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MONDAY, DECEMBER 29, 2008

Bottoms Up New Jersey!



By Pat Tanner

New Jerseyans take pride in many firsts, not least among them being home to America's first distillery: Laird's, which has been producing applejack for almost 300 years now. Today the company, based in Scobeyville, Monmouth County, is headed up by an eighth generation Laird. In addition to its famed AppleJack, it produces three longer-aged brandies, including 12-year-old Rare Old Apple Brandy.

Mixologists around the country are rediscovering the charms of applejack and apple brandy, and when Laird's is in the mix the resulting concoctions pay tribute to Jersey in the name. Here, just in time for the New Year, are some fine examples. The Jersey Julep was concocted by the chef at the newly revived and restored Rocky Hill Inn Tavern & Eatery in Rocky Hill. Cheers!

JERSEY JULEP

Evan Blomgren, Rocky Hill Inn

2 sprigs fresh mint

2 ounces (4 tablespoons) Woodford's Reserve Bourbon

1 ounce (2 tablespoons) Laird's 10-Year Apple Brandy

Splash of Sprite

Shake the mint, Bourbon, and brandy in a cocktail shaker. Pour into a silver julep cup or highball glass filled with crushed ice and add a splash of Sprite.

A blog by the Editors of New Jersey Life magazine

Food Finds

Food writer and critic Pat Tanner tells you what's good to eat in the Garden State

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JERSEY GIRLlairdandcompany.com

1-1/2 ounces (3 tablespoons) Laird's AppleJack
 1 ounce (2 tablespoons) Cointreau
 1/2 ounce (1 tablespoon) fresh lime juice
 2 dashes (12 drops) cranberry juice

Shake well with ice and strain into a chilled martini glass. Garnish with a lime wedge.

JERSEY DEVIL PUNCH FOR A CROWDAdapted from webtender.com

1 gallon cranberry juice, chilled
 1 quart Laird's AppleJack, chilled
 2 quarts apple cider or apple juice, chilled
 1 apple, cored and sliced thin

Combine liquids, gently, in a large punch bowl. Carefully add a block of ice and float apple slices on top of punch.

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As a chef, I have used Lairds Apple Jack in sauces for years. It makes killer sauce for duck, pork, and game. Substitute for Calvadoes in any recipe.


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