



CELEBRATE SENSIBLY

BY CRAIG MATTSON

The variety of non-alcoholic "mocktails" to be savored across metro Milwaukee is ever expanding. And the booze-free sips are every bit as intriguing as the real deal. We asked mixologists from a few area hot spots to share an alcohol-free tipple available at their establishments and how you can make it at home for holiday celebrations and beyond.

It Takes Two to Mango

BRYANT'S COCKTAIL LOUNGE
(414) 383-2620, BRYANTS COCKTAIL LOUNGE.COM

This cozy lounge with dim lights and smooth R&B music is a great after-work, date or celebration spot. Mixologist McKenzie Ross recently created It Takes Two to Mango, a sweet and savory beverage made with strawberry, mango and a hint of chili and citrus. Ross calls it a summery drink that people can enjoy in winter to remind them of the warmth that will inevitably return.

MAKE IT:

2 oz. mango nectar
1 oz. strawberry nectar
½ oz. fresh squeezed lime juice
chili lime powder to taste

Give the mixture two shakes in a shaker. Pour over cubed ice.



MOCKTAIL MULE

BITTERCUBE BAR & BAZAAR
(414) 367-4477, BITTERCUBE.COM

Bittercube is a comprehensive beverage company that makes and sells signature bitters and other drink products. Visitors to the unique bar can book drink-making classes, or stop in any Saturday night for an informal session on how to make a classic cocktail or mocktail beverage. Brandon Reyes, research and development manager, shares a spicy drink with hints of citrus and Bittercube's Tailor Made Apothecary brand of ginger beer syrup.

MAKE IT:

1 oz. fresh lime juice
1 ½ oz. ginger beer syrup
2 dashes Bittercube Jamaican No. 1 bitters
2 ½ oz. seltzer

Combine in a shaking tin and shake vigorously until chilled. Add seltzer to the tin and strain into glass. Add ice and garnish with a fresh lime wedge.



Mock Toddy

DELAFIELD; (262) 404-6308, IDDELAFIELD.COM

For Lake Country diners, I.d. in Delafield is a must for inspired drinking and dining. The space's inviting and innovative design makes it a great spot for sampling seasonal craft cocktails and mocktails. The Mock Toddy, made with the winter season in mind, is a rich, non-alcoholic version of the Hot Toddy, featuring pear nectar, cider and butter.

MAKE IT:

16 oz. pear nectar
1 Tbsp. pie spice mix
3 Tbsp. unsalted butter
6 oz. cider or water

Bring pear nectar and spice mix to a boil. Cover and simmer for 30 min., remove cover and reduce by half. Meanwhile, brown unsalted butter in a separate pan.

Pour nectar mixture into a heat-proof jar or glass container and add cooked brown butter.

Cover and let stand for 8 hours. Do not shake.

Place the mixture in the freezer for about 30 minutes or until the butter has separated. Use a spoon to lift away the butter solids.

To serve, add 1.5 oz of the mixture to 6 oz. hot water or cider.

COOKING WITH FIRE (FIGHTERS)

BY NAN BIALEK



JASON KATZ



BRANDON LEONARD

Brandon Leonard and **Jason Katz** aren't just first responders, they're also first on the scene when their fellow firefighters' stomachs are growling.

Leonard, who serves at the West Milwaukee firehouse, joined the Milwaukee Fire Department when he was just 18 years old through the Fire Cadet program. He developed impressive kitchen skills by trailing his firehouse chef—"a fancy gourmet cook," he explains—stashing tips and ideas in a binder. Assigned to a different house years later, his peers tapped Leonard to be their regular cook.

One day, Leonard filled in at the "big house" in downtown Milwaukee, where the deputy chief and battalion chief were working. He offered to make lunch—baked ziti with marinara sauce and garlic bread, and grilled chicken breast with baked zucchini and squash topped with mozzarella cheese. For dinner he made grilled tenderloin and a Thai seafood and vegetable stir-fry. "Half a year later, my name was on the transfer list," Leonard chuckles. He was reassigned to the "big house," where the chief himself named Leonard the cook.

Katz, a North Shore firefighter stationed in Whitefish Bay, loves to cook Asian-inspired dishes. His peers, he says, most often request "a spinoff of the Volcano Chicken at the King and I in Milwaukee. ... It consists of individual battered and fried chicken thighs, a fairly elaborate soy-based sauce, shredded carrots and sautéed red cabbage served over rice."

Katz learned to cook in his mother's kitchen, but he picked up practical skills as a high school intern with the fire service where he "found myself in the kitchen with the regular cooks." Cooking shows and good ol' trial and error have bolstered his skills set too.

Read more about the foodie firefighters online at mkelifestyle.com.