

Watering holes deepen offerings with artisanal cocktails

POSTED: WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 7, 2016 4:30 AM By Melanie Harrice | ⊚ 0 comments



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The Kitchen serves up artfully made craft cocktails with fun names like "Three Simple Rules" — the name of the middle cocktail shown above. The drink was named after a quote in the 1989 movie "Road House."

Another team with a different approach — general manager Jeremy Weiss and bar manager Kristen Hawley of the Kitchen — is designing artisanal cocktails like "the Brooklyn," one barrel at a time.

"It lives in the office," Weiss said, referring to the barrel.

The aging process can take a week or so in a new barrel, but once it's used eight or 10 times that takes longer.

The two share a love of bitter drinks that are easy on the palate. Their creations are slightly sweet but not too much so, and have a complex variety of flavors, with an extra boozy kick.

"We love fun cocktails and we wanted to share them," Weiss said. "They're high-octane but they don't taste like it."

With its warm, minimalist decor, soft lighting and urban ambience, the Kitchen offers handcrafted beverages with clever names that sometimes have inside meanings to staff. For example, there's "The Lusitania," which refers to a ship sunk during World War I and how everyone feels at the end of a crazy busy summer, Weiss said.