



Raising the Bar



FOODSERVICE *news*
The Industry's National Newspaper



Proudly Presents:



THE SEMI-ANNUAL BEVERAGE MENU MAKE-OVER CONTEST

One lucky restaurant will win 2 days of hands-on staff and management training by master mixologist and renowned flair bartender Gavin MacMillan, focusing on:

- accuracy • speed • flair • cocktail synergy
- time management behind the bar • review of current menu and full menu makeover

Sponsored by:



Here's what to do: Complete the ballot below (one entry per establishment). Mail or fax your ballot to the coordinates listed below. We'll take care of the rest. Gavin will visit your restaurant to help your staff 'Raise the Bar.'

Name: _____

Establishment: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____

Email: _____

Turning Your Bar Green

While the environmental movement is at the forefront of public conscience, more and more bars are making an effort to go green with their daily business practices. I'm sure you've heard all the popular catch phrases: renewable energy, carbon neutral footprint and the uber-popular green is the new black.

What does this have to do with operating my restaurant or bar you ask?

First of all, it's important to identify the difference between a green cocktail and the absurdity of the healthy cocktail. Ordering up a martini made with pomegranate liqueur is not going to earn you any points in the anti-oxidant cup. Cocktails are supposed to be a little bit naughty anyways...

It starts with the understanding that operating a sustainable bar or restaurant is easier than you think, not to mention the opportunities to save money and increase margins. Making each business decision with the environment in mind is rewarding in many ways: socially, economically and environmentally.

When you look at your business' carbon footprint, it gets broken down into two parts: a primary and secondary footprint. The primary footprint is the sum of the direct carbon dioxide emissions from the burning of fossil fuels, like energy consumption by furnaces, water heaters and transportation, like automobiles to get to work. The secondary footprint is the sum of indirect emissions associated with the manufacture, shipping and breakdown of all products, services and food that your business consumes.

Fresh, seasonal, local and sustainable are really just a part of a much larger picture that involves every business decision you make, from the light bulbs you choose – there are now dimmable Compact Fluorescent Light bulbs which use up to 75 per cent less energy and can create ambiance – to the cleaning products you use and how you separate your waste. Here are some things you might consider when developing your next menu or are considering a new supplier.

Fresh is pretty self explanatory, and if you haven't tasted the difference between a fresh cocktail and the one that comes off your post mix line, enter the menu make-over contest, so we can come to your bar and open your eyes.

Local means supporting business within 100kms, and making the decision against importing bottled water from the other side of the world when the largest supply of clean fresh water on the planet is at your doorstep. Developing relationships with the folks at your local farmers market can inspire on both culinary and beverage fronts.

Seasonal is about using peaches on your menu when peaches are in season locally, not when peaches are in season in Argentina. When your chef is making Peach Cobbler, your bartenders, who should be thinking about themselves as Bar Chefs, should be making Peach Daiquiris, or peach Mojitos.

Going the sustainable route is not the easiest, but it is becoming increasingly accessible. You just have to ask, and you can believe that the more people who ask, the more accessible it becomes. Businesses that make the commitment can expect to be rewarded with a loyal clientele and the few pioneers of the Green Bar philosophy will attest.

San Francisco's "Elixir" was one of the first Green bars to open. H. Joseph Ehrmann (known simply as "H") walks the talk of fresh fruit cocktails made with organic and/or environmentally responsible products. Green and Tonic (www.greenandtonic.org) is doing the same and taking it to the next level. It is a volunteer group that consults with bar owners to help them find solutions to reducing their waste, energy, and water consumption.

The feel good "X" factor of supporting a green business is something that will have your clients talking to their friends, and your commitment to excellence will bring them back again and again in larger numbers. Fresh, local, seasonal, sustainable can no longer be looked at as options, but rather as the business decisions that make our restaurants and bars sustainable businesses as we move into a new economic environment.

As operators, managers, and staff, we have the ultimate power to choose what is offered for sale, how it is offered for sale, and how we're going to clean it up. While many of us diligently separate food waste from recyclables and garbage at home, few of us pursue these socially responsible actions with the same vigour when we're working in the hospitality industry. I've been guilty of it myself and I'm sure you can relate to the feeling that you should recycle an empty water bottle but when no recycling bin is present, it ends up in the trash. While many of us want to recycle, few of us have taken proactive steps towards putting a recycling / food waste program in place.

The truth is that respecting the planet and making money do not have to be mutually exclusive. After all, we don't really need to "Save the Environment," it was fine before we were here, and it'll heal itself after we're gone. We really need to save ourselves.

Until next time, Keep Raising the Bar in your establishment.



Gavin MacMillan is a master Mixologist and Bar Chef and Director of Operations for BartenderOne, Canada's Fastest Growing Group of Bartender Training Facilities and The Movers'n'Shakers, Canada's largest team of Bartenders for Hire. From Bar design to menu development and onsite training, Gavin is considered one of Canada's top authorities on beverage alcohol and mixology. You can reach him at gavin@bartenderone.com