

BEVERAGE AUTHORITY

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THE BIG PICTURE

What's Your Clientele Thinking?



We've all had about a year to adjust to the New Economy. For most of us it's taken that long to grasp that no one has the kind of money in their pockets that they once had. Within every industry, swarms of well-educated people are scrambling around researching what effects the recession is having on their customers. Like most economic crashes it came on suddenly and universally changed our outlook on nearly everything dealing with money.

In the on-premise arena, we know people are going out less frequently and spending less money when they do. However, getting a glimpse into what consumers are thinking would certainly help matters. For example, how do they choose where to go and socialize? What kind of things are they looking for and what do they want to find when they get there?

To find out, Nightclub & Bar magazine commissioned my company—NextLevel Marketing—to conduct a consumer research study into how the recession is affecting on-premise beverage trends. This past May we interviewed more than 1000 people that frequent nightclubs and restaurants and had ordered beverage alcohol on-premise within the past 30 days. What consumers told us may affect how you manage your business.

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Suntory Hibiki 12 Year Old Blended Whisky

The requisite skill and artistry needed to blend whiskies of varying ages and types into a genuinely remarkable whisky are nothing short of astounding. Few brands better demonstrate this expertise than super-premium *Suntory Hibiki 12 Year Old Blended Whisky*.

The highly acclaimed brand is being introduced in the United States this October to commemorate its 20th anniversary. The Hibiki signature blend is comprised of over 30 handcrafted whiskies, each of which is produced at the Yamazaki and Hakushu distilleries and aged more than 12 years. Some of the malts featured in the blend were matured in Umeshu casks—barrels used in the long process of aging Japanese plum liqueur. The carefully selected malts are then combined with grain whiskies and finished with a dose of vintage whisky barrel-aged more than 30 years. Prior to bottling, the whisky is filtered through bamboo charcoal,

a process partially responsible for its sweet and mellow flavor.

The 86-proof blend is deserving of its critical acclaim. Hibiki is an accessible whisky with an enticing amber hue, a smooth textured body and a generous bouquet of honey, chocolate and ripe red fruit. The whisky's palate presents a grand array of long-lasting, spicy and semisweet flavors.

The Japanese symbol on the label means Hibiki, a word that holds many positive meanings in Japanese, one of them being "harmony." Suntory chose the name Hibiki to express the ideal balance of this whisky. —RP



Suntory Yamazaki 1984 Single Malt Whisky

There is something remarkably poignant about *Suntory Yamazaki 1984 Single Malt Whisky*. Like a fading pleasant dream, when this great malt is gone, it's gone. There'll be none to replace it. Released to commemorate the distillery's 110th anniversary and the 25th anniversary of the Yamazaki brand, this extraordinary malt is a slice of life not to be missed.



Created in 1984, Suntory Yamazaki is the most popular single malt whisky in Japan and the thirteenth bestselling single malt whisky in the world last year. All Suntory whiskeys are double-distilled in copper pot stills from high-grade barley malt and pure spring water drawn from the

Vale of Yamazaki, the same water prized by the famous Japanese tea ceremony master Senno Rikyu.

A significant portion of Yamazaki's success can be attributed to it being aged in three different varieties of oak—American, Spanish and Japanese. The native Mizunara oak barrels imbue the whisky with its distinctive sweet fragrance.

Yamazaki 1984 Single Malt is exquisite. It has a deep amber hue, a satiny full body and a glorious bouquet of cinnamon, ripe red fruit, toffee and incense. On the palate, the 96-proof malt shows tremendous depth of character and the flavors of vanilla, black cherries, honey and lingering wisps of peaty smoke.

