

# ENTREPRENEUR OF THE YEAR

DECEMBER 2009

# Restaurant Business

STREET SMARTS FOR THE

## KEVIN REDDY

PRESIDENT, CHAIRMAN, CEO

## NOODLES & COMPANY

In a year full of industry challenges, Noodles & Company did everything right

FOODSERVICE BUYER 2010 PREVIEW

BY TO STREIB

### Mixing it up

AS THE MEXICANO CRAZE CONTINUES, MORE MEXO staples are making their way to the cocktail list in the guise of new products. Olives, bacon and chocolate are leading the charge.

Dirty Martinis are a popular call, but chefs get upset if bartenders drain the brine from the olive jar. Enter Dirty Sue. This twice-filtered olive juice comes in 37.5ml bottles that can be displayed on the bar. Creators Eric Tecosky and Terry Fratet have developed Dirty Sue recipes, including riffs on the Gibson, Tequila Sunrise and Michelada.

Pork is an evergreen on most food menus. Now Black Rock Spirits introduces Bacon Vodka, a potato-based spirit infused with peppery bacon flavor. Oliver's Lounge in the Mayflower Park Hotel features the vodka in a signature B.L.T. Mary (\$8.50), garnished with a cherry tomato, romaine leaf and bacon slice. "If people like bacon, they love the drink," says server Jerri Peterson. It's paired with a BLT sandwich for brunch.

Chocolate is no stranger to the cocktail scene, but sweet chocolate martinis are passé. The new trend is bitter chocolate. Literally. Two companies market chocolate-based bitters: both blend spices and chilies with bitter chocolate in the Mexican style. Fee Brothers has added Aztec Chocolate Bitters to its line and Bittermens debuted Xocolatl Mole Bitters, which is inspired by Mexican mole sauce. The latter is featured at Mayahuel, a New York bar, where The Slight Detour is made with agave nectar, jalapeño-infused tequila, joven mescal and reposado tequila with a dash of the bitters. "It gives drinks a nice spicy chocolate note," says bartender Philip Ward.



BIT BLOODY MARY AT OLIVER'S LOUNGE

### Think inside the box

HERE'S A REVERSE TREND THAT MAY reverse migrate from off-premise to on-premise, from back of the bar to top of the bar. Cash-strapped customers are rethinking bag-in-box wine just as a new crop offers a step up in quality. And as they have accepted screwtops, younger drinkers seem especially open to the unorthodox box.

Box wines offer several advantages. The bladder collapses as wine is dispensed, so there's little oxidation. This results in an opened shelf life of several weeks for the three- to five-liter packages.

There's a green aspect to the packaging, too. Shipping costs are 20 percent lower because cardboard and plastic are lighter than glass and the boxes pack tightly, according to Stan Israel, president of Blue Coast Wine Imports. The company's new Blue Coast Vineyards wine-in-box brand is produced in the Provence and Rhone regions of southern France and shipped to the U.S.

Currently available in midlot and chardonnay, Blue Coast three-liter boxes have an SRP of \$21.95. "The carrier holds four bottles worth, which figures out to about \$5 per bottle for a French varietal," notes Israel.

Another entry is Charla, a three-liter box wine from Spain. "Charla is Spanish for 'chat,'" says Eric Miller, a partner in Romero & Miller, an importing company. Under the DO Valenciano, the red wine is made from tempranillo and bobal grapes grown in the sunny Mediterranean. It undergoes stainless steel fermentation with no barrel aging. "The wine is light and refreshing, easy to drink," adds Miller.



BLUE COAST'S NEW WINE

### Waters with a plus

AFTER THE BOTTLED WATER BACKLASH, SUPPLIERS HAVE SCRAMBLED FOR ANOTHER ANGLE. They found it with so-called enhanced waters—bottled water pumped up with flavors or vitamins. But the first enhanced waters were deemed deceptively sweet, often with as many calories as carbonated soft drinks and sometimes made with the same high-fructose corn syrup. Now comes a new generation of more sophisticated products.

Hint Essence's slogan is "drink water, not sugar." The brand doesn't contain sweeteners or preservatives and boasts zero calories. The waters have just a "hint" of natural flavors, such as cucumber, pomegranate-tangerine and honeydew-hibiscus. Ayala's

Herbal Water is purified water infused with USDA-certified organic extracts of culinary herbs. Flavors include such blends as cloves-cardamom-cinnamon, lemongrass-mint-vanilla and lemon verbena-geranium. No sweeteners or preservatives are used. Coca-Cola offers Dasani Essence, an extension of its Dasani line. Dasani Essence is unsweetened purified water in subtle flavors like black cherry and strawberry-kiwi.

It's also easy to make your own flavored waters in-house. Muddle fruit slices or fresh herbs in glasses, then add still or carbonated water. Or infuse water with various flavors in eye-catching glass containers with taps.



ASSORTED HERBAL WATERS FROM AYALA

### Waters with a plus

AFTER THE BOTTLED WATER BACKLASH, SUPPLIERS HAVE SCRAMBLED FOR ANOTHER ANGLE. They found it with so-called enhanced waters—bottled water pumped up with flavors or vitamins. But the first enhanced waters were deemed deceptively sweet, often with as many calories as carbonated soft drinks and sometimes made with the same high-fructose corn syrup. Now comes a new generation of more sophisticated products.

Hint Essence's slogan is "drink water, not sugar." The brand doesn't contain sweeteners or preservatives and boasts zero calories. The waters have just a "hint" of natural flavors, such as cucumber, pomegranate-tangerine and honeydew-hibiscus. Ayala's

Herbal Water is purified water infused with USDA-certified organic extracts of culinary herbs. Flavors include such blends as cloves-cardamom-

cinnamon, lemongrass-mint-vanilla and lemon verbena-geranium. No sweeteners or preservatives are used. Coca-Cola offers Dasani Essence, an extension of its Dasani line. Dasani Essence is unsweetened purified water in subtle flavors like black cherry and strawberry-kiwi.

It's also easy to make your own flavored waters in-house. Muddle fruit slices or fresh herbs in glasses, then add still or carbonated water. Or infuse water with various flavors in eye-catching glass containers with taps.



ASSORTED HERBAL WATERS FROM AYALA

2010 trends and new product preview

Creative ways to cut your food costs

