

A GLIMPSE INSIDE

An occasional feature by MATT LOVE

Custard King

I wanted custard for the first time. It was a sweltering Saturday in late summer, and I was walking toward cold custard and the dreamy creamy prospect of its mysterious texture and taste. I even had a \$1 off coupon that a rock 'n' roll-looking guy handed me on the street!

Astoria's rehabilitated Custard King produces custard with a recently acquired \$10,000 new custard machine. Experts fanatically trained in the machine's use make custard with exquisite care in the old ways of the former custard masters.

Zounds, I love the how the word "custard" sounds! Custard! Custard! Custard!

My next dog is going to be named Custard. I want to write a poem about a custard sky. Would someone crank up Led Zeppelin's "Custard Pie"? I want to meet a woman with custard eyes. I want to live in a country with a flag the color of custard.

Wait, I don't even know what color custard is!

I spotted Custard King in the distance — for the love of custard! — it had a line 20 custard hounds deep. I couldn't wait. There was no time. Custard waits for no one.

Four hours later, Custard King was closing, and there wasn't a single person out front. I ordered custard, vanilla, in a cup. The gleaming metal machine whipped it out in front of my eyes. I brought it to my mouth and tasted. Two seconds later, I did a little jig because I was so overcome with delight.

Custard's First Stand. It definitely won't be the last.

Matt Love lives in Astoria and is the author/editor of 14 books about Oregon. They are available at coastal bookstores and at www.nestuccaspitpress.com

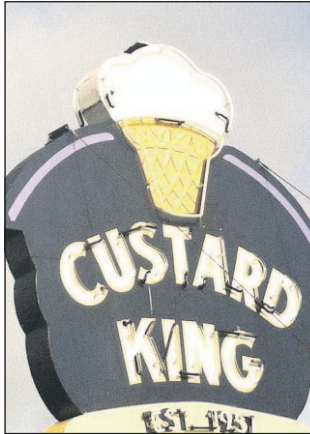


Photo by Matt Love

The rehabilitated Custard King in Astoria now serves custard on its menu.

COLUMBIA BAR

BBQ Peach Iced Tea

By RYAN HUME

I suppose it was bound to happen: having written about the bar scene on the North Coast for over a year now, eventually I would walk into a random bar and find a familiar face standing behind a different slab of wood, ready to pour.

Jennifer Wayne, formerly of the Twisted Fish and Finn's in Seaside, is now holding court at Rich Ewing's newly opened Inferno Lounge at Pier 11 in downtown Astoria.

With a crow's nest DJ booth overlooking the open floor and a slow river view to die for, the Inferno promises to cater to different moods depending on the time of the day.

The lounge's signature drinks begin with an idiosyncratic list of infused spirits, all done in house — peanut vodka, cucumber gin, red hot whiskey, to name a few. Everything is made fresh and to order.

For Wayne, this meant less shots poured and more muddling and mixing. Having only been open for two months, the mood behind the bar is still largely experimental: the recipe provided is a variation of a BBQ Iced Tea, which is itself a variation on one of the bar's more popular confections, the Inferno Iced Tea.

Ingredients:

3/4 ounce charred oak-infused vodka*

2 ounces sweet tea-infused vodka**

1/4 ounce 360 Georgia

Peach vodka
Lemonade
Ice



Directions:

To layer, top a pint glass with ice and then fill 1/3 full with fresh-squeezed lemonade. Mix liquors together in a separate, small glass and carefully pour atop lemonade. Garnish with a lemon wedge and stir before consuming.

*The Inferno uses Svedka vodka as the base for all of its vodka infusions. The charred oak variety sounds mighty complicated and involves oak, fire, at least eight weeks of shelf life and a strainer, I presume. If one were feeling a bit like a mad scientist, I suppose you could substitute a nip of bourbon or a peaty scotch in its place, though I don't think any bartender would recommend mixing your browns with your clears. At home, it may just be best to keep the barbecue component on the grill.

**This infusion shouldn't take as long to master and doesn't require a blowtorch: tea bags plus sugar to taste. Store in dark place until you like the color.

—Recipe courtesy of Jennifer Wayne, bartender at the Inferno Lounge in Astoria

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