

DECEMBER 2019

COAST



Merry and Bright

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Holiday TOAST



Holidays kindle thoughts of family and friends. Gatherings with conversations that linger into the evening and gut-busting laughter that reminds us that we actually enjoy spending time with each other. Typically this jolly vibe ensues after a few cocktails. Fortunately at Selanne Steak Tavern in Laguna Beach, the bar manager intends to please. He dabbles with seasonal flavors to bring out the best sips of the season. An autumnal pumpkin offering makes way for a spirited eggnog ideal for December's frosty nights.

Coming up with new offerings is "kind of like reinventing myself," says Selanne's bar manager, Neil Matchko. "I take inspiration from my struggles in life. I'm a marathon runner, so I pull some of that focus and I enjoy remaking the classics. I'm drawn to bourbon. It reminds me of the holidays. It reminds me of home."

The restaurant enjoys its standing as a favorite among locals. A side door leading directly into the bar is even dubbed "the locals' entrance." This atmosphere makes Selanne Steak Tavern a special place during the holidays. You revel in the creativity and bask in the warmth of good service.

The eggnog comes from an old family recipe. "Kevin Pratt, one of the owners, brought it in one day. It was actually written on a napkin," says Matchko, who took a picture of the scrawled-out ingredients. "I just played around with it."

He incorporated different spirits before finally settling on Bulleit bourbon with a punch of Ron Zacapa rum. To add whimsy, the garnish features two slices of marshmallow sandwiching a sliver of bacon. The marshmallows are torched right before serving. A soothing campfire smell emanates from the glass, transporting you back to childhood. The cocktail evokes toasty fireside chats and stockings hung with care. The final sips will remind you that the holidays are fleeting, so we might as well make the best of them!

HOLIDAY EGGNOG

1 oz. Bulleit Bourbon
1 oz. Ron Zacapa Rum
2 oz. house-made eggnog
Garnish: shaved nutmeg flamed bacon marshmallow

METHOD:

Mix all ingredients into a shaking tin with ice. Shake and strain into a chilled coupe glass. Garnish with fresh grated nutmeg and a flamed bacon marshmallow.

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