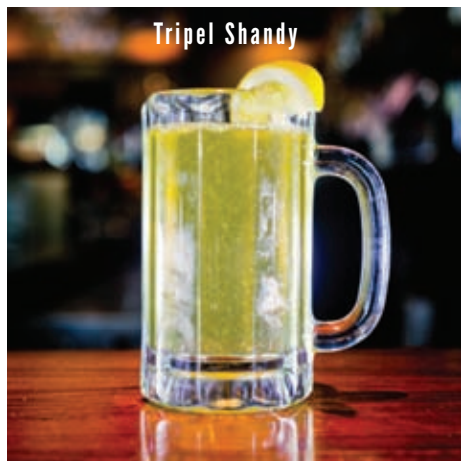


Chris Murphy, bartender at Davis Restaurant and Bar, serves a variety of beer cocktails. Murphy has been tending bar on and off for more than 20 years, but this is the first time he's had these beverages on his menu. He says the beer cocktail is popular right now in major metropolitan areas like New York and San Francisco, and the trend has reached Eugene. "Sales are really picking up. I used to have to 'sell' beer cocktails, but I'm getting return customers now," he says while preparing some examples of the trend.

The most popular beer cocktail on Murphy's menu is the michelada, a mixture of spicy tomato juice, lime juice, tequila and Sessions lager. Its flavor is a sort of cousin of the Bloody Mary. The drink is from Mexico, and its mixture of light beer and lime juice would be appealing on a warm summer evening. But the one-two punch of tequila and spices would make it hard to survive more than one.

Next up is the top o' the morning (Guinness, hard apple cider and Patrón XO Coffee Liqueur). Murphy says it's the most divisive beer cocktail on his menu, and I can tell why. The mixture of Guinness, apple and coffee flavors reminds me of an ill-advised hangover breakfast on its way back up. I didn't think you could ruin Guinness, but this drink proves it's possible. Back on the refreshing side is the tripel shandy (Trumer Pilsner, ginger brew and lemon) and a Murphy original called the lunchbox (amaretto, orange juice and Oakshire Line Dry Rye). Both drinks are thirst-quenching, and it would be easy to drink one too many on a hot summer afternoon.

Murphy goes on to say that many of his customers order beer cocktails on a whim despite being skeptical at first, and most are converted to the idea. He adds that the "professional drinkers" in Eugene are an educated bunch who tend to be a bit stuck in their ways. "If you like IPA, that's all you order," he clarifies. So this summer get out of your comfort zone, put down the IPA (for a round) and try a beer cocktail. You might surprise yourself. ■



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Meet the brewers of Laurelwood and Oakshire Brewing

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