sangria might. The Cardamaro does seem to get a bit lost in the Cocchi Rosa — both have wine-like profile — but it doesn’t exactly take away from the drink either. One small downside is that the bar at Rolf and Daughters is always fairly packed. (Some of y’all may like that. I prefer a little space. I also hate wasting a server’s table when I’m just getting drinks. I like to call that “former-server syndrome.”) While incredibly delicious, the 1.21 Gigawatts is not the type of cocktail many folks could stomach more than one of. It’s more of a dinner-meeting treat to sip on while you chat. The Doc Brown-inspired name may take you back, but it won’t take plutonium or a lightning bolt to get you back home. It’s Nashville in 2016, after all, and there’s always Uber. **AMANDA HAGGARD**

**Nutella+burnt marshmallow milkshake, $10.50 with Kahlua/$5.50 without**  
**Flip Burger**, 4111 Charlotte Ave.

Milkshakes, like bloody Marys, have gotten R-I-D-I-C-U-L-O-U-S, with some restaurants topping their frosty glasses of sippable ice cream with everything from clouds of cotton candy and giant cookies to actual slices of cake. The stunning sugar piles may rack up the likes on Instagram, but ultimately, they just melt into a mess. Chef Richard Blais’ Flip Burger, though, has found a way to craft a showy shake without being too absurd. These milkshakes are finished with a shot of freshly poured liquid nitrogen, causing a thick, mesmerising fog to engulf the glass by the time it arrives at your table.

The Cap’n Crunch (made with a shot of RumChata, if you’d like) was too sweet, but the Nutella and burnt-marshmallow flavor had a much better balance. The thick, oh-so-chocolaty drink is topped with a generous pile of freshly charred mini marshmallows, still gooey inside from the torch. For $5 more they’ll throw in some Kahlua. But a warning: If you mix the ‘mallows into the rich shake, yes, it will taste like adult rocky road, but the candy will also clog the shit out of your straw. Don’t be a hero — just eat them off the top with the spoon. **MEGAN SELING**
The Riverside Tiki, $11
Bar Luca, B, 1100 Stratton Ave.

The Riverside Tiki cocktail at Bar Luca looks best when it first arrives, filled to the brim with a pale orange potion and an orange rind and magenta orchid garnish. In a way, that means its aesthetic pleasure diminishes as you drink it. No worries, though — I could drink several made from this mixture: Plantation Pineapple rum, Old Forester bourbon, Bluff City Pale Ale, ginger, lemon and orange bitters. And it’s the pale ale that makes it, leveling out the liquors and flavors so that this drink is actually smooth. A bartender tells me that, if you try it before the pale ale is added, the difference is remarkable. No need for that, though. We’ll take it how it comes. Actually, we’ll take two. STEPHEN HALE

Ivory Tower, $13
Pinewood Social, 33 Peabody St.

Do you like piña coladas? If so, there’s no need to get caught in the rain to taste this spicy update of the tropical classic, in which green chili vodka takes the place of rum. When mixed with coconut and pineapple and just a splash of lime juice, the cocktail tastes not so much like a piña colada, per se, as something like a boozy Thai green curry poured over ice. Garnished with an orange slice, a Luxardo-soaked cherry and foliage, the Ivory Tower is tiki without being retro — a nice balance between savory and sweet, and a drink that works as well as a brunch drink as a happy-hour poolside quaff. CARI WADE GERVIN
Sangria, $6
Mas Tacos Por Favor,
732 McFerrin Ave.

Even if you aren’t drinking, the new bar at East Nashville’s Mas Tacos Por Favor is a good place to hang out on a summer afternoon — the sort of bar that makes you feel like you’re sitting in a beach-town hole-in-the-wall. If you are drinking, make it a sangria. At Mas Tacos, there’s no bottled mixes or flavors. They make their sangria daily, using different fruits on different days — the one I ordered was made with white wine, a lime mix that’s made in house and fresh watermelon. The result was refreshing and fruity, without being too sweet, and strong enough to take the edge off your day without being too overpowering — just like a good day on the coast. STEVEN HALE

A cheapskate’s shandygaff, $0.43
Your yard or patio or shower

There are summer days when the Nashville Basin feels like an 8,000-square-mile Crock-Pot.

Craft beer is great, but when every breath feels like inhaling a soaking-wet quilt, the last thing I want is an 8.5 percent ABV coffee stout.

What I want needs to be light, crisp and — since I will need to drink a boatload of it — cheap.

