

BEST WINE BAR AND WINE SHOP



Danny Miller

WineKraft co-owners Rebecca Kraft, right, and her daughter April Thorgramson, inside their Astoria wine bar.

WineKraft

ASTORIA

By EDWARD STRATTON

Runner-up: The Wine Shack, Cannon Beach

Honorable mention: The Cellar on 10th, Astoria

Rebecca Kraft and her daughter April Thorgramson opened WineKraft nearly four years ago.

"I wanted to have a place you could relax and enjoy a good glass of wine, and enjoy some good local music," Kraft said. "It's really important these days to have places where people can meet up and chat, and connect."

The two opened in a suite on Pier 11 with panoramic views of the Columbia River. Visitors there can taste up to 34 different wines — whites, reds, rosés, bubbles and dessert wine — five types of beer, cocktails and nonalcoholic drinks, along with small plates of cheese,

charcuterie and other snacks. WineKraft also offers a wide variety of events, from open mic poetry nights and music to paint-and-sips.

"It's an alternative to all the beer places in town," Kraft said. "Not that there's anything wrong with the beer business. I like beer."

A former hairdresser whose mother ran restaurants, Kraft said she wanted something of her own and saw a similar wine shop model in Sisters. Even through trolley track construction and closures on the Astoria Riverwalk, people have still been searching out WineKraft, she said.

"I just think it's all about taking care of our customers, and being consistent with things, offering locals different things, like the tipsy painting and the wine tours," Kraft said. "This is my feeling on how to promote a business to locals. They in turn will tell others to come to my place." CW



Danny Miller

A red wine from WineKraft in Astoria.

BEST BARTENDER

Cory Teubner

ASTORIA COFFEEHOUSE & BISTRO

By KATIE FRANKOWICZ

Runner-up: Jeany Birdeno, Merry Time Bar and Grill

Honorable mention: Juan Meza, Shelburne Pub

Cory Teubner doesn't understand why you like dirty martinis, but he will make you a really, really good one.

For him, though, a great cocktail begins with fresh ingredients.

"Liquor is step number two," he said. "I often start with something fresh and see what liquor pairs with it."

Teubner has been the bartender at the Astoria Coffeehouse & Bistro for nearly seven years. In the seasonal menus he creates throughout the year, he's known for playing with flavors, using fresh herbs, fresh fruit and unusual ingredients (dill? yogurt? sambal sauce?) and making his own infused liquors.



Katie Frankowicz

Cory Teubner, seen here working at Astoria Coffeehouse & Bistro, was voted Best Bartender in this year's Readers' Choice Awards.

A cranberry hibiscus vodka he made on a whim to fill an immediate need has since become a staple at the bistro. Every year, he tries to branch out a little more, exploring new flavors and ingredients.

He tries to source liquors from North Coast distilleries and makes frequent use of Pat's Pantry, a spice store in

downtown Astoria.

For anyone venturing into the world of making their own cocktails, he suggests finding balance. A really good lemon drop, for example, is simply a balance between sweet and sour, he said.

"Play with everything and see what ratios you can mess with," he said. CW

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