



The Art of the Cocktail

A Renaissance of the Cocktail Is Underway at the Arizona Biltmore

COCKTAIL CULTURE IS FICKLE AND AWASH WITH

trendy drinks and fads that come and go. Examples abound, including the Long Island Iced Tea in the 1990s, and last decade's ubiquitous Cosmos.

What trend is next? Frank & Albert's General Manager Mo Habul wouldn't know. He's too busy crafting a vision based on two main ingredients featured at the historic hotel: a return to classics like the Gimlet and Classic Sunrise, blended with mixology's new best practices, including using organic, locally sourced and hand-crafted ingredients. Add some innovative presentations and flavorings, such as candied lavender petals that slowly change the hue of a cocktail and delicious foams that embellish while adding a flavorful zest, and you have the makings of cocktail classics reborn.

With a driving passion for libation perfection, Habul has taken great strides

to ensure the cocktails presented at Frank & Albert's are worthy of the stellar cuisine being imagined by Executive Chef Todd Sicolo. "It's evident everywhere that food is getting a new focus when it comes to quality, source and organic standards," says Habul. "We decided to do the same with our cocktails, and bring them to a whole new level."

Indeed, viewing the cocktail menus at the Arizona Biltmore may have you thinking you've stumbled upon a bountiful farmers market, overflowing with items like organic basil, cucumber, Arizona limes, local olive juice and an Arizona original, organic prickly pear vodka. But it all harkens back to Habul's vision of only utilizing hand-crafted ingredients.

All juices are fresh-squeezed, syrups are made by hand and everything possible is locally sourced, including limes and sage which are picked right on property.

The results are superlative sips such

as the Deconstructed Gimlet, featuring a lime and sage foam that lends a supple, savory start to the drink, while the Russian Standard vodka and fresh lime juice in the body of the drink create a tart and delicious finish.

Another classic artfully remade at the Biltmore is the Prickly Peartini, comprised of Arizona-sourced organic prickly pear vodka, with a splash of Chambord and homemade sweet & sour. And showcasing both Chef Sicolo's and Habul's desire that food and cocktails be fun and interactive, the hit libation known as the Lavender and Lemons Martini, features Rain organic vodka, house-made fresh lemonade and lavender syrup, infused with candied lavender petals, which ever-so-gradually turn the drink into a blushing beauty.

"The idea with our cocktails is a return to passion and ingredients that put a smile on our customer's faces," observes Habul. ●



Lime Gimlet