

Stay Organized in your bar



Kristina Mcalpin from Florida, USA has worked in some bars back home. Now pursuing a course in the Indian Institute of Bartending, Chennai, she shares her bartending experiences with Ritika Shankar.

How would you rate the India bartending practices and what difference do you find between the Indian and western bartending?

The Indian bartending in 4 and 5 star hotels is very high. These establishments concentrate on high customer service and quality cocktail making. In the United States from where I come, the practices are similar but with a few differences.

Overall, the Indian bartending is definitely becoming a respectable profession as it should. A lot of people go to a bar for social purposes, and bartending is more than just serving alcoholic drinks to customers. It's entertaining and gaining a relationship with

the customer. I have gained lifelong friends from this profession and have found it quite suitable for making good money to support my lifestyle.

'When I make a drink for the first time as per a customer's choice, ... I allow them to name the drink of their choice or simply name the drink after the customer. This adds extra specialness to the customer's bar visit...'

Every individual has a different taste and choice for drinks. How to attend to such diverse demands?

Very simple. Ask the customer what they like, what flavours they enjoy, then simply improvise your menu to suit their tastes. This will not only make the guest happy that you could provide something that is not on the menu, but will also make them immensely happy that you have created something that suits their taste buds.

Kristina's Favourite : "Dirty Ginger"

(Best taken after dinner as it is light, refreshing and good for digestion)

Ingredients: 45ml of Vodka, fresh grated ginger, fresh lime wedges (2), 1 tsp of honey, and club soda.

Method: First muddle around a tsp of ginger (this can be adjusted according to taste), 2 lime wedges and a tsp of honey. Then add ice to your shaker along with 45ml of vodka. Shake this for about a minute making sure everything is mixed well.

Strain into a champagne flute and top up with club soda and garnish with a ginger twist and lime twist.

Do you get enough opportunities to experiment with drinks in a situation where people stick to their choices?

Often I get the opportunity to experiment. Many people come to the bar to socialize. They may not have any idea of what they want to drink. This provides me an opportunity to build relations with customers and see what they like. I suggest them a particular drink or make them something new that will suit their tastes. When I make a drink for the first time as per a customer's choice, I go an extra step to make this customer feel super special. I allow them to name the drink of their choice or simply name the drink after the customer. This adds extra specialness to the customer's bar visit that they will never forget.

Some tips for our budding bartenders.

Buddy bartenders should undergo bartending training from a reputed institute. The training will not only help them work in an organized way but also fetch them a certificate. The most important tip is to stay as organized as possible while running your bar. Organization is the most important key to run a successful bar. If your bar is organized and your thoughts are organized then it will be very simple and easy to take drink orders from 10 different people without forgetting any of them and serving them their choices quickly and efficiently. This will bring you lots of compliments as well as big tips in your pocket. 🍀



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