This October, 300 individually numbered bottles of Yamazaki 1984 will be released in the United States. Like the return of Haley's Comet, this once in a lifetime event should not be missed. —RP

Notable New Releases



El Tesoro Paradiso Extra Añejo Tequila— is handcrafted high in the Los Altos Mountains. It is a blend of barrel-aged añejos that are further matured in French oak casks previously used by A. de Fussigny Cognac. The result is a rare spirit skillfully balanced between the elegance of cognac and the sultry character of tequila. It has a wafting bouquet, velvety textured body and a palate deeply imbued with the flavor of cognac. If it's true that ingenuity is the mother of invention, then double-barreled Paradiso is a stroke of genius. (Fortune Brands)

Citadelle Gin Réserve— Gin enthusiasts and cocktail aficionados be prepared to be wowed. Vintage-dated Citadelle Gin Réserve is alembic distilled in Cognac with a whopping 19 botanicals and aromatics—easily twice the number used in most London dry gins—and then it's aged for six months in oak casks. The spirit has a pale amber hue and a captivating bouquet laced with notes of cinnamon, juniper and citrus blossoms. The soft oaky palate is slightly spicy with a touch of smoke on the finish. (W.J. Deutsch & Sons)

The Glenlivet 15-Year-Old French Oak Reserve— When it comes to marketing Scotch— intrigue sells. Fitting the bill perfectly is The Glenlivet 15-Year-Old French Oak Reserve, a single malt initially aged in ex-bourbon barrels, after which a portion is matured in new, Limousin oak barrels. Famous for its role in aging cognacs, Limousin has an unusual grain pattern that allows the aging whisky to extract more flavorants from the wood. The sweet oak influences the whisky from start to finish. While still representative of the Glenlivet style, the French oak finishing adds a welcome dash of spice. (Pernod Ricard)

Triple Wheat Van Gogh Blue Vodka— Long known for their incomparable range of flavored vodkas, the Royal Dirkzwager distillery in Schiedam, Holland has released Triple Wheat Van Gogh Blue Vodka, the first ultra-premium vodka triple distilled from three different varieties of European grain. The elegant, classically neutral spirit has a glimmering, crystal clear appearance and a lushly textured body. Its entry is momentarily soft and refined before quickly building in intensity and filling the mouth with puckery, grainy sweetness. The finish is long, clean and delectable. A top-notch contender. (Van Gogh Imports)



Imperia Russian Vodka— is an archetype Russian vodka, an elegant tour de force. The small batch spirit is distilled in St. Petersburg from select winter wheat and pristine glacial water, all according to its original 1894 recipe. It's classically structured with a silky featherweight body and wispy bouquet of grain and evergreens. The vodka immediately fills the mouth with warmth and bathes the palate with dry, slightly tart flavors. Its finish is refreshingly crisp. Nazdaróvye! (Russian Standard)

Old Forester Birthday Bourbon— Brown-Forman has introduced the 2009 vintage of Old Forester Birthday Bourbon, a limited edition whiskey honoring the birthday of George Garvin Brown, the founder of Old Forester, America's first bottled bourbon. The whiskey is crafted from a batch of 98 barrels hand-selected by master distiller Chris Morris for their rich, complex maturation profile. This annual release is 97-proof and aged for 12-years. It's delightfully assertive with a woody nose and a palate of honey, spice and maple syrup. (Brown-Forman)

Kübler Swiss Absinthe Superieure— The bestselling absinthe in its native Switzerland, Kübler Swiss Absinthe Superieure is produced using pot-distilled wheat spirits infused with spices and Grand Wormwood. The 106-proof absinthe has pristine clarity, a luxuriously creamy texture and a mild, yet refreshing bouquet balanced between anise and fennel. Its initial entry is warm, semisweet and loaded with anise flavor, which is followed closely by a wave of slightly bitter, alpine wormwood. Kübler has a persistent and thoroughly satisfying finish with a savory herbal taste. (Altamar Brands)



Absolut Mango— Lip-smacking delicious Absolut Mango is made from all-natural ingredients with no added sugar or preservatives. The vodka has a lush mouth feel, a captivating bouquet, redolent of sliced ripe mangos, and a palate with only one thing on its mind, namely delivering the luscious flavor of fresh mangos. A jigger of the vodka makes an excellent premise for a cocktail. (Pernod Ricard)

