

LIQUIDS

Hot Stuff

Warm your insides
with toasty tipples.

By Brandy Rand

COME WINTER, THOSE MINTY mojitos and frozen margaritas just don't do the trick. That's why many restaurants are heating things up at the bar with a selection of mulled wine, spiked ciders, and hot toddies.

Keven Halopoff, general manager of 5 Corners Kitchen in Marblehead, says there's a surprising science behind warming up alcohol. "When creating a hot spirit drink, the factors that affect the flavor are the opposite of when you chill the spirit. The chilling usually mellows [or] mutes the flavors of the spirit (think chilled vodka or tequila), and when you warm the spirit, it enhances the aromas and flavors."

So your grandmother may have been onto something when she swore by a swig of toddy to ease aches and chills. Made with either hot water or tea with honey or sugar, fresh lemon juice, and whiskey or brandy, toddies are easily tailored to your taste. As a fan of whiskey for taming a cold, Halopoff's favorite combinations for curing the common malady are whiskey, honey, hot water, and cinnamon, and whiskey, hot water, and fresh ginger.

When it came time to concoct a hot seasonal drink for 5 Corners, Halopoff decided to take the road less traveled, opting to use a Japanese whisky. The Japanese have been making whisky (spelled without the "e") since 1923, when the Yamazaki Distillery was established. These Japanese spirits are now rising in popularity (in part due to the recent importation of the brand Nikka to the United States). Japanese whiskies showcase a range of artisan distilling techniques, Halopoff says.

Inspired by the subtle smokiness of Nikka Yoichi, a 15-year-old single malt,



Spiced Zen

Makes 1 serving

- 2 oz. Nikka Yoichi single-malt whisky
- 1 oz. Sorel liqueur
- 1 slice of fresh ginger, peeled
- 1 large twist of orange peel
- 1 oz. boiling water

Muddle ginger in rocks glass. Pour hot water over muddled ginger. Add whisky and Sorel and stir all ingredients together. Squeeze orange peel over drink to release oils.

he decided to create a spicy, citrusy hot drink that incorporates fresh ginger and a handcrafted liqueur called Sorel. Made from a global concoction of plants and herbs—Brazilian clove, Moroccan hibiscus, Indonesian cassia and nutmeg,

and Nigerian ginger—Sorel blends with the whisky perfectly, offering an aromatic and soothing sip. It's no wonder Halopoff settled on the name Spiced Zen for this East-meets-West hot cocktail. scornerskitchen.com