

End of the Trail Public House Sour

Public house's drink isn't what you'd expect

BY RYAN HUME

It's hard to imagine that I've been writing this Columbia Bar column for over five years now. I have learned quite a bit along the way while ducking into the region's numerous drinking holes and offering myself up as a guinea pig to whomever happened to be slinging sauce that day.

In no particular order, some half-truisms: know that bartenders are some of the best people in the world to talk to. Yes, you should at minimum tip a dollar a drink. Not all simple syrups are simple. Mezcal has more regulations upholding its place of origin and quality than its hermana tequila. And, sorry Kentucky, but even Oregon can make a decent bourbon.

Writing this column has introduced me to many creative spirits. It should come as no surprise to say that the bar culture and local distilling scene is thriving.

It seems appropriate then that I landed at End of the Trail Public House in Seaside.

When quizzed, owner Sean McKeown traces the origin of the sport pub's name to the plaque on the Lewis and Clark statue rising above the roundabout where Seaside's Prom ends against the sand. Though, if you find yourself staring at this statue, you've missed the pub by a number of blocks.

McKeown has deep roots on the other end of Broadway. His parents owned the Firehouse Grill, Nonni's Italian Bistro and McKeown's Irish Pub. All three are (or were) in spitting distance of End of the Trail.

McKeown cut his teeth in the family businesses before venturing out on the pub, which is his first solo effort. The pub is located in the old Moose Lodge, 733 Broadway St.

Having just celebrated its six month anniversary in January 2020, End of the Trail is up and running as a proper sports bar, with an array of flat-screen televisions reaching deep into the ESPN multiverse. There's also pool, darts and a gigantic Connect 4 board that just so happens to compliment the rest of the pub's décor. The bar top was moved across the street from the closed McKeown's Irish Pub.

When I first sat down at the bar, the bar-

Not Your Standard Sour

3/4 ounce Maker's Mark Bourbon

3/4 ounce Hendrick's Gin

1 1/2 ounces freshly squeezed lemon or lime juice

3/4 ounce simple syrup

A splash of grenadine

1 large piece of lemon or lime rind

1 Bordeaux Maraschino cherry

Ice

In a cocktail shaker filled with ice, add all liquid ingredients and shake. Strain into an old fashioned glass loaded with more ice. Pierce the cherry with a bamboo skewer and lay across the brim. Finish with a graft of citrus.

tender was fielding a landline call from someone looking for an update on the score of the Oregon Ducks women's basketball game. If that doesn't legitimize a sports bar, I don't know what will.

In true Oregon Coast fashion, everything behind the bar and in the kitchen is scratch-made, from the simple syrup to the whipped cream that blooms off the head of each Irish coffee like a cloud.

But for this column, we are looking past tradition. This particular drink is a new arrival to the bar menu. The Not Your Standard Sour is just that.

American bourbon and English-style gin are not exactly fast friends in an old-fashioned glass, even if this particular gin, Hendrick's, very light with cucumber and herbaceous with rose, is made in Scotland, and carries no hang-over from the dust of the Revolutionary War.

This odd couple is melded with freshly squeezed citrus — either lemon or lime will work, McKeown says — and a splash of grenadine stains the whole thing pink. Most whiskey sours run queasy on the color wheel, with a hint of green.

An impaled Bordeaux cherry and a graft of lemon peel spruce up the finished product.

Enjoy and don't forget to tip your bartender.



Sean McKeown and 'Not Your Standard Sour' at the End of the Trail Public House.