Laphroaig 18 Year Old Single Islay Malt Scotch— This fall marks the highly anticipated release of Laphroaig 18 Year Old Single Islay Malt Scotch. The full-bodied malt has a bright gold hue and a distinctively sweet and spicy bouquet of peat smoke and sea spray. Its tangy, smoky palate gradually gives way to a lingering semisweet finish with floral, oaky and nutty notes. The 96-proof whisky will carry a retail price of \$79.99 to \$99.99. (Fortune Brands)

Yamazaki Cocktails a la Gardner Dunn

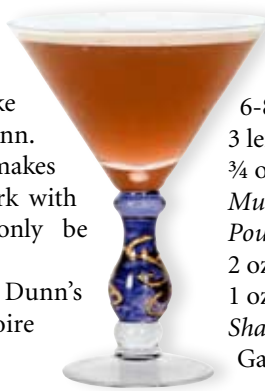


Suntory Yamazaki 12-Years Old Single Malt has quietly become one of the most successful whisky marques. Most recently, the famed Japanese malt walked away with the Gold Medal at this year's prestigious *San Francisco World Spirits Competition*.

So it was only a matter of time before the country's top bartenders would begin featuring Yamazaki in a wide range of cocktails and mixed drinks. Few practitioners have garnered more attention with their creations than all-star mixologist Gardner Dunn. A longtime fixture behind many of New York's top cocktail lounges, Dunn and business partner Ben Clemons have built a reputation for creating innovative drink menus for some of NYC's hottest establishments, such as Elizabeth, Parlor Steakhouse, La Otra, Nightcap and Permanent Brunch

"Yamazaki 12-Years Old performs brilliantly in cocktails. The malt is loaded with the flavors of honey, citrus and baking spice with just a touch of peaty smoke on the finish," says Dunn. "The crisp, clean malt makes it extremely easy to work with and the results can only be described as luxurious."

A sampling of Dunn's malt-inspired repertoire follows. —RP ♦



Elderflower Manhattan

Specialty of Gardner Dunn, Suntory Int'l
Cocktail glass, chilled
Pour into an iced mixing glass
2 oz. Yamazaki 12-Years Old Single Malt
1 oz. St-Germain Elderflower Liqueur
½ oz. Premium Dry Vermouth
1 dash Peychaud's Bitters
Stir contents and strain
Garnish with a lemon twist

Royal Gingersnap

Specialty of Gardner Dunn, Suntory Int'l
Double rocks glass, ice
Combine into an empty mixing glass
2 orange slices
1 maraschino cherry, no stem
1 teaspoon orange marmalade
2-3 dashes Angostura Bitters
Muddle contents and add ice
Pour into the iced mixing glass
2 oz. Yamazaki 12-Years Old Single Malt
¼ oz. Domaine de Canton Ginger Liqueur
Shake vigorously and double-strain
Garnish with an orange slice and cherry

Kyoto Smash

Specialty of Gardner Dunn, Suntory Int'l
Double rocks glass, ice
Combine into an empty mixing glass
6-8 fresh mint leaves
3 lemon wedges
¾ oz. simple syrup
Muddle contents and add ice
Pour into the iced mixing glass
2 oz. Yamazaki 12-Years Old Single Malt
1 oz. Cointreau or Orange Curaçao
Shake vigorously and double-strain
Garnish with a lemon wedge

Manhattan East Meets West

Specialty of Gardner Dunn, Suntory Int'l
Cocktail glass, chilled
Pour into an iced mixing glass
2 ½ oz. Yamazaki 12-Years Old Single Malt
½ oz. Domaine de Canton Ginger Liqueur
½ oz. Dry Saké
2 dashes orange bitters
Stir contents and strain
Garnish with a flamed orange peel

The Rising Sun

Specialty of John Lermayer, Miami, FL
Double rocks glass, ice
Combine into an empty mixing glass
2-3 pieces of fresh ginger, an inch in length
½ oz. fresh lemon juice
2-3 pieces of lemongrass, sliced lengthwise
Muddle contents and add ice
Pour into the iced mixing glass
1 ½ oz. Yamazaki 12-Years Old Single Malt
¾ oz. Drambuie
¼ oz. honey
Shake vigorously and double-strain
Garnish with stalk of lemongrass