Costco has a private-label brew called Kirkland Light. At the risk of damning it with faint praise, I’ll say that as generic beers go, it is not that bad. There is no weird chemical aftertaste, and unlike the Walgreens brand, it doesn’t hit you with an insta-headache. It is also $22 for a 48-pack — or roughly, 46 cents per can. It is ideal for drinking in a hot shower (#showerbeer), which, coincidentally, makes it perfect for Tennessee summers.

If you need to dress it up, mix it in equal parts with Walmart ginger ale, which will set you back 89 cents for two liters. Walmart ginger ale is not going to win any soda awards, but for a store brand, it packs a gingery punch and dances well with the, shall we say, astringent quality of the Costco beer. The final concoction is bracing, if not destined from the cover of Bon Appétit. All told, a cup of each will fill a Mason jar for a total cost of 43 cents or so. Now that’s refreshing.

J.R. LUND
Irish Coffee, $10
Butcher & Bee, 902 Main St.

I must admit, I'm a bit of a purist when it comes to liquor, especially whiskey. I like mine neat — served with no ice and completely unadulterated. But nothing says weekend brunch like mixing a depressant with a stimulant. I typically associate Irish coffee with cool fall nights or holidays with family — usually Irish coffee is served piping hot, and whiskey is always necessary to handle relatives. Butcher & Bee's version of Irish coffee is a bit untraditional, served cold and made with an in-house Stumptown Coffee-based cold brew. It's a great alternative if you're looking for something cool and alcoholic — but less savory than a bloody Mary — with your brunch. The mixture of cold brew, Jameson Irish Whiskey and cinnamon syrup (yum!) is topped with whipped heavy cream and an orange twist. The orange peel works as an aromatic, but also turns the last few sips into a mingling of citrus and cream that I could drink by itself. (Serious, give me a gallon of just the heavy cream and orange, please.) Butcher & Bee also serves this one sans Jameson as a mocktail, for half the cost of the booze-filled version. AMANDA HAGGARD
Perth, TN, $10
Steadfast Coffee, 603 Taylor St.

This warm cocktail is made with espresso and apple brandy, which is believed to be the earliest spirit colonial Americans produced, thanks to the successful propagation of apple trees initially brought over from Europe. And mixing brandy with coffee is a time-honored way to sustain a person in life’s vicissitudes. In this cocktail, the brandy brings out the wine notes in its espresso companion, the apple side amplified by another fruit note, an orange peel garnish. A hit of demerara sugar adds a sweet kick. Steadfast is a wonderful coffeehouse in Germantown that offers well-prepared coffees and cocktails, along with a small, thoughtful menu of food. I can imagine a Perth, TN cocktail being a great way to cast off the previous night’s cobwebs during weekend brunch. Dana Kopp Franklin

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Pony Show, $11
Old Glory, 1200 Villa Place, #103

Thanks to its refreshing snap of honeydew and green bell pepper, the Pony Show is among the most cool-and-breezy fine cocktails you can get your hands on here in the waning days of summer. Made with Maestro Dobel tequila and Fords gin and finished with a sprig of mint, it’s an extremely light drink that pairs well with any of Old Glory’s tasty small plates (the incredibly savory tartine, for instance). As the Scene’s Dana Kopp Franklin mentioned in her recent review of Old Glory, the newly opened Edgehill Village spot boasts a “creative and novel” drinks list, and though the Pony Show isn’t necessarily the most adventurous creation on the menu, that hint of bell pepper gives it a unique burst of flavor. Plus, brimming with crushed ice and aglow with a chartreuse hue, it’s rather pretty to look at. D. Patrick Rodgers
We asked some Nashville brewers what they’re drinking this summer. Here’s what they said:

Linus Hall, Yazoo:
“My wife has fallen in love with gin-and-tonics this time of year. A good gin-and-tonic is just as classic for me in the summer, if I’m not drinking beer.”

Carl Meier, Black Abbey:
“Probably the best thing that I’ve tasted in the last little bit is Belle Meade Bourbon finished in a cognac barrel. It’s legit. They came out with a sherry version, but the cognac really rounds off the edges. It’s almost plummy. It’s really nice and really well done.”

Bailey Spalding, Jackalope:
“I suppose the most constant is ending evenings with Fernet Branca. I know in chef world you are supposed to shoot it, but I like to sip it on ice. I swear by the powers of Fernet!”

