



RIO TOWNER

PHOTO BY TRASK BEDORTHA

Rio Towner, a bartender at Davis' Restaurant, was the overwhelming favorite in *EW*'s "Sexiest Bartender" readers' poll. Among her many fans taking the time to cast a ballot for her general hotness, she was praised for "absolutely everything!" — for being "beautiful inside and out," for "her harem pants, cleavage and that smile... damn," for being able "to joke for days" and for being "wicked smart," as well as for the way "her sensuality and creativity mix together and burst forth into an explosion of giddy lust that is only made more intense after a sip of her expert cocktails."

Are you bringing sexy back?

Back? Shoot, I'm pushing sexy into the future where brains are the new boobs, eyebrows are the new mustache, and where people remember that the flavor is always in the fat.

Straight up or with a twist?

I think everything in life should come with an element of surprise. So why would I ever skip a twist?

Neat or on the rocks?

Preferably well-organized pebbles. Nah, as much as I hate to admit it, I'm just not badass enough for a Laphroaig neat. That distinct burnt Muppet flavor always transports me to mysterious and frightening places. However, I will drink Irish whiskey till the holy cows come home, any way you can give it to me: neat, rocks and right outta the bottle.

If you could have a drink anywhere in the world right now, where would it be and what would you drink?

Given that it is March in Eugene, I'm have to say gimme the most outrageous guilty pleasure — frufu, frozen, fruity and fabulous tropical drink topped with Carmen Miranda *and* an umbrella. Naturally, I assume you understand this order comes with a warm beach, a group of friends and a well-greased cabana boy... well, maybe skip the friends, and just leave me the cabana boy.

Do you have any special drinks?

Many, many, many! One of the greatest parts of my job is inventing new drinks. It's always good to show up when I'm testing new recipes and need fresh palettes for tasting. However, my claim to fame is probably the titillating "I dream of Rio." For a good laugh, ask to see it with its original garnish!

What's the sexiest part of your job?

Loving it. Having fun in every moment, and with everyone. Oh, yeah, and the occasional slow and sexy "Dirty Dancing" crawl across the bar to bestow a kiss on some lucky sucker!

What is the scariest pickup line you've ever heard?

"Ooh girl, I want you like a breakfast buffet, so I can just lay you out on the table and take what I want!" I'd say that just about covers the basics... But, truly, there are so *many* gems.

Do people really throw drinks on other people, or does that just happen in the movies?

I don't know a woman alive who hasn't wanted to throw a drink in someone's face, but mostly we try to live out those fantasies in our heads. I stay pretty satisfied with the occasional spray down with the soda gun. A fantastic trick I learned from my boss Tom during his many years, and many personal hosing of me, as a bartender.

What's the strangest thing that ever happened to you while tending bar?

In the world of bartending, I think strange becomes normal, and normal is downright creepy. But I'm saving a few for the grandkids. Something involving a slap fight, a peanut and just the right song.

Do you flirt with customers for better tips?

Never for better tips. *Always* for better entertainment! Because, really, who doesn't like a little wink and a smile?

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