Silk Road

Specialty of Gardner Dunn, Suntory Int'l
Double rocks glass, ice
Pour into an iced mixing glass
2 oz. Yamazaki 12-Years Old Single Malt
3-4 fresh basil leaves
¾ oz. fresh lemon juice
½ oz. honey syrup
1 oz. apple juice
Shake vigorously and double-strain
Garnish with basil leaves

MIXOLOGY EVENTS IN THE NEWS

Nightclub & Bar Awards Nominations September 23rd through November 4th

Nightclub & Bar magazine will celebrate its 25th anniversary with a new program, the Nightclub & Bar Awards. It will recognize the achievements of the best nightclubs, bars and restaurants in the U.S. Nominations can be submitted beginning September 23, with a deadline of November 4th.

Entries will be judged by a panel, including the NCB editorial staff, select members of the Nightclub & Bar Advisory Board, industry journalists and other industry professionals. Winners will be

featured in Nightclub & Bar magazine, as well as honored during the Nightclub & Bar Trade Show in Las Vegas in March 2010.

Award category criteria and entry forms are available online at Nightclub.com.

U.S. Drinks Conference 2009

New York City, October 13th & 14th

The 3rd annual U.S. Drinks Conference 2009 scheduled for NYC October 13th and 14th is designed to directly address that issue. The conference is a comprehensive guide for beverage alcohol brands to learn

how to navigate the complexities of the U.S. wine, spirits and beer market.

The format will include panel keynote speakers, and panel discussions with audience Q & A to respond to the specific and practical needs of the attending delegates. The speaker list this year includes a wide range of key industry executives representing suppliers, distributors, independent and chain, off and on-premise retailers, as well as participants from regulatory agencies, including the TTB and the NY State Liquor Authority. Visit USD Drinksconference.com for details on registration, agenda and speakers. ♦

America's Mix Of Choice

Sweet & sour is the stuff of which legends are made.

There are more drinks in the lexicon of American mixology made with lemon-forward sour mix than all other types of drink mixes combined. If for no other reason, that makes it about the most important ingredient stocked behind the bar.

The savvy move is to determine for yourself whether the sweet & sour you're using is up for the job. The only sure-fire method is to sample it—first by itself, then over ice and finally in its leading application. Make note of its color and opacity. Sweet & sour should retain the appearance of real lemon juice especially when it's used in a cocktail.

Next, take stock of the product's bouquet. Does it have a vibrant lemon fragrance? Or is it faint and lackluster? Considering its frequency of use and that the olfactory is the most powerful sense, how it smells is a legitimate concern.

Naturally the last qualifier is taste. Swirl the sour mix around your mouth all the while assessing flavor and mouth feel. The finish is where sour mixes often falter

and turn astringent, overly tart or cloying. A bona fide keeper should taste good alone in a glass.

Scratch Sour Mix

Sour mix is a difficult product to make well. The challenge is proportioning the lemon juice and simple syrup such that the resulting mix is slightly tart. Most scratch recipes call for 3 parts lemon juice to 1 part of simple syrup (3:1). If early attempts are too tart, use a higher proportion of simple syrup. If the mix is moderately sweet—like lemonade—increase the proportion of lemon juice.

It should be noted that many a great sour mix has been crafted using a larger cast of performers than just lemons. An added splash or two of orange, lime or grapefruit juice is a proven way to add more dimension and pizzazz to the mix.

A few tips about juicing lemons. Fruit at room temperature yields more juice than chilled fruit. Avoid getting the bitter white pith of the lemon from getting into the juice. While pulp in orange or grapefruit juice

is a cache of quality, lemon juice needs to be strained before use. Pouring freshly squeezed juice through a cheesecloth (chinois) or strainer will do the trick.

Many beverage operators like the idea of using a scratch sour mix; that is until it comes down to actually executing on the concept. Whether it's the additional amount of prep work involved or the increased costs incurred, the price of turning "fresh" is too steep for many operators.

