

Sip, sip, hooray: Raise your glasses to La Jolla's seasonal cocktails

BY ELISABETH FRAUSTO, STAFF WRITER



Wheat & Water is offering "The Bend" this holiday season.

Mulled wine or mules, wine or whiskey — celebrating the holidays often includes a libation or few, and several La Jolla restaurants are serving their takes on seasonal sips.

The La Jolla Light pored over some of the holiday pours available from local mixologists through December.

Wheat & Water: Bartender Braden Goddard at Wheat & Water, 5737 La Jolla Blvd., is offering "The Bend," containing bourbon, honey simple syrup, walnut bitters and Cynar, an artichoke liqueur. The drink is "booze-forward," Goddard said. "It's a twist on the Manhattan [and] Old Fashioned" cocktails, inspired by Manhattan itself. Goddard said more holiday cocktails will be created throughout December as Wheat & Water celebrates its fifth anniversary in La Jolla.

Nine-Ten at the Grande Colonial hotel, 910 Prospect St., is shaking up two holiday drinks. "Putnam's Pumpkin Cure," a fall-inspired homage to Putnam's Pharmacy, former occupant of the restaurant's site, contains pumpkin-infused bourbon made in house, Domaine de Canton ginger liqueur, lemon, spiced simple syrup and egg white.

"Pumpkin is the seasonal flair," bartender Rob Pigoni said. "I just really wanted something with pumpkin bourbon." He said the cocktail, which has been on the drinks menu for about a month, has been "pretty popular."

The "Muddled Humor" drink is "basically a blood orange mojito," Pigoni said, with house-made blood Orangetello, white rum, blood orange juice, Cointreau, lime and a prosecco float, garnished with mint.



"Putnam's Pumpkin Cure" (left) and "Muddled Humor" are available at Nine-Ten.



"Santa Got Mulled Over by a Reindeer" is one of three holiday cocktail offerings at George's at the Cove.

George's at the Cove, 1250 Prospect St., offers three holiday cocktails from bar director Cole Shepherd. "Santa Got Mulled Over by a Reindeer" features Patron Sherry Añejo, a house-made mulled riesling with rosemary, cardamom and star anise. "Immaculate Libation" is mixed with Gran Centenario Añejo, Grand Classico Amaro, house-made grenadine and lemon. "The Georgie" features fig-infused Remy Martin 1738 cognac, Cointreau, heavy cream and brown sugar.

All three cocktails were created with "basic, fun stuff that play to the fall spirits," Shepherd said, leaning away from cinnamon and chocolate and toward "a lighter-style profile" than most holiday drinks. "It's never that cold here," he said.

Michael Matthews, owner of **Mermaids & Cowboys**, 1251 Prospect St., created "Harbor Holiday," which mixes Old Harbor Distilling Co. vodka, St. Germain elderflower liqueur, orange juice and ginger beer, garnished with pomegranate seeds and thyme. Matthews said he was inspired to create a holiday drink "with a Southern California citrus feel to it."



Mermaids & Cowboys is mixing "Harbor Holiday" this year.



The Shores Restaurant is blending a "Koo Koo Banana Split" for the holidays.

Wesley Dwaine, bartender at **The Shores Restaurant**, 8110 Camino del Oro, is blending a "Koo Koo Banana Split" featuring Koo Koo chocolate liqueur. "We combine that with vanilla vodka, banana schnapps and some pure bananas," Dwaine said. "It's to die for." The blended drink is then topped with whipped cream, fresh banana slices and a cherry.

The **La Valencia Hotel**, 1132 Prospect St., has several holiday drinks on its menu, such as "Pucker Up Sage," with Hangar One Buddah Hand's Citron Vodka, Lillet Blanc, sparkling grapefruit juice and sage-infused sea salt, and "Sazaretto," with Disaronno Amaretto, Sazerac Rye, apricot and egg white.