



Proof Positive



COCKTAIL of the Month

AVENIDA

"This was one of the first cocktails on the menu at RumBa, and it's been so popular that we have kept it on," says Wember Castillo. "This is the one we suggest when people just want a fruity drink. It's on the sweet side." The instructions call for shaking the drink, but Castillo advises that you can also roll it: once all ingredients are together, pour it from the mixing glass into a second, similar glass, and then pour it into the highball glass.

- 6 whole raspberries, plus garnish
- 3 pineapple dice, plus garnish
- 1½ ounce Clément Premium Cane Rhum
- ¾ oz Mathilde Pêche (peach schnapps)
- 1 ounce fresh sweet and sour

Place the fruit in a mixing glass and muddle briskly. Add the liquors, sweet and sour, and ice. Shake vigorously (or roll) and pour into a highball glass. Garnish with fresh pineapple dice and raspberries.



MIXOLOGIST OF THE MONTH

Wember Castillo

RumBa, InterContinental Hotel, Boston

Wember Castillo, the bartender at RumBa at the InterContinental Hotel, Boston, has 100 rums at his disposal, plus liqueurs, juices and a startling array of fruits, vegetables, herbs and spices. He can provide pretty much anything a customer asks for.

"I ask my guests, what do you like? What are your taste buds telling me?" He says that young bartenders often make the mistake of mixing to their own palates exclusively.

"If you have a great rum, it's perfect for sipping. You don't really need to mix it," he says, adding that, in general, the higher the alcohol, the more difficult it is to mix. The darker rums, more suitable for enjoying straight up, exhibit vivid molasses notes. As they lighten, they go more to caramel and spice.

The InterContinental is located on Boston's harbor at the Fort Point Channel—it adjoins the exact spot where the Boston Tea Party took place. The hotel chose a rum-themed bar due to Boston's long dependence on seafaring for its economy, and rum's historic importance. "We are bound to rum, it was so important to this area," Castillo says. (The name RumBa does not refer to the dance, but rather the way a Boston native would pronounce "rum bar.")

Castillo was born and raised in San Salvador. He came to the United States when he was 16, following his mother and sister to Boston. He began his restaurant career in 1996 as a bartender's assistant at the Hilton Hotel at Logan Airport. A year later, he was a bartender at the Boston Harbor Hotel, where he stayed for 10 years. He opened RumBa in 2006, and has seen its collection of rums (from the classic cane-growing countries as well as Austria, India and elsewhere) grow to 100.

If you're wondering what sort of name Wember is: "It came to my mother in a dream," he says. intercontinentalboston.com

—TIM MORIARTY

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