For starters, it requires that produce be juiced before every shift and purchased on a near daily basis. Fresh lemon juice keeps no more than 24 hours before needing to be discarded. Because they're not pasteurized, a scratch mix must be refrigerated and can't be kept at a bartender's well, which impacts a staff's speed of service.

Then there's the question of whether the staff will invest the time and effort preparing the sour mix correctly. Another operational challenge is fluctuating quality of citrus due to seasonality and availability issues. Exceedingly tart or bitter lemons will throw off the balance of the mix, which increases the risk of serving inconsistent drinks. For whatever reason, scratch sour mixes don't always perform up to expectation. ♦



PRODUCT PROFILE

Finest Call's Solution



An all-world sour mix is a thing of beauty, which best describes *Finest Call Premium Sweet & Sour Mix*. Its naturally tart character provides the ideal foundation upon which to build a sensational cocktail. The classically structured mix is produced using a proprietary natural flavor emulsion system that blends lemon, lime, grapefruit and orange essential oils to create its singular taste. Sweeteners are

added to throttle back some of the citrus exuberance, resulting in a flavorful and zesty mix.

Finest Call Sweet & Sour has a lightweight body, excellent opacity and a true-to-fruit appearance. In the all-important category of taste, the vivacious lemon-forward mix is tangy and delicious. Equally important from an operational perspective, it's pasteurized, shelf-stable and costs pennies per ounce.

Among the many things Finest Call Sweet & Sour Mix has going for it is its relative degree of tartness. Many producers add sweetener until it completely neutralizes the tart ascorbic acid in the juice. That's fine if you'll



be serving the mix straight, but as a foundation for contemporary cocktails, it's way off the mark. You need a bit of the lemon's natural tartness to shine through to work with the drink's spirited ingredients.

Finding a really great sour mix is cause for celebration, which is exactly the kind of response Finest Call Sweet & Sour deserves. Kudos! ♦



America Embraces Midori Sno-Cones

Ingenuity in the drinks business always attracts a crowd. There's no better example than the craze stirred by *Midori Sno-Cones*, a cool and enjoyable way of enjoying summer fun in the sun. Around the country people are having a blast with the old-school treat. Armed with Midori's Sno-cone machine, the frosty delights are a snap to prepare and remarkably easy to drink. Not many drinks will provoke more smiles than Midori Sno-Cones.

Information on how to get the Sno-Cone by Midori Starter Kit can be obtained at Sno-coneByMidori.com. ♦



Cognac—Can You Identify These Backbar Celebrities?



ANSWERS
 A. Hardy Noce d'Or Grande Champagne Cognac B. Martell Cordon Bleu Old Classic Cognac C. Courvoisier VSOP le Cognac de Napoleon D. Rémy Martin XO Cognac E. Courvoisier VS le Cognac de Napoleon F. Kelt X.O. Cognac G. Hennessy VS.O.P. Privilege Cognac H. L'Esprit de Courvoisier Cognac I. Hennessy XO Cognac

BIG PICTURE *continued from page 1*

It's particularly interesting what people had to say about what motivates them to order a particular cocktail or drink. As it turns out, 90% of the consumers read drink menus in a bar or restaurant and for a quarter of them it's how they decide what to order. More than half of the consumers said that they prefer a standalone drink menu compared to 17% who rely on drink listings on tabletop cards and 11% who rather the drinks be promoted within the food menu. Nearly 6 out of 10 surveyed said that they want the drink menu left on the table at all times, while about 15% would rather the hostess or server hand it to them.

Over 80% of the consumers said it was important to them that drink prices be listed on menus, followed closely by drink descriptions (68%), pictures of the drinks (50%) and listing of the brand name products used in making the drink (40%). According to the research, it's clear that if your marketing strategy doesn't include a

well-conceived drink menu, you might be spinning your wheels.

Importance of Service

The study also suggests that quality service plays a significant role in where people go to socialize. Almost 8 out of 10 consumers reported that speed of service was the most important factor, even more so than being served drinks in appropriate and clean glassware (72%), having their drink order taken promptly (68%) or being greeted with a smile (68%). Today great service involves taking the order quickly, delivering the drink quickly and getting things right.

