



Some would say it's not exactly advisable to take a sledgehammer to the walls of your restaurant, but in Tarek Debira and Patricia Ageheim's case it worked out. The husband-and-wife duo behind Chez Moi in Brooklyn Heights was renovating the place with their business partner Ali Mardassi. Late one night after a few drinks, Debira and Mardassi took a sledgehammer to the wall and discovered two chambers in the basement that were once part of the Atlantic Avenue tunnel—rumored to be the world's oldest subway tunnel, as reported by [Untapped Cities](#). After some arduous cleanup, they transformed it into an intimate cave-like space now open to in-the-know Brooklynites.

To find it, you'll have to push open the door disguised as a bookshelf in Chez Moi and descend the stairs to a space that channels Marie Antoinette's boudoir. Custom-made banquettes upholstered in red velvet flank the room, creating intimate nooks for sipping cocktails by beverage director Franky Marshall, who could previously be found slinging drinks at top New York bars including the Clover Club, the Holiday Cocktail Lounge, and the Dead Rabbit. Atop the white marble bar, a bronze bust of Marie Antoinette serves as the beer tap ready to dispense brews. The ceiling is made of wooden parquet inspired by the floor in the Château de Versailles. But the coolest detail has to be the antique sconces and gilded mirrors sourced from French castles, not to mention an original engraved doorknob from Marie Antoinette's bedroom.



The way the space was set up with access from the restaurant, the owners knew they had a speakeasy on their hands, but didn't want to create yet another 1920s-styled haunt—ubiquitous as they are these days. With the French menu upstairs at Chez Moi, it certainly made more sense to have a Gallic-inspired bar. They let that inspiration guide them when it comes to the décor and the menu, which features cocktails with names that take their cues from Marie Antoinette and the French Revolution.

Libations come served in a swanky variety of antique goblets and coupes. The Hot Air Balloon is a marvel to look at, with pebbled ice and a citrus garnish, and is a tasty concoction of rhum agricole, aqua de cedro, green chartreuse, and fresh lime. Other originals include the Du Barry, with bourbon, vermouth, apricot, and fresh lemon. And of course, Marshall makes all the classics, including a great French 75. In keeping with French tradition, light bites include a lovely cheese plate with homemade jam, truffle mushroom croquettes, and country paté. With live jazz on Monday nights, a lovely ambiance, and solid drinks and bites, Le Boudoir is perfect for a date or ladies' night out.

135 Atlantic Avenue, Brooklyn Heights