



Mixologists

What's the Buzz?

By Carmen Taylor

“Excuse me may I see a menu?” “Sure.” He says as you watch the bartender hand over the menu. The *drink* menu that is. Gone are the days of vodka and tonic or rum and coke. Oh no, we have moved on to much more sophisticated yet fun concoctions. Yes that's right, I'll have one of those “fun” drinks. You know the type, you've seen them around and it's about to get a lot more intense. Food & Wine referred to “The Year of the Cocktail” in their December issue. “Could this be true?” I asked. With all of the hype about wine and tastings and festivals....I started taking a closer look at what's been happening.

Now, don't get me wrong, I *love* a nice glass of wine. But the ordering of a drink is a matter of time, place and of course occasion. That said, aside from the wine with dinner or a quiet evening at home, it's *fun* drink time! It's *happy hour* or we've had a nice dinner let's go out on the town time. It's mix it up and light it up time. Ok, you get the picture. The first thing that came to mind as I started wondering about the “year of the cocktail” was the thought of Tom Cruise in the movie *Cocktail*. Yes, at this point I too wish I had a better example but that was a few years ago and I guess we'll give that to him. Anyway in *Cocktail*, it portrays the bartenders as bottle throwing flame shooting talented circus like performing bartenders..... “fun!” Right? But these days you need just a few more tricks up your sleeve to really get noticed. You need to be the “Emeril” or the “Rachael Ray” behind the bar. You need a fully stocked refrigerator, various mixing apparatuses and above all you own unique ingredient. I



guess it's kind of like a chili cook off. “How many ways can one make chili?” One may never know. You see the secret is the special ingredient. “How many ways can one mix a Martini, Margarita or a Bloody Mary?” “I don't know.” “What's your secret ingredient?” I ask. Is it Pumpkin in October, Mint at Christmas. Does it light up? Do you have a special name for this concoction? Because apparently we want it all. Maybe there's a reason why we ask if the doctor is in or that's just what the doctor ordered. Have we been misled as to the real identity of the Bartender? Consider this, The Columbia **University** School of Mixology or perhaps the Mixology Wine **Institute**, also offering a Masters in Psychology (just kidding) but there it is. The proof is in the pudding. Or is it the chocolate pudding martini? What ever you have an appetite for, I'm sure your neighborhood mixologist has a recipe for it. For innovative drink recipes see page 71. *Entreé* magazine would like remind you to drink responsibly.