



A serving of SUCCESS

SUE LECKIE ASKS, HAS THE CRAFT OF THE BARTENDER GONE TOO FAR?



The part played by the bartender has meant many things over the ages, from confidante to entertainer. All too often, the actual drink has come second to the experience that he would provide.

Jerry Thomas, the godfather of cocktail culture, placed huge importance on customer service, way back in 1862, in his *Bartender's Guide (or How to Mix Drinks)*. He states: "An efficient bartender's first aim should be to please his customers, paying particular attention to meet the individual wishes of those whose tastes and desires he has

already watched and ascertained; and, with those whose peculiarities he has had no opportunity of learning, he should politely inquire how they

wish their beverages served, and use his best judgement in endeavouring to fulfil their desires to their entire satisfaction. In this way he will not fail to acquire popularity and success."

This point is still held in high esteem by many operators and industry commentators. "A great bartender doesn't discriminate, he makes you feel like you are welcome in his home," says PM Bar's Nidal Ramini. "He doesn't keep his head down when you walk in because he's stirring down an Old Fashioned, he won't drown you in knowledge but he'll explain the drinks menu to you and if you decide that all you want is a beer, he won't mutter expletives under his breath."

Ardent Spirit's Gary Regan agrees: "The primary job is not to make great drinks, but to make people happier than they were when they walked into the bar."

"The primary job is not to make great drinks, but to make people happier than they were when they walked into the bar."

