

The Big Retreat Wales toasts Sober October by announcing a mindful bar at next year's festival

Submitted by: The Big Retreat Wales

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As the country prepares to go sober for October the UK's most balanced festival announces a brand new 'no-low' alcohol bar for 2020.

The Mindful Bar at The Big Retreat Wales is a response by the TBRW organisers to the huge trend for drinking less (one fifth of UK drinkers say they are working on changing their drinking behavior [source: Drinkaware]) as well as the success of the festival's alcohol-free happy hours in 2019.

And there won't be a lime and soda in sight. Instead, the 3,000 Big Retreaters at the four-day wellbeing event on the beautiful Pembrokeshire coast will be able to choose from fermented kombucha fizz, fruit shrubs, cold-brew coffee, zero-proof cocktails and booze-free beers and artisanal spirits as they hop between the yoga tents, bush-craft workshops, cookery demos, and expert chats.

With a 22-yr career in the premium drinks industry, the festival's co-founder (and resident gin expert) Diana Dredge welcomes this shift in attitudes. She says: "At The Big Retreat Wales we love to offer choice, and so alongside our traditional bar and Craft Gin bar, we are introducing 'The Mindful Bar' to prop up our mind-expanding Talk Tent and offer a drinking experience that is inclusive to all.

"Choosing not to drink is a personal choice, and it's becoming more and more popular, so we want to celebrate that by offering a range of crafted low-alcohol and no-alcohol drinks and activities that will encourage conscious connection and make people feel good, mentally as well as physically."

Author and addiction expert Shahroo Izadi, whose Kindness Method workshop on Habit Change was one of the most oversubscribed events at this year's festival in May says: "A booze-free bar is a fantastic way to remind ourselves that so many of the things we enjoy about drinking don't involve alcohol at all. Even if we want to drink throughout our lives, it's important to remember that it's so often the connection with others and the environment we're in that enables us to enjoy ourselves. Booze-free nights can also help us give ourselves credit for how mindful, engaging and socially confident we can be without alcohol. Often we don't have an opportunity to update these beliefs about ourselves if we've associated all socialising with drinking from a young age so a festival surrounded by new friends and new experiences is actually the perfect place to give it a go."

And Toni Jones, founder of the Shelf Help Club, the self-help brand that will be hosting the Talk Tent for 2020 says: "Sober October 2018 for me turned into a 100-day stint that changed my relationship with alcohol – and myself! - forever. I think that changing our drinking habits is the best act of self-care that we can do, and so I love that will be encouraging more people to do this by sharing a whole BAR full of delicious non-alc options with our Talk Tent talent and guests."

The Big Retreat Wales will take place on the stunning Old Castle Site in Lawrenny from 22nd-25th May 2020. Weekend tickets cost from £149 and under-5s admitted free. Admission includes access to over 300 hrs of fitness and wellbeing sessions, workshops, talks and live performances To Book Visit www.thebigretreatwales.co.uk

*The Mindful Bar will be hosted by healthy drinks brand, Made by Caro B

*Confirmed Talk Tent talent includes: Presenter Matt Johnson, DR Ahmed Kazmi, The Scummy Mummies, influencer Erica Davies, The Naked Professor Ben Bidwell, Digital detox Expert Tanya Goodin and GBBO talent Dan Beasley Harling

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