Garr Schwartz, Garr’s Beer:
“I love a well-made saison, and I had the Southern Torrent from Hellbender Brewery in D.C. when I was recently there. This saison has an attractive golden body with a nice fluffy head. Super crisp and very dry with notes of fruits and citrus. A little bit of floral and a touch of funk make this beautiful beer a real drinker.”
DRINK UP SUMMER
Your next barbecue will be a blast with these recipes from some of Nashville’s best bartenders

BY CHRIS CHAMBERLAIN

The end of the summer means the end of the summer grilling season, so it’s time to plan at least one big barbecue blowout. But an open fire with food above it requires strict supervision and constant attention—the difference between a perfectly cooked medium-rare steak and a piece of shoe leather could be the few minutes it takes to whip up another mojito for a needy buddy.

Instead, free up your time and attention by planning for large-format drinking. If you make it easy for your guests to serve themselves, they’ll get the hint and let you concentrate on filling their plates with delicious grilled meats. Because that’s why they’re all there anyway, right?

With these tips, tricks and recipes from some of Nashville’s best bartenders, your summer cookout is sure to be a hit.

COLD SHANDIES ARE SO HOT
Speaking of beer, more and more drinkers are discovering the joys of a fine shandy, a traditional drink made by mixing beer with something like lemonade or ginger ale. To party hosts, you can whip up a batch and let your guests top off their own glass. Here’s a great shandy recipe from the folks at Mantra Artisan Ales:

**Shady Shandy**

**You’ll need:**
- 2 ounces lemon juice
- 1 ounce simple syrup
- A pinch of chaat masala
- Mantra Saffron IPA

**Directions:**
Shake together lemon juice, simple syrup and chaat masala in a cocktail mixer. Strain into a pint glass over ice and top with 1 ¼ ounces of Saffron IPA. Rim the glass with a mix of chaat masala and sugar for a unique touch. You can also make up a pitcher of the syrup mix to facilitate self-service.

PUNCHY PUNCHES
Batched cocktails and punches are all the rage, and for good reason. Ain’t nobody got time to fix a drink for each delicate little professional.

**Ajax Punch**

courtesy of Embers Ski Lodge

(20-25 servings)

**You’ll need:**
- 1 ½ liters Bacardi Silver Rum
- 2 liters Ajax syrup (see recipe below)
- Chilled sparkling wine
- Mint sprigs for garnish

**Directions:**
Add all ingredients to a punch bowl with a large block of ice. Stir and ladle into individual cups. Mint sprigs for garnish.

**Infused Syrup**

Mix together 1 ½ cups sugar with 1 cup water, adding 3-4 sprigs of saffron or lavender. Heat until the sugar dissolves and covers the lemons. Let sit while you squeeze the lemons. Remove sprigs before using.

**Infused Watermelon Puree**

In 3-quart saucepan, bring 1 tablespoon of cinnamon, 2 cups of sugar and 2 cups of water to a boil over medium heat, whisking constantly. Simmer 15 minutes, then strain in a liquid measuring cup through a cheesecloth-lined fine-mesh sieve. Cool completely before using.

**Deep South Sipper**

courtesy of Lesley Singletary of SPEAKeasy Spirits

(12-16 servings)

**You’ll need:**
- 4 ounces Papaya juice
- 4 ounces meyer lemon juice
- 4 ounces Pineapple juice
- 2 cups Pickers Blueberry Flavored Vodka
- 2 cups Georgia Peach Flavored Vodka
- 2 cups Blueberry Flavored Vodka
- 2 cups Saigon cinnamon syrup (see recipe below)
- 2 cups Infused syrup (see recipe below)
- 1 ¼ cups fresh squeezed lemon juice (you may use Meyers for a sweeter flavor)
- 3 cups water
- Blueberries for garnish (optional: freeze the berries and use as “ice” cubes)

**Directions:**
Mix all ingredients together and strain into a punch bowl filled with large块 of ice. Garnish with leftover herbs.

**Rockaway Beach Punch**

courtesy of Freddy Schwenk of Nashville Ice Lab

(12-16 servings)

**You’ll need:**
- 1 750-milliliter bottle of Amarohead rum
- 4 ounces Ancho Reyes Chile Liqueur
- 10 ounces lime juice
- 4 ounces papaya juice
- 6 ounces simple syrup
- 4 ounces Saigon cinnamon syrup (see recipe below)

**Directions:**
Add all ingredients to a punch bowl with a large block of ice and ladle into individual cups.