When we asked what the consumers look for as signs of a quality beverage operation, the number one response was a great beer selection (59%) and having a great spirit/cocktail selection was second (56%). What's interesting is that even in the midst of an

economic downturn, the people in the study ranked product selection over "having a wide range of price offerings," which just under half said was most important.

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Beverage Authority

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John Lermayer's Miami



The Delano is a world-class hotel located in the heart of Miami's ultra-hip South Beach. Situated on the water's edge, the venue is breathtaking in both its design and luxurious amenities. Nestled in the basement of the landmark hotel is The Florida Room, a cocktail lounge that combines the glamour of a '50s piano bar and the intimacy of a Cuban-style speakeasy. The popular destination is known for its sensational cocktails, great live music nightly and a liberal fun atmosphere.

It's there that I caught up with John Lermayer, The Florida Room's celebrated mixologist. I asked him about his life behind bars in Miami. —RP

Q: *What prompted you to become a bartender? Where was your first gig?*

A: "I was working as a line cook on my way to becoming a chef when I realized there was more fun and beautiful women in the front of the house than the back. So I landed a job in a local dive bar in South Hampton called The Green Derby. On my first shift the place had a promotion going called "Drinking with Lincoln" where we sold beer all night for a penny. It was a raucous indoctrination to bartending."

Q: *Looking back, is there something you did when you first started bartending that now makes you shake your head in disbelief?*

A: "Absolutely, but there were so many that they all blurred together into one unspeakable mess."

Q: *Is there a cocktail you automatically recommend to a guest stuck on what to drink?*

A: "A classic Daiquiri, because it is elegant, quick to prepare and unbelievably refreshing. I'm also passionate about keeping the somewhat forgotten cocktail from fading into obscurity."

Q: *What's the most frequently called cocktail where you work?*

A: "The Margarita...like everywhere else in the country."

Q: *What's your favorite cocktail to serve?*

A: "That would definitely be the classic Mint Julep."

Q: *Where's the best place to listen to live music in your city?*

A: "It's got to be this place—The Florida Room. In the last year we have had Robin Thicke, The Marley brothers, The Roots, Perry Farrell, Matisyahu and Macy Gray to name a few. Our regular bands Angela Laino and The Big Bounce play weekly."

Q: *What's your favorite place to go dancing?*

A: "Brazil—love me some samba."

Q: *Which songs are on the recently played list on your iPod?*

A: "Honky Cat by Elton John, The Denial Twist by The White Stripes, South of Heaven by Slayer and Crazy Bald Heads by Bob Marley."

Q: *What's your cocktail of choice?*

A: "Good question. If I'm in a classy cocktail bar then I order a Hemingway Daiquiri. If not, then it's Miller High Life with a shot of reposado."

Q: *Who makes the best burgers in town?*

A: "Guinness Braised Sliders at Clarkes Charcoal Broiler. They've been at it for over 50 years, which is plenty of time to get it right."

Q: *What's your favorite website?*

A: "Wikipedia. Seriously, I think it's fascinating."

Q: *What TV show do you overhear people talking about the most?*

A: "Entourage."

Q: *What brand of clothing is the most popular at the bar you work?*

A: "There's really no one brand of clothing that dominates—at least that I'm aware of—but as far as style goes, it's Fedora hats."

Q: *What is the weirdest/oddest drink someone has asked you to make?*

A: "Are you sitting down? James Hetfield, the lead singer of Metallica, once asked me to make Jägermeister & milk for him. I could barely keep from gagging."

Q: *What advice do you pass on to rookie bartenders?*

A: "Keep your head up at all times, map your bar and know your products."

Q: *What's your idea of a great vacation?*

A: "A secluded beach, some roots reggae music, some hot sun, some cold beer and my ridiculously hot girlfriend shaking Margaritas next to me."

Q: *What famous person would you most like to share a drink with?*

A: "Barack Obama."

Q: *What's your bar pet peeve?*

A: "People putting their hands in my garnishes or fruit bowls, bad dancing, people ordering from me in Spanish, people snapping at me...to name a few." ♦