



# TASTING TABLE

Food Culture Daily

LOS ANGELES

Mon. 24 Aug '09

People | LOS ANGELES

## The Cocktailier

*Drago Centro's sommelier does double duty behind the bar*

At Drago Centro, sommelier Michael Shearin is just as comfortable pouring a \$550 Gaja Sori Tildin as he is recommending a great value wine, but he's not just a wine geek: His cocktail skills are shaking up the Downtown scene.



When it comes to wine, Shearin clearly knows his stuff: He helped build the award-winning list at Guy Savoy in Las Vegas and has worked at Bouchon at the Venetian and Craftsteak at MGM Grand. But in L.A., he takes mixology just as seriously.

"It's all about Red Bull and vodka in Vegas," says Shearin. "Here, having people who appreciate specialty cocktails has inspired me."

Vincenzo Marianella ([Copa d'Oro](#)) consulted on the restaurant's initial cocktail program, but now Shearin creates drinks to match the seasons. In the Fragolino, a touch of balsamic vinegar and lemon juice adds a little snap to muddled strawberries and Belvedere vodka. In the fall, he'll debut the Fumo E Fuoco, a smoky-spicy combination of aged Scotch, Thai chiles and honey (click [here](#) to download the recipe).

Great wine, says Shearin, is a balance of sugar, alcohol, tannin and acidity; it's almost the same thing with cocktails. "You don't want any one ingredient to outshine another."

*Drago Centro, 525 S. Flower St., Downtown; 213-228-8998 or [dragocentro.com](http://dragocentro.com)*

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Debate No. 02

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*The Drago Centro Cocktail Menu (pdf)*

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