

PLAYBOY® ARTICLE WITH AGWA Slovenian Representative Ales Porter (March, 2008)

Barman, three times champion in Flairtending and **AGWA De Bolivia** Rep Ales Porter gets sparks in his eyes when you mention the word flair. "If you are not an opened guy, you can throw 12 bottles in the air, but you will never get the response from the public". Ex cook, who looks a kind like Jamie Oliver says that essence of his discipline is a total control of the bar. He puts a lot of effort into his skills and others education and since he owns the flair bartending school also tries to lift the quality of barman profession in Slovenia.

Attractive mixing

Flair bartending represents additional offer of the bar. You got to show, that you are in a total control of the bar and its guests. People often think that it is just throwing and juggling with couple of bottles. We are not from circus. I am a barman and really like mixology, recipes and harmony of the flavours in the cocktails and contact with people. If people knew that, I wouldn't need to throw bottles in the air.

Tricks

One of the costumers took the napkin, wrote her name on it, wrinkled it and burned it. After the napkin burned, her name appeared on my hand, written with smoke....Everything is possible, even bottles can float and fly in the air. Those are the tricks.

Circumstances

The attractiveness of your shows mainly depends on the mileage you have done. You have to have supporting people around you, otherwise you cannot perform well. In the moment I am in the beginning of the new season of competitions. In average, one show in the competition lasts for 5 minutes, in final 7 or 8 minutes. In this time, you must prepare from 1 to 3 cocktails. Approach you use is "working flair" with random filled bottles, which cannot have less then 5 centiliters of the drink. Afterwards there is an "exhibition flair" which is basically playing with laws of physics. At least 2 centiliters of the drink in the bottle is just enough to pull some really crazy tricks. Here comes in your creativity, which leads you towards the top. We use 5 to 6 bottles. That's really crazy, that's a real show.

Beginnings

My first bottle in the air was on our family houses garden, while I was still working as a cook. Five years ago I logged on the web site of Caesars Palace Las Vegas. I was looking for recipe for Caesars Salad. On the web site a saw for the first time flair in progress and I said to my self "Jamie Oliver is the man, but I want this".

Qualifications

Youngsters want everything to come immediately. I shared the same thought when I was in the beginning. No, can't do. Everything needs time. When you agree with that, you are on the right way to the top. Problem with bartending is, that there are not enough of professional barmen because bar owners prefer to hire cheaper labour like student, and this is mainly reason, why standard in bartending is not on the highest level in our country.

Cocktail

Story goes like this. First flair championship was named Blue Blazer and was held in the United States. The winner had the honour (or Tom Cruise had the honour) to train the main actor of the famous movie Cocktail. Moves performed by Tom Cruise were almost impossible in that time. This movie set the stage for flair bartending across the world.