

MacGREGOR'S WHISKEY BAR TO WET MANZANITA'S WHISTLE

SOON-TO-OPEN ESTABLISHMENT WILL HAVE MORE THAN 100 BROWN LIQUORS ON HAND

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FOR COAST WEEKEND

MANZANITA — Mark Twain famously asserted that “too much of anything is bad, but too much good whiskey is barely enough.”

Keep that in mind as you plan your first visit to MacGregor's Whiskey Bar, a soon-to-open establishment on Laneda Avenue that holds good brown liquor in high regard.

Owner Chip MacGregor has developed a deep appreciation for the educational side of whiskey, something he credits to his Scottish roots.

“I grew up in a Scottish family around Scotch, and over the years, I've really enjoyed getting to know about whiskey,” he said.

Over the years, MacGregor — who also owns and operates MacGregor Literary — had harbored a desire to open a tasting bar of some sort in Manzanita.

“I'd talked with Vino Manzanita a few times about buying it,” he said, though concrete plans never materialized.

That changed Oct. 14 when a freak tornado hit the town.

Vino Manzanita took a direct hit, sustaining significant damage and prompting the former business owner to not renew her expiring lease.

MacGregor communicated his whiskey bar idea to the building's owner and soon began the whirlwind process of repairing and remodeling: New lighting, a copper-top bar and old church pews will highlight the space, which will seat 30.

The bar, located at 387 Laneda Ave., is slated to open May 1.

'That perfect feel'

While whiskey has been a staple of the cocktail scene



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MacGregor's Staff Breanna Stephens and Joel Jacobsen sampling high-end meats. Manager Lynn Kyriss will offer a variety of tasty plates with fresh ingredients, including desserts.

for years, only recently has it developed its own craft scene, with whiskey tasting bars and distilleries popping up with greater frequency around the country.

It has also taken on an international flavor and stretched beyond the more recognizable Scottish, Irish and American brands.

MacGregor points to the evolution of whiskey as a big part of the fun in his new venture.

“Whiskey has become a big deal all over the world,” he said. “Some of the finest whiskeys right now are being made in Japan, where they utilize more scientific methods rather than the cultural approach most people are used to.”

Besides the bar's name-sake, MacGregor's brain trust includes Manzanita author and editor Holly Lorincz and Lynn Kyriss, longtime owner of Manzanita staple Left Coast Siesta.

Lorincz drew up the interior plans for a quiet, intimate space where people can enjoy a wide variety of whiskeys in an upscale setting; Kyriss will manage the kitchen.

They've had outside help as well: A consultant from Lexington, Kentucky, who owns the whiskey bar Parlay Social, has been working closely with the team to ensure the new establishment captures the perfect feel.

Part of that perfect feel is food, and MacGregor's will concentrate on upscale tapas



SUBMITTED PHOTO

Chip MacGregor displays his new whiskey bar's sign, created by Nehalem artist Susan Walsh.



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While offering a full cocktail bar, the bar's focus will be on brown liquor. More than one hundred labels will be on hand.

offerings, including meat, cheese, pate, and vegetable boards, along with a fresh soup of the day, fresh-pressed coffee and a dessert selection.

All menu items will be locally sourced.

“I'm looking forward to the creative opportunity and changing the menu often,” Kyriss said.

Nice, warm, healing

The star of the show, of course, is whiskey, and MacGregor's will have more than 100 brown liquors on hand.

That includes scotches from all six regions of

Scotland, Irish whiskeys, American bourbons and ryes, Canadian blended whiskeys, and several choices from around the world.

MacGregor and Kyriss recently attended bartending school in Portland and used the opportunity to research myriad whiskeys. Favorites, of course, separated themselves from the pack.

“I discovered Angel's Envy Rye from Kentucky,” MacGregor said. “It was like a religious experience for me.”

Aged in rum barrels, it has a strong rye taste, followed

by what Kyriss describes as burnt-caramel flavor.

“We should have the biggest selection of brown liquors on the Oregon Coast,” MacGregor said, adding that there will also be a full bar available, including a few select beers and wines.

“Overall, we want it to be a nice, low-key place to enjoy a quiet evening drink and talk,” Kyriss said.

MacGregor is pleased the community has been overwhelmingly supportive and enthusiastic. He's also happy to offer something the area doesn't have yet, especially considering the warming properties of whiskey.

“I'm a native, born and raised in Oregon,” he said. “It's a very wet place, and whiskey is nice and warm and healing.”

For more information, visit www.macgregorswhiskeybar.com for details or call 503